



Update:
Annual Meeting
European Parliament Reception
Press Conference

October 2009

Dear Members of the Alliance for MRI,

First of all we would like to thank so many of you for your participation in the Alliance for MRI Annual Meeting and for joining the European Parliament reception on 13th October.

The Alliance for MRI welcomed the initiative of Dr Peter Liese MEP and Stephen Hughes MEP to host a joint press conference, together with founding members of the Alliance, Mary Baker, President of the European Federation of Neurological Associations, and Professor Gabriel Krestin of the European Society of Radiology.

Our key challenge is to create an awareness of the threat posed to MRI by EU legislation. Amongst others, the European Parliament magazine featured an article: (<http://www.theparliament.com/policy-focus/health/health-article/newsarticle/eu-parliament-drive-to-safeguard-future-of-mri-scanners/>)

The Alliance for MRI is delighted that a number of new members of the European Parliament have expressed an interest in joining and we would like to welcome those who have already signed up:

Françoise Grossetête (EPP) FR, Alejandro Cercas (S&D) ES, Richard Howitt (S&D) UK, Frieda Brepoels (Greens/EFA) BE, Siiri Oviir (ALDE) EST and Derek Roland Clark (EFD) UK.

We very much look forward to working with you all over the next year to ensure that politicians, policy makers, the scientific community and patients around Europe understand the importance of amending the current EU legislation to safeguard the future of MRI.

Where are we now?

It is apparent that there is still a widespread lack of understanding regarding the implications of the EU legislation on the use of MRI to treat and diagnose diseases today and in the future. The EU and many member states are investing in the development of MRI technology and do not realize that this work would be severely curtailed should MRI not be excluded from the exposure limits in the EU Directive.

Therefore in 2010 the Alliance for MRI will be working with all its members to ensure that the potential threat is well understood amongst healthcare professionals and key decision-makers in the European Commission, European Parliament and the member states.

What is the process?

The European Commission is preparing its proposal to amend Directive 2004/40/EC on electromagnetic fields. The proposal is expected to be adopted by the college of Commissioners by April 2010. Commissioner Špidla has committed to ensuring that MRI is protected and we very much hope that his successor will do so too.

It will take at least a year for a proposal to be adopted by the EU (under the 'co-decision procedure'). Given the interest of different industry groups regarding the Directive we fear that it will take longer.

Under the co-decision procedures, the proposal will be passed to the European Parliament and the Council (representing the member states) for their agreement. Both Parliament and Council can propose amendments to the proposal. In the European Parliament the lead committee will be the Employment and Social Affairs Committee and the opinions of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee and the Industry, Research and Energy Committee are likely to be sought.

How you can help?

- Inform your **branch offices in key member states of the threat posed to MRI** **Germany, UK, France, Poland, Spain and Italy** are key countries for our campaign (newsletters, press opportunities, articles, conferences)
- **Be an advocate for the Alliance for MRI in your contacts with:**
European Parliamentarians interested in health and research
European Commission officials (DG Health and Consumer Affairs 'Sanco'), DG Research, and DG Enterprise,
Member State decision-makers -Politicians and policy makers in your country concerned with health policy, innovation and research
- Please **keep the Alliance for MRI Secretariat** abreast of any new intelligence

Background information is available on the Alliance for MRI website. Please feel free to contact us any time for support.

We look forward to working with you!

Alliance for MRI Secretariat

Alliance for MRI Position

- **The Alliance for MRI requests an EU-wide derogation for all uses of MRI from the exposure limits in the Directive**
- The established MR safety standard (IEC/EN 60601-2-33) ensures that MRI scanners are safe for patients and workers.
- The Alliance for MRI supports the adoption of guidelines to support the safety standard. These ensure working practices are in line with technological developments.
- Binding exposure limits for MRI will curtail research work and restrict the future of the technology.

Alliance for MRI Background

The 'Alliance for MRI' is a coalition of European Parliamentarians, patient groups, leading European scientists and the medical community, who together are seeking to avert the serious threat posed by EU health and safety legislation to the clinical and research use of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI).

The Alliance for MRI was officially launched in March 2007 in response to the implementation of the EU Physical Agents 2004/40/EC (EMF) Directive in April 2008. The Alliance was founded by the European Society of Radiology, the European Federation of Neurological Associations and Dr. Swoboda MEP, Vice-Chairman of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament.

In October 2007 the European Commission proposed the postponement of the implementation deadline from April 2008 to April 2012 to allow more time for the evaluation of new data on EMF and its short-term effects on the human body. The Commission stated that it was never the intention of this Directive to impede the practice of MRI and the postponement was approved by the European Parliament and the Council.

The Alliance is supported by:

Leading Members of the European Parliament

Frieda Brepoels (Greens/EFA) BE, Alejandro Cercas (S&D) ES, Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (ALDE) DE, Derek Roland Clark (EFD) UK, Robert Goebbels (PES) LU, Françoise Grossetête (EPP) FR, Richard Howitt (S&D) UK, Stephen Hughes (S&D) UK, Ville Itälä (EPP/ED) FI, Anneli Jäätteenmäki (ALDE) FI, Eija-Riitta Korhola (EPP/ED) FI, Peter Liese (EPP) DE, Elizabeth Lynne (ALDE) UK, Linda McAvan (S&D) UK, Dr. Angelika Niebler (EPP/ED) DE, Siiri Oviir (ALDE) EST, Antonio Panzeri Pier (S&D) IT, Frédérique Ries (ALDE) BE, Zuzana Roithová (EPP/ED) CZ, Hannes Swoboda (S&D) AT (Founding member), Thomas Ulmer (EPP/ED) DE, Dr. Anja Weisgerber (EPP/ED) DE

European and National patient groups

European Federation of Neurological Associations (Founding member); including the European Parkinson's Disease Association, The European MS Platform and the European Headache Alliance, The European Heart Network, Europa Donna, The European Patients Forum, Cancer Research UK, The International Diabetes Federation – Europe, Alzheimer Europe, The WHO Collaborative Centre for Research, training and treatment in Epilepsy, The Austrian Lung

Association, The Austrian Epilepsy Association, Werkgroep Hersentumoren vzw (Belgian Brain Tumour Group), Epilepsy Centres of the Netherlands Foundation: SEIN

Representative Groups of Scientists

- European Society of Radiology (Founding Member) and institutional members (below)
- The Wellcome Trust
- European Society for Magnetic Resonance in Medicine and Biology (ESMRMB)
- European Union of Medical Specialists
- European Brain Council
- Luxembourg Medical Council
- European Institute for Biomedical Imaging Research (EIBIR)
- The Society and College of Radiographers
- European Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology (ESTRO)
- European CanCer Organisation (ECCO)
- European Federation of Organisations for Medical Physics (EFOMP)
- European Federation of Radiographer Societies (EFRS)

Institutional members of European Society of Radiology:

- Société Française de Radiologie (SFR)
- Spanish Radiological Society (SERAM)
- Polish Medical Society of Radiology
- Norwegian Society of Radiology
- Royal Belgian Radiological Society
- Luxembourg Society of Radiology
- Deutsche Roentgensgesellschaft - German Radiological Society (DRG)
- Radiological Society of the Netherlands
- European Society of Urogenital Radiology (ESUR)
- European Society of Thoracic Imaging (ESTI)
- European Society of Neuroradiology (ESNR)
- Croatian Medical Association & Croatian Society of Radiology
- European Society of Cardiac Radiology (ESCR)
- Italian Society of Radiology (SIRM)
- European Society of Breast Imaging (EUSOBI)
- Romanian Society of Radiology
- Danish Society of Radiology
- Austrian Radiologic Society (ÖRG)
- British Institute of Radiology
- Swedish Society of Medical Radiology
- Bulgarian Association of Radiology
- Sociedade Portuguesa de Radiologia e Medicina Nuclear
- Czech Radiological Society
- Slovak Radiological Society
- Faculty of Radiologists, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
- European Society of Head and Neck Radiology
- Cardiovascular and Interventional Radiological Society of Europe
- The Royal College of Radiologists

In addition, a number of individual scientists and patient group representatives have signed up to the Alliance. Further information is available at www.alliance-for-mri.org

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