



San Francisco SAR Labelling Requirement

The city of San Francisco has recently passed a new law requiring retailers to display the Specific Absorption Rate (SAR)¹ value for mobile phones alongside other product information in retail outlets.

SAR is a laboratory measurement designed to determine a phone's compliance with exposure limits before it is placed on the market. Although the SAR is determined at the highest certified power level under laboratory conditions, the actual SAR during normal operation can be well below this value. More importantly, variations in SAR do not mean there are variations in safety. While there may be differences in SAR levels between phone models, all mobile phones must meet national and international guidelines governing RF exposure.

MMF members have a long-standing practice of voluntarily making SAR information easily available to consumers around the world through user manuals and company websites. This practice has been well received by governments and consumers alike, and provides consumers with comprehensive information regarding the SAR value for their phones².

The San Francisco requirement risks misleading consumers by presenting SAR in isolation and without explanation. Thus consumers may be misled to believing that SAR is some form of relative safety indicator or that there is a need to be aware of this information from a product safety perspective – both of which are contrary to the conclusions reached by the 100-plus reviews, reports and government statements that have been published concerning the safety of mobile phones and wireless communications³, including the most recent statement by the World Health Organization⁴ (WHO).

The approach undertaken by MMF member companies provides consumers with access to far more substantial information about the mobile phones they use or may choose to buy, with the overriding assurance that all such products are designed, built and tested to meet science-based safety guidelines endorsed by the WHO.

The mobile telecommunications industry takes all questions regarding the safety of mobile phones seriously and the MMF was established to support ongoing scientific research in this area as well as to provide access to authoritative advice to consumers concerned by these issues. More information on SAR and related issues is available from the MMF's website at www.mmfai.org.

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¹ general information on SAR: <http://www.emfexplained.info/?ID=25584>, video on SAR measurement: <http://www.emfexplained.info/?ID=25593>

² <http://www.mmfai.org/public/sar.cfm?lang=eng>

³ <http://www.gsmworld.com/health/links/independent.shtml>

⁴ <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs193/en/>