

Revised and Amended

Resolution No. 15

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT: Health and Safety

**Re: Study of Firefighters Exposed to Radio Frequency (RF)
Radiation from Cell Towers/Masts**

1 WHEREAS, fire stations across the United States
2 and Canada are being sought by wireless companies as
3 base stations for the antennas and towers for the
4 conduction of cell phone transmissions; and
5 WHEREAS, many firefighters who are living with
6 cell towers on or adjacent to their stations are paying a
7 substantial price in terms of physical and mental health.
8 As first responders and protectors of the general public,
9 it is crucial that firefighters are functioning at optimal
10 cognitive and physical capacity at all times; and
11 WHEREAS, the brain is the first organ to be
12 affected by RF radiation and symptoms manifest in a
13 multitude of neurological conditions including migraine
14 headaches, extreme fatigue, disorientation, slowed
15 reaction time, vertigo, vital memory loss and attention
16 deficit amidst life threatening emergencies; and
17 WHEREAS, most of the firefighters who are
18 experiencing symptoms can attribute the onset to the
19 first week(s) these towers/antennas were activated; and
20 WHEREAS, RF radiation is emitted by these
21 cellular antennas and RF radiation can penetrate every
22 living cell, including plants, animals and humans; and
23 WHEREAS, both the U. S. and Canadian
24 governments established regulatory limits for RF
25 radiation based on thermal (heat) measurements with
26 no regard for the adverse health effects from
27 non-thermal radiation which is proven to harm the
28 human brain and immune system; and
29 WHEREAS, the U. S. Environmental Protection
30 Agency stated in a July 16, 2002, letter, “Federal
31 health and safety agencies have not yet developed
32 policies concerning possible risk from long-term,
33 non-thermal exposures. The FCC’s exposure
34 guideline is considered protective of effects arising
35 from a thermal mechanism (RF radiation from cell
36 towers is non-thermal) but not from all possible
37 mechanisms. Therefore, the generalization by many
38 that the guidelines protecting human beings from
39 harm by any or all mechanisms is not justified”; and
40 WHEREAS, an Expert Panel Report requested

41 by the Royal Society of Canada prepared for Health
42 Canada (1999) stated that, “Exposure to RF fields at
43 intensities far less than levels required to produce
44 measurable heating can cause effects in cells and
45 tissues. These biological effects include alterations
46 in the activity of the enzyme ornithine decarboxylase,
47 in calcium regulation, and in the permeability of the
48 blood-brain barrier. Some of these biological effects
49 brought about by non-thermal exposure levels of RF
50 could potentially be associated with adverse health
51 effects”; and
52 WHEREAS, based on concerns over growing
53 scientific evidence of dangers from RF radiation, an
54 international conference was convened in Salzburg,
55 Austria, in the summer of 2000 where renowned
56 scientists declared the upper-most RF radiation
57 exposure limit from a tower-mast should be 1/10th of
58 1 microwatt (Note that 1/10th of 1 microwatt is 10,000
59 times lower than the uppermost limit allowed by the
60 U. S. or Canada.); and it should be noted this limit was
61 set because of study results showing brain wave
62 changes at 1/10th of 1 microwatt; and
63 WHEREAS, in a recently cleared paper by Dr.
64 Richard A. Albanese of the U. S. Air Force, a
65 highly recognized physician in the area of the impact of
66 radiation on the human body, Dr. Albanese states, “I
67 would ask a good faith effort in achieving as low
68 exposure rates as are possible within reasonable
69 financial constraints. Also I would fund targeted
70 studies using animal subjects and human groups living
71 or working in high radiation settings or heavy cellular
72 phone users, emphasizing disease causations. I urge
73 acceptance of the ideal that there should be no
74 unmonitored occupational or environmental exposures
75 whose associated disease rates are unknown.” (The
76 opinions expressed herein are those of Dr. Albanese,
77 and do not reflect the policies of the United States
78 Air Force.); and
79 WHEREAS, recently a study, not affiliated with
80 the wireless industry, was conducted of firefighters
81 exposed to RF radiation from cell towers/antennas
82 affixed to their stations. The study revealed brain
83 damage that can be differentiated from chemical
84 causation (such as inhalation of toxic smoke) suggesting
85 RF radiation as the cause of the brain damage found on
86 SPECT scans; and

87 WHEREAS, firefighters are the protectors of
88 people and property and should be protected under the
89 Precautionary Principle of Science and therefore, unless
90 radiation is proven safe and harmless, cellular
91 antennas should not be placed on or near fire stations;
92 therefore be it
93 RESOLVED, That the IAFF shall seek funding for an
94 initial U. S. and Canadian study with the highest scientific
95 merit and integrity, contrasting firefighters with residence
96 in stations with towers to firefighters without similar
97 exposure; and be it further
98 RESOLVED, That in accordance with the results of
99 the study, the IAFF will establish protective policy
100 measures with the health and safety of all firefighters
101 as the paramount objective; and be it further
102 RESOLVED, That the IAFF oppose the use of fire stations
103 as base stations for antennas and towers for the conduction
104 of cell phone transmissions until such installations are
105 proven not to be hazardous to the health of our members.
Submitted by: Local 3368, Carpinteria-Summerland, California

Cost Estimate: None

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: Adopt as Revised
CONVENTION ACTION: Adopted as Revised and Amended