

REPORT OF THE RF SAFETY COMMITTEE TO THE ARRL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

January 2026

The RF Safety Committee participated in the following areas over the past six months:

1. RF Safety Committee Activities.
2. Monitoring current events and scientific studies regarding RF Safety.
3. Participation in the scientific RF Safety community.
4. Administrative issues.

1 RF Safety Committee Activities

- 1.1 The Committee continues to await the release of the FCC publication, OET Bulletin 65 Supplement B, **Evaluating Compliance with FCC Guidelines for Human Exposure to Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields, Additional Information for Amateur Radio Stations**. The new document has been held up in the FCC Chairman's office, as is the publication of the rewritten OET Bulletin 65. This presents a potential problem for exposure advice to amateurs that references these documents, as the outdated versions are still available on the FCC website. On a recent visit to the FCC, Dr. Lapin attempted to meet with the Chairman and his wireless advisor to discuss this issue, but received no response.
- 1.2 As a result of the emergence of handheld radios for the Amateur Radio service that transmit more than 5 watts, Dr. Lapin has written a paper that extrapolates the SAR testing data for commercial radios in the FCC database to various transmitter power levels and calculates the maximum transmit time allowed during any averaging period (FCC exposure limits are based on the average exposure during 6 minutes for amateur operators and during 30 minutes for the general public). The original concept for estimating the SAR levels produced by amateur handhelds, which are not generally tested that way, was published by Mr. Tell several years ago in QEX. The new paper describes the issues with maintaining compliance with FCC exposure limits for handheld transmitters and then explains how to best determine the maximum compliant transmit times for various power levels and frequencies. This paper will be published in the February 2026 edition of *QST*.
- 1.3 The Committee is compiling a "Master RF Safety Chapter" that contains all relevant information about RF Safety and its scientific bases, its history, standards and regulations that govern it, methods to determine compliance with regulatory limits, and methods to mitigate situations when exposure conditions above those limits exist. This document will be maintained and kept up to date by the Committee. Appropriate portions of it will be excerpted for use in ARRL publications, such as the ARRL license manuals, the *ARRL Handbook*, the *ARRL Antenna Book*, the *ARRL RFI Book*, as well as potentially revising the book, *RF Exposure and You*.

2 Monitoring Current Events and Scientific Studies

- 2.1 Robert F. Kennedy, Jr, as secretary of Health and Human Services, has mainly acted on his non-science-based opinions regarding vaccines. He also has a history of espousing warnings about the health effects of electromagnetic radiation that are in conflict with good scientific results. He has been recently quoted as claiming that "WiFi radiation opens up your blood-brain barrier, so all these toxins that are in our body can now go into your brain." This claim is based on the results of several poorly performed studies on rats that could not be replicated and that were based on exposure levels far higher than any standard allows. Mr. Kennedy has also been advocating for getting cell phones out of schools, which many people agree with for different reasons. Mr.

Kennedy's reasoning diverged from good science when he said, "Cell phones also produce electromagnetic radiation, which has been shown to damage, to do neurological damage to kids when it's around them all day, and to cause cellular damage and even cancer." We continue to monitor whether Mr. Kennedy will have any influence on exposure decisions by the FCC.

3 Participation in the Scientific RF Safety Community

- 3.1 Mr. Tell serves as the chair of the IEEE ICES TC-95 standards committee, which oversees the C95.1, C95.2, C95.3, and C95.7 RF exposure standards.
- 3.2 Dr. Lapin continues to serve as co-chair of IEEE ICES TC-95 Subcommittee SC-4: Safety Levels with Respect to Human Exposure to Electromagnetic Fields, 3 kHz to 300 GHz.
- 3.3 Mr. Butcher continues to serve as the co-chair of IEEE ICES TC-95 Subcommittee SC-1: Techniques, Procedures, Instrumentation, and Computation.
- 3.4 Dr. Bushberg and Mr. Witkowski continue to serve on the IEEE ICES TC-95 RF Safety Standards Committee and its subcommittees.
- 3.5 Dr. Lapin, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Tell, Dr. Bushberg and Mr. Witkowski attended the three-day IEEE ICES TC-95 RF Safety Standards Committee meetings and the COMAR meeting in California in January.
- 3.6 Dr. Lapin, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Tell, Dr. Bushberg and Mr. Witkowski remotely attended the two-day IEEE ICES TC-95 RF Safety Standards Committee meetings and the COMAR meeting in Rennes, France in June.
- 3.7 Dr. Bushberg serves as chairman of the IEEE EMBS Committee on Man and Radiation, COMAR.
- 3.8 Mr. Butcher serves as vice-chairman of the IEEE EMBS Committee on Man and Radiation, COMAR.
- 3.9 Mr. Witkowski serves as secretary of the IEEE EMBS Committee on Man and Radiation, COMAR.
- 3.10 Mr. Tell and Dr. Lapin continue to serve as members of the IEEE EMBS Committee on Man and Radiation, COMAR.
- 3.11 Dr. Lapin and Mr. Tell continue to serve on the work group that is revising the NATO exposure safety standard: IEEE C95.1-2345 Standard for Military Workplaces - Force Health Protection Regarding Personnel Exposure to Electric, Magnetic, and Electromagnetic Fields, 0 Hz to 300 GHz.
- 3.12 Mr. Butcher continues to serve as a member of the United States National Committee of the International Electrotechnical Commission (USNC/IEC) for TC106: Methods for the assessment of electric, magnetic and electromagnetic fields associated with human exposure.
- 3.13 Dr. Bushberg continues to serve as the Vice President of the Congressionally-chartered National Council on Radiation Protection, NCRP.

4 Administrative Issues

- 4.1 The Committee mourned the passing of Edward Hare, W1RFI. Over this committee's entire existence, Mr. Hare took an integral part in introducing the topic of RF Safety to the amateur radio community. Mr. Hare was an active participant in the committee's deliberations, both while he was the committee's staff liaison and after he retired and served as one of its members. He will be missed.

- 4.2 Dr. Lapin has contacted several medical doctors who are also Amateur Radio operators and members of the Medical Amateur Radio Council (MARCO). The RF Safety Committee was once evenly split between medical doctors and scientists/engineers, and due to MD retirements, the balance has shifted. The Committee will be meeting with these interested medical doctors in the coming year with the aim of adding some of them to our membership.
- 4.3 Dr. Siwiak is a technical advisor for *QST* and *QEX*. He shares submitted RF Safety-related articles with the Committee.
- 4.4 Dr. Lapin is the editor of the *ARRL Handbook 102*, and continues to update the RF Safety section of the Safe Practices chapter, as well as making sure exposure issues are referenced in the rest of the Handbook, where applicable.
- 4.5 Dr. Lapin has participated in the ARRL Electromagnetic Compatibility Committee meetings. Complaints of interference to medical devices, that are reported to the RF Safety Committee, are shared with the EMC Committee, whose expertise includes electromagnetic interactions with all types of instrumentation.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chair, ARRL RF Safety Committee

The ARRL RF Safety Committee

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