

R K Partnership Ltd

Dr Howard Stoate MP
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27 April 2006

Dear Dr Howard Stoate MP

Stakeholder Advisory Group on Electromagnetic Fields - SAGE.

We are writing regarding your request for input by SAGE stakeholders to the "Parliamentary Commission" on childhood leukaemia and EMFs

The SAGE process was built on a stakeholder dialogue initiated by National Grid and subsequently formalised following the then National Radiological Protection Board (now Health Protection Agency's Radiation Protection Division (HPA-RPD)) advice on limiting exposure to electromagnetic fields (EMF). The Ministerial response of 22 July 2004 welcomed the advice and supported the opportunity "to consider the possible need for further precautionary measures" in respect of extremely low frequency (mains power frequency) electromagnetic fields (known as ELF- EMF) for which there remain concerns about the possible effects of exposure.

Over the course of 2005, under the guidance of a professional facilitator funded jointly by the National Grid Company, the Department of Health and the charity *Children with Leukaemia*, SAGE has developed an understanding of the potential for proportionate measures to reduce electric and magnetic field exposure from sources in the home and from overhead power lines. We are currently developing detailed working documents that will become the basis for a submission to Government Ministers this summer (2006). This submission will suggest practical ways in which people's exposure to electric and magnetic fields could be reduced.

SAGE stakeholders have agreed not to talk about interim conclusions or findings but to wait until they have been collectively agreed. Therefore the SAGE coordination group is clarifying that there will be no SAGE input to the commission until the SAGE work is finalised. Additionally it is felt that at this busy time when draft reports are being written and finalised the competing time pressures on SAGE participants will prevent them from doing sufficient justice to the commission.

SAGE is a deliberative process. It was set up and designed to consider carefully, the subject it has been tasked with, with an inclusive range of stakeholders as possible. We have involved over 40 stakeholders including two working groups of experts each of which has held a dozen full-day meetings. We have considered and critically scrutinised extensive factual material from a variety of sources, and the supporting material for our Report is likely to run over a hundred pages. The report should be a major contribution to inform decision making by elected representatives. As such it was strongly felt that your commission would greatly benefit from holding open your process and your conclusions until after you have received the SAGE report.

The SAGE web site (<http://www.rkpartnership.co.uk/sage/process.php>) has a description of the overall process and the remit of the working groups, including a list of participants. Some of this is attached here for your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

John Benson, Ofgem
Professor Denis Henshaw, University of Bristol
George Hooker, Dept of Health
Dr John Swanson, National Grid
Dr Hilary Walker, Dept of Health
Professor Mike O'Carroll, individual

On behalf of the SAGE Co-ordination Group

Copy to:
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