

NCC battles proposal to limit wireless stations

BAD WAVES?: The WHO said there was no evidence to show base stations are dangerous, but a proposed amendment would limit them to three per building

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National Communications Commission (NCC) spokesperson Lee Ta-sung (李大嵩) said yesterday that the commission would continue communicating with lawmakers serving on the Transportation Committee about an amendment to the Telecommunication Act (電信法) that would limit buildings to housing three base stations for mobile phones.

The amendment to Article 32 of the act passed its first reading last month.

Changes also stipulate that state-owned land or property must be opened for the installation of base stations unless administrative authorities in charge of the properties can present proof that installation is infeasible.

The amendment further stipulates that no base stations can be installed in public or private senior high schools, junior high schools and primary schools.

The committee adopted most of the version proposed by Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) Legislator Ting Shou-chung (丁守中).

The amendment was proposed in light of the numerous protests launched against base installations. Some environmentalists and community residents are worried that electromagnetic waves emitted from base stations could cause cancer or harm their health.

A representative from the Department of Health (DOH) attended the Transportation Committee meeting last month. He cited a report from the WHO in 2006 that said there was no reliable evidence showing that radio waves emitted from base stations harm humans.

Lee said the NCC would continue to communicate with legislators on the details and encourage telecom operators to share use of base stations.

"[Sharing base stations] must be done in a way that sustains the nation's telecommunication industry," Lee said. Lee's comments were made in a press conference introducing a Web site designed by the Taiwan Telecommunication Industry Development Association to educate the public about electromagnetic waves.

The association was formed by major telecom operators, including Chunghwa Telecom (中華電信), Taiwan Mobile Co (台灣大哥大), Far EasTone Telecommunication (遠傳電信), Asia Pacific Telecom (亞太電信) and Vibo Telecom (威寶電信). The management of the companies takes turns chairing the association.

Association spokesperson Liu Li-ciou (劉莉秋) said it would be technically impossible to only have three base stations on each building.

"You have the 2G system, the 3G system, the low-power PHS system and WiMAX, and each technology is different from the other. Sharing base stations isn't like joining a three-legged race. You can't just tear one antenna from each system and tie them together," she said.



Taiwan : Base stations and microwave receivers installed on building roofs have aroused concern about the potential effect of electromagnetic waves on area residents