



**Minister for Health; Culture & the Arts
Government of Western Australia**

Our Ref: 33-35983

Hon Simon O'Brien MLC
Chairman
Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr O'Brien *Simon*

Thank you for your letter dated 13 October 2016 regarding Petition No 127: Proposed Telecommunications Tower, Bell Hill Reserve. I have noted the health concerns raised by the petitioners who are not supportive of the proposed telecommunications tower being located on Bell Hill Reserve.

For health standards related to electromagnetic radiation of the type emitted by telecommunications towers, the Department of Health is guided by the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA) 2002 publication entitled *Maximum Exposure Levels to Radiofrequency Fields 3 kHz to 300 GHz*.

The ARPANSA standard was developed following extensive review of relevant scientific literature on the biological effects of low level radiofrequency exposure (i.e. below the limits of the ARPANSA standard). The findings were that exposures below the limits in the ARPANSA standard, does not lead to unambiguous biological effects indicative of adverse physiological or psychological function, or to increased susceptibility to disease.

It is important to note that the limits in this standard are for the protection of all age groups against known adverse health effects, and include significant safety margins. The limits are set well below the level at which adverse health effects are known to occur. Current data does not establish the existence of adverse health effects for exposure levels below the limits of the ARPANSA standard. However, if the extensive continuing worldwide research programme does uncover any such adverse effects, the limits in the ARPANSA standard will certainly be reviewed.

Australian research, coordinated by the National Health and Medical Research Council, is part of a worldwide research effort facilitated by the World Health Organisation into possible health risks of exposure to electromagnetic fields. ARPANSA regularly survey the published worldwide studies and provide commentary to assist the public in interpreting their findings. Further information can be found at <http://www.arpansa.gov.au/RadiationProtection/EMR/literature/index.cfm>.

Compliance with the maximum exposure levels within the ARPANSA standard is required through licence conditions placed on the telecommunications tower and regulated by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA). Therefore, at this current time, there is no reason to prevent the construction of the tower on Bell Hill Reserve based on health concerns alone.

I trust the information provided is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Day". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

**JOHN DAY
MINISTER FOR HEALTH;
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

9 NOV 2016