

## Call for project „Electrosensitivity“ of the FGF concluded

The call for the research project „Provocation study on electrosensitivity“ issued last year by the Research Association for Radio Applications ended following a thorough evaluation of all applications. Over the past year eleven applications of university institutes from Germany, Finland, the Czech Republic and Great Britain came in. The applications have been evaluated and ranked by independent experts in a standard procedure based on precisely defined criteria. The proceeding ended on August 9th 2000.

## Cooperation between American Health Administration and mobile radio industry

On June 8th 2000 the American Health Administration FDA (Food and Drug Administration) announced future cooperation with the association of the mobile radio industry (Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association, CTIA). Supervised by the FDA over the next three to five years the CTIA will promote studies on the safety of mobile radio devices. The amount of funding is not yet established.

The selection of the individual studies that will be part of the promotion program will be made by a commission of international specialists. The FDA will ensure that the research projects are carried out by independent scientists and that the studies will be scientifically exact. All results will be reviewed based upon scientific criteria and published in medical journals. Thus, physicians as well as consumers may have access to information and critically reflect studies' conclusions.

According to Harvey Rudolph, director of the FDA's department „Science and technology“, the first study will deal with the question whether weak radiation emitted by a mobile radio device can cause genotoxic effects or not. If genotoxic effects should be established, it is necessary to explore the radiation intensity at which the effect will occur. In the view of the FDA „we do not have sufficient information to be completely sure that these products pose no risks“. On the other side, the results suggesting possible health hazards for users lack convincing proof.

Further, research results from industry will be explored in order to find aspects which are worth further scientific interest. Advice and recommendations given by the FDA shall contribute to the aim that the studies to be carried out provide credible results.

## Easier access to the Science Helpdesk of the Forum Mobilkommunikation in Vienna

Because of the great interest the FMK Science Helpdesk <http://www.sciencefaqs.com> in the future will be also accessible to state authorities. Thanks to the cooperation with international scientific bodies such as WHO EMF Project, ICNIRP, IEEE, BEMS, URSI, the FGF and a number of contributions from internationally renowned institutes standard and variety of knowledge sources could be significantly increased. The FMK appreciates the great willingness to cooperate.

## Auction of UMTS licences closed

On July 31st 2000 the auction of licences for the mobile radio standard of the third generation, UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunications Standard) started in Mainz. Eleven candidates were allowed to participate in the competition on the much sought-after UMTS licences by the regulation authority. Three applicants, Vivendi Telekom International, WorldCom Wireless and Talkline, already left before the first round. Auditorium Investments Germany S.A.R.L. retreated too, since the shareholding company Hutchinson Whampoa from Hongkong originally went for a cooperation with the parent company of E-Plus, KPN. On August 17th the Asians put an end to this cooperation, too. SwissCom daughter Debitel from Stuttgart left the auction on the tenth day. On August 17th after 173 auction rounds the future six licence holders were found.

- T-Mobil of the Deutsche Telekom
- E-Plus (KPN)
- the syndicate Group 3-G
- Mannesmann Mobilfunk
- Mobilcom Multimedia and
- VIAG Interkom

will compete for clients at the future UMTS market. The companies' interest was worth between 16,37 and 16,58 billion DM. The final sum of the bids was 98,807 billion DM (50,519 billion Euro). During an auction on August 18th uncoupled frequency blocks were given to the competitors. These blocks went to T-Mobil, E-Plus, Group 3-G, Mannesmann Mobil-

funk and Mobilcom Multimedia for 561 million DM (286,8 million Euro). Thus, the Federal Minister for Finances, Hans Eichel, may look forward to receive the substantial sum of 99,368 billion DM (50,805 billion Euro).

While some observers like Telekom spokesman Stephan Broszio characterised the bids as „economic madness“, others, such as expert Josef Scarfone, suggested that after the UMTS auction future wins of mobile radio companies are at stake. For the company Talkline the high licence fees were absurd from the start. „Licence costs will in no case pay back“, said Talkline manager Kim Friemer. Similar recriminations were the reason for Vivendi manager's Jean-Marie Messier early withdrawal.

The only German company among the future UMTS services is the Deutsche Telekom. The rest of the companies all are foreign consortiums or have foreign parent companies. With the Group 3-G led by the Spanish company Telefónica and the Finnish Sonera a new company enters the competition within the German market.

Beginning with the year 2002 German people shall be able to make calls with the new UMTS system. In the following years the network shall grow fast, as the companies by buying the mobile radio licences undertook the obligation to connect 25 per cent of the population up to the year 2003 with the network of the future and even 50 per cent up to the year 2005. The extensive promotion of the UMTS network will cost the companies further 7,5 billion DM.

## Imprint

newsletter of the FGF e.V.

### published by:

Forschungsgemeinschaft Funk e.V.  
Rathausgasse 11a,  
D-53111 Bonn  
phone: +49 228 / 726 22-0  
fax: +49 228 / 726 22 11  
e-mail: info@fgf.de  
internet: http://www.fgf.de

### concept/editors:

Gerd Friedrich (responsible),  
Gudrun Westendörpf,  
Kesberg, Bütfering & Partner, Bonn

### copyright:

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### design, layout, graphics:

setz it, Sankt Augustin

### illustrations:

S. 8 Robert Bosch GmbH,  
S. 12 Prof. Dr. Irnich,  
all others: archive

**the newsletter is published  
3-4 times per year**

### Auflage:

number of copies: 3000

**reprint/reproduction permitted**  
ISSN 0949-8745