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SHORT REPORT

ON RECEPTION IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 08.11.2011

The meeting was organized by the Alliance for MRI to update the current status of discussions in EU Parliament and Council of the new proposal revising the EU Physical Agents Directive 2004/40EC (electromagnetic fields) which was published by the Commission in June 2011.

Our Section was invited to contribute to this discussion at the UEMS Meeting in Naples.

The proposal of the revised Directive gives lower thresholds for exposure to electromagnetic fields and the reference values differ for the current limit values and action values for the range from 0 – 100 kHz and the range from 100 kHz to 300 GHz. It covers all sectors of activity.

The European Section of Radiologists oppose to this solution and claims derogation of MRI of all limitations. They assure that workers exposed to MRI are protected well enough and they do not perceive any adverse health effect if they use MRI safely. Instead of the Directive the Guidelines should be developed in order to protect workers. They state that the Guidelines are important as they will include a real risk. Some EU member states oppose to this solution, saying that

- derogation of MRI workers will provide unequal workers' protection,
- MRI used in medicine and medical researches also needs cleaning and maintenance.

When I was challenged to express the opinion of our Section I had to be very careful. I underlined that we had been invited to such a meeting for the first time now. We are making risk assessment for all sectors of employees and we know very well that the risks must be diminished as much as possible. Our task is to protect the health of all workers so we are willing to take an active part in the protection of the workers if in the next steps those who are deciding on that topic will find our Section useful to contribute our knowledge and experiences to protect workers' health.

As I recognized lobbying will now take place:

- the countries who approve the derogation of MRI, are: Great Britain, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Hungary, Malta, Estonia, Latvia, The Netherlands;
- undecided countries are: Greece, Spain, Belgium, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Cyprus, Luxembourg, Bulgaria, Rumania, France;
- the countries who oppose the derogation of MRI, are: Germany, Italy, Portugal, Austria, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Poland.

Only short term health effects are considered in the Directive, if long term effects were in game I would expect even stronger political action ...