

16th General Meeting of the Research Association for Radio Applications (FGF)

Gerd Friedrich, Daniela Wernze

A total of 23 participants represented the members of the Forschungsgemeinschaft Funk e.V. (FGF) at this year's 16th annual general meeting which took place on 31 January 2008 on the premises of Vodafone D2 GmbH at Duesseldorf. Besides by-elections for the board of directors, the focus of the meeting was on the reports on activities in the period since the 15th general meeting in January 2007 as well as on the upcoming work for 2008.

Karl-Wilhelm Siebert, the chairman of the board of the FGF, opened the meeting on time and welcomed the attending members. After the call for quorum, approval of the meeting agenda and of the minutes of last year's general meeting, Siebert presented in his account the past reporting period. In doing so, he, for a start, gave a summary review of all activities of the FGF in the past business year. In particular, he addressed the participation and cooperation of the FGF in national and international bodies and projects, the research work and public relations as well as the event on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the FGF in September 2007.

One of the central tasks of the board of directors in the reporting period was the reorientation (known under the header „Re-Invent“) of the FGF which should reposition the FGF for the execution of future tasks. For the future, Siebert emphasised especially

the importance of the FGF as an information platform. To him, it was of outstanding importance to know provable scientific facts and arguments in the discussion on EMCE (Electromagnetic Compatibility with the Environment). The work provided by the FGF today and in the future lays for all members, interested parties, and for him the foundation for a better understanding of the EMCE problem complex.

It was with regret that Siebert observed the budget of the FGF that had declined due to the withdrawal of three full members. Siebert emphasised that, in spite of the decreased income and the resulting special challenges for establishing the budget plan, one succeeded in the past year to realise all scheduled projects and to fulfil all incurred commitments. Siebert was especially pleased to be able to welcome two new members - the Huawei Company and the Jacobs University of Bremen - in the ranks of the FGF. At the end of his speech, he thanked the members, the working groups as well as the administrative office, and here especially the managing director Dr. Gerd Friedrich, for the good cooperation in the year 2007.

Working Group „Research“

The responsibility for reporting on the research activities of the FGF lies with Dr. Volker Boekelmann, Head of the Working Group „Research“ (AG F). He firstly thanked all combatants for the good cooperation and especially for the valuable contributions of the FGF members to the work in the AG F.

His report covered the activities in the period since last year's general meeting. The fact that, with the closing of the sub working groups that had existed up to the year 2007, the work concentrated on the working group as a whole, was accommodated by holding five meetings and numerous conference calls. In the reporting period, the monitoring of five research projects was part of the work program of the FGF which were individually briefly outlined by Bockelmann:

Knowledge-based Literature

Data Base (EMF-Portal):

An enormous and increasing degree of popularity could be noted for the Knowledge-based Literature Data Base (EMF-Portal) of the Research Centre for Bioelectromagnetic Interaction (femu) in the clinical centre of the RWTH University of Aachen: The number of page views has continuously increased since the opening of the EMF-Portal and currently amounts to about 2,000 per day. With about 11,500 included publications, the data base is up to date. It is intended to incorporate as new topics publications on risk communication and implants as well as recommendations and guidelines.

Toxicological Study Regarding UMTS

The long-term multi-generation project with rats as test objects for an investigation according to toxicological standards on the effects of exposure to electromagnetic fields with UMTS generic signals is now in the third of three phases. Up to now, no effects as a consequence of nonthermal origin have been found. The reported effects of differences in body weight and fine motor skills are most likely effects of thermal nature. This has still to be confirmed by the final evaluation of the overall project.

Numerical Dosimetry

After the completion of the project, a presentation of the results took place in August 2007. Object of investigation was the whole body absorption of human beings in a complex but also realistic environment. In different body models, the dependence of the specific absorption rate on technical parameters (antenna types, propagation characteristics, frequencies etc.)

and biological properties should be investigated. This study showed that averaged whole body worst case considerations can be drawn on for the assessment of the specific absorption rate with sufficient certainty.

„Lessons learnt“


This project has not yet left the planning stage. With the aid of a literature study or research, it shall be derived, by means of examples from biological projects on heat shock proteins and blood brain barrier, which experience from previous projects can be consulted in order to avoid errors or impairments of results of previous experiments in follow-up and more detailed studies. Biological experiments are characterised by high complexity of the parameters and error sources to be considered. By means of this pilot project, it shall be attempted to identify mistakes made and postulate indications for the correct approach of future experiments.

Lifetime Study in Rats

Behind the study question, „Do applied radiofrequency fields have an effect on the lifetime of rats?“ there lies quiet the concern that exposed animals exhibit a shorter lifetime compared to unexposed ones. For this purpose, the test animals are monitored under equal conditions and maintenance up to their natural end of life.

A further focus of work in the AG F was the organisation of three scientific workshops: An event at the Federal Office for Radiation Protection (BfS) was focussed on the topic „Genotoxicity“. This workshop with all involved research groups and specially invited experts put to the test the results of the European REFLEX project and its replication attempts with partly contradictory results. (Detailed workshop report in Newsletter 2/2007.)

Great interest was attracted by the workshop organised in November 2007 in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment of Baden-Wuerttemberg on the topic „Sleep, EEG and cognitive functions“ which, with 58 participants and a total of 29 presentations, was one of the greatest events so far organised by the FGF. The workshop had gained special topicality



not only by the numerous recent research results discussed here but also due to media attention paid to this topic few weeks before the workshop. (Workshop report in Newsletter 4/2007.)

„Mobile Phone & Co. - How About Health?": Under this heading, a workshop took place in November 2007 in Vienna that was organised together with the Austrian Forum for Mobile Communication (FMK) and gave an overview of the state of research on the topic „Electromagnetic fields and health“. (Workshop report in Newsletter 4/2007.)

Boekelmann concluded his report by an outlook on the year 2008: After identification of four research priorities, the work of the AG F will, according to him, initially concentrate on the topics „Thermal Response“ and the evaluation of the results of the Interphone project. For the year 2008, as in the previous year, two international workshops have been projected and an internal seminar on statistics. (Note: This event took place on 27 February 2008, see report in this Newsletter, page 8.)

Working Group „Public Relations“

Cornelia Szyszkowitz introduced herself to the present member representatives as head of the Working Group „Public Relations“, the chair of which she had taken in April 2007.

Szyszkowitz was pleased that the revision of the FGF website could be completed according to plan. Since January 2008, the optimised website of the FGF - adapted to the state of technology and enhanced by further information - has been online. (See report in this Newsletter, page 25.)

As one of the vital tasks of the working group, she named the publication of the periodical „Newsletter“ of the FGF which had been released in the past year in three regular issues and one special issue on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the FGF. After successful reorganisation of the Newsletter to one „issue“ consisting of a printed part (with a reduced number of pages) and an only „electronic“ offered

supplement (newsletter online) on the FGF website by individual online articles with background knowledge. This concept has been further pursued and extended in the past reporting period. Thus, with reduced production costs, the printed version of the Newsletter persists as the business card of the association.

Whereas the Newsletter systematically takes up scientific and social issues, the „Infoline“ released weekly, which gives a quick and comprehensive overview of news in the field of EMCE, serves to provide topical information to the subscribers.

Szyszkowitz furthermore pointed out in her talk the participation of the FGF in the fair „Wissenwerte“ at Bremen by which especially the target group of scientific journalists could be reached which by now expresses itself in respective/corresponding requests from the FGF.

Also for the year 2008, the head of the working group emphasised, the information of the public about matters of the EMCE and the provision of scientific information are in the focus as the main tasks of public relations of the FGF.

Administrative Office

Starting his presentation, Friedrich, managing director of the FGF, expressed his thanks to all contributors for supporting the work in the past year, especially to the board of directors and to the heads of the working groups, Mrs. Szyszkowitz and Dr. Boekelmann.

He reported on the activities of the administrative office in the past year. Besides the permanent tasks and activities of the administrative office, he especially pointed out the organisation of the event on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the FGF. For this, the FGF was able to enlist renowned experts who, in the framework of a scientific symposium, gave an overview to the attendees of the state of knowledge in the field of EMCE. As a special speaker, Dr. Paolo Vecchia, Chairman of the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection, addressed the

position of the ICNIRP regarding the currently applicable legal situation.

For a detailed description of the past activities, Friedrich referred to the annual report of the FGF for the year 2007 (downloadable from: http://www.fgf.de/english/publications/annual_reports.html) from which many details can be learnt, amongst others regarding the international activities of the FGF.

Report of the Cash Auditors and Discharge of the Board of Directors

Among the ever recurring tasks within an association are the discharge of the managing committee and the cash audit. The cash auditors ascertained correct cash management as well as statutory application of funds which had been confirmed by the cash audit performed on site in January 2008.

Subsequent to the cash auditors' report, Rolf Burgherr from the Swiss Federal Office for Communication took the chair for the discharge of the board of directors. After an unanimous vote with one abstention, Burgherr formally declared the discharge of the board of directors and thanked the directors on behalf of the members for the work achieved in the past reporting year.

Election of New Members of the Board of Directors

After the retirement of four board members, by-elections were pending. Candidates nominated were Mag. Maximilian Maier, FMK; Luo Shudong, Huawei; Reinhard Waehlen, Motorola; and Dr. Joe Wiart, France Telecom Orange. The nominated persons were unanimously elected with one abstention.

Programme 2008 and Budget 2008

Friedrich presented the budget for the year 2008 which was adopted with one dissenting vote and one abstention. Due to the withdrawal of two members at the end of the year 2007, the FGF has available a lower income than in the previous year. To attract new members and to win back withdrawn members, respectively, is therefore part of the spectrum of tasks of the FGF in the year 2008. This also means, according to Friedrich, to make the offers and services of the FGF more apparently to the outside. As one of the main tasks, he therefore saw the further upgrading of the internet presence of the FGF to an information platform in the field of EMCE; new research subjects should as well be taken into consideration.

Board of Directors of the FGF

Director

For the Group of Network Operators:

Karl-Wilhelm Siebert, Vodafone D2
Dr. Fritz Lauer, T-Mobile
Dr. Karsten Menzel, E-Plus

For the Group of Service Providers:

Herbert Tillmann, Bayerischer Rundfunk

For the Industry:

Matthias Meier, Motorola
Dr. Christer Törnevik, Ericsson
Luo Shudong, Huawei

For the Group of Authorities:

Albrecht Gundlach, BMWi

Personal Deputy

Dr. Thomas Schüller, Vodafone D2
Dr. Joe Wiart, France Telecom Orange
Dr. Holger Ruse, O2

Helwin Lesch, Bayerischer Rundfunk

Reinhard Wählen, Motorola
Slavko Kutija, Ericsson
Mag. Maximilian Maier, FMK

Dieter Garvert, BMWi

Miscellaneous

New COST Action BM0704

Friedrich briefly outlined the new European Action COST BM0704 starting under the heading „Emerging EMF Technologies and Health Risk Management“. The action, in the proposal of which the FGF had participated, was approved in November 2007 with a duration of four years and is financed by the European Union. Though there will be no research funds allocated in the framework of the action, it will gain an enormous degree of awareness by the organisation of scientific workshops with participants from almost all European countries (currently already 25 nations are members of it) and therefore constitutes a valuable platform for scientific discourse.

Presentation by Prof. Bernard Veyret

Prof. Bernard Veyret from the University of Bordeaux, as a representative of the European Action EMF-NET, gave an overview of current research projects in Europe and their financial basis. For this purpose, the action EMF-NET has developed a data base that is based on the evaluation of questionnaires. In this data base, there were considered current projects and such that were completed in the year 2004 or later. On average, according to Prof. Veyret; a budget of 200,000 Euro is available for a research project, while most projects cannot be financed to a cost-covering extent.

At large, Prof. Veyret - in spite of emerging new technologies - saw a trend towards a reduction of research projects in the field of EMF (with some exceptions, e.g., in Great Britain). In the discussion following the lecture, a categorisation of the role of the FGF became apparent as an information and communication platform in the research scenery outlined by Prof. Veyret, the further development and establishment of which will also in the year 2008 form an important part of the work of the FGF.

Gerd Friedrich, Daniela Wernze
Forschungsgemeinschaft Funk e.V.

femu Research Report 2007

The annual report of the Research Center for Electromagnetic Environmental Compatibility (femu) in Aachen informs about the activities and projects of the working group in the past year. The report contains information about structure, contents, development and usage of the EMF portal.

Download of the 93 pages report from:

<http://www.femu.rwth-aachen.de>

Brochures/ Infomaterial

- **Bayern wide action „mobile radio and schools“**

In the framework of this action schools can apply for material and so called SAR measurement head for measurements of the exposure to radiation of handheld phones without any charge for teaching purposes. Participation of this landing is only possible for schools from those if one teacher has participate in one of the information seminar of the LfU. The date of the further education courses in the field of mobile telephony and schools or mobile radio and schools can be found on the website of the action. Proposal for further venues can be proposed to the Bavarian Environment Agency (LfU).

<http://www.mobilfunkundschule.bayern.de>

- **Teaching material for the issue of mobile radio**

The information center for mobile radio (Informationszentrum Mobilfunk - IZMF) will present in Stuttgart the newly developed „mobile phone license“ for primary school children in six lesson units to the basic rules and risks of usage of handheld phones which can be acquired. The free of charge lessons material should support teacher of primary schools in teaching the pupils abilities in the secured handling of the mobile radio equipment. Additional the IZMF has given material to help the teachers in preparing and realisation of information of parent-teacher conferences around the issue of mobile telephony.

<http://www.izmf.de/html/de/57899.html>

und <http://www.schulprojekt-mobilfunk.de/>

Workshops

- **International Workshop of ICNIRP/WHO/BfS to leukemia of children.**

The international workshop brings experts from different disciplines together to debate about the present state of the art with all well-known risk factors and to discuss a