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1. Buce Johnson, President of RETA in Canada, announces a video on Canada's approach to health effects of powerlines, which can be seen at www.reta.can, saying "you have to admit that this is funny ... in a way".(news297.8-10)
2. The SAGE Group signed off its Second Interim Assessment on 27-4-10. There is no change to the position on science, and just a summary of the inconclusive discussions of the Science Forum. The main point of the report is to make practical recommendations on electricity distribution – that is for low- and intermediate-voltage lines and substations, and the final distribution circuits taking power to homes. The report recommends several precautionary measures: 13 existing measures; 7 new measures; 12 measures available to consumers; and 4 measures requiring further investigation.
3. The new Infrastructure Planning Commission (IPC) newsletter of May 2010 announces six more project applications received, including one powerline, a 132kV line in Banwen, Neath, Wales. This is a Western Power Distribution (WPD) overhead line on wood poles to connect the Maesgwyn windfarm to an existing 132kV line on steel pylons about 1km away.
4. Andrew Darke, of the PLACE campaign to bury the 400kV line in the Peak District National Park, will give a thirty minute talk beside his site-specific sculpture (on site until 7th July) situated in Regents Canal. This part of a 12-week show by Basement Arts Projects called "*Happy End / A Transmitter To the Ultimate Way of Contemporary Living*". www.basementartprojects.org/happyend
5. The Interphone Study Group finally published 18-5-10 its report on mobile phone use and brain cancer. This is a partly industry-funded initiative from IARC (International Agency for Research on Cancer), a WHO agency. The main constituent studies among the 13 participating countries were published separately over the last few years. I spent some time analysing them statistically last year.
6. The Interphone results show (1) repeated statistically significant results of reduced cancer incidence among people who ever use a mobile phone compared with a reference set of people who never used a mobile phone; (2) generally no significant increase among the (then) higher-use categories compared with never-use.; (3) some statistically significant increase in cancer in some special higher-use categories especially for cancer on the same side of the head as the phone. There were many common flaws in the Interphone protocol and methodology, and it was suspected that

the apparent “protective” association with light use compared with never-use was due to such flaws, not a real or causal protection.

7. However, some higher-use categories show significantly elevated cancer incidence relative to the lower-use categories. Crucially, there are very few data for heavy use by modern standards, or for long-term effects beyond 10 years. Taken together the results are indicative, with uncertainty, of a longer-term increase of brain cancer, which has latency of the order of 20 years.

8. Comparing mobile phones with cigarettes is not perfect. Present use of mobiles at 2010 seems to me at least comparable with the prevalence of smoking back in the 1950s, whereas the Interphone data were largely for exposure from the 1990s when people used mobiles much less. The Interphone results may be seen as like comparing people typically smoking one cigarette a day (half an hour a week) for about 10 years with non-smokers, and considering only effects within that short time span.

9. The long delay in publishing an overall review of the Interphone results is indicative of the greater importance attached to political impact (spin) than to scientific investigation. The conclusions of the review are also revealing in their omission of mention of the significant pseudo-protective findings and the strength of high-use to low-use comparisons.

10. A discussion of the results and the general story can be seen at http://www.powerwatch.org.uk/news/20100514_approach_to_interphone_results.asp and <http://www.microwavenews.com/Interphone.Main.html>.

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