

**Submission of the Consumer Council  
on Certification Scheme for Mobile Phones**

1. The Consumer Council supports the disclosure of Specific Absorption Rate (S.A.R.) values to help consumers make informed choices when purchasing mobile phones.

**2. Current Situation**

- 2.1. From 1 April 2003, the S.A.R. values of all mobile phones sold in Hong Kong have to comply with either one of the two commonly adopted international limits, notwithstanding whether the phones bear the authorised label issued by OFTA after it certifies mobile phones submitted to it for certification under the voluntary certification scheme.
- 2.2. There is no robust scientific information to suggest that exposure to radio-frequency radiation below the commonly adopted international limits will cause adverse health effects to the general population.
- 2.3. According to the results of a recent test conducted by consumer organisations on mobile phones, the highest S.A.R. value found is well within the limit.
- 2.4. Even so, some health conscious consumers prefer to buy mobile phones with comparatively lower S.A.R. values.
- 2.5. The S.A.R. values of the mobile phones certified under OFTA's voluntary scheme can be found in OFTA's website or can be enquired through OFTA's telephone hotline.

- 2.6. The Consumer Council has publicized OFTA's certification scheme through its monthly magazine "CHOICE" and listed the S.A.R. values of mobile phone models which have been certified.
- 2.7. For mobile phones produced by major manufacturers, this information can also be found in the websites of the respective manufacturers or in the user manuals of the products.
- 2.8. The Council also incorporates manufacturers' S.A.R. data into the specification table when mobile phone test reports are published in the Council's "CHOICE" magazine.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1. Considering the possible burden of a mandatory certification scheme on small and medium phone manufacturers and the current availability of S.A.R. data through various channels, the Consumer Council supports the continuation of OFTA's existing voluntary certification scheme on mobile phones.
- 3.2. However, consumers should have access to the S.A.R. values when considering purchasing a mobile phone.

- 3.3. To make the S.A.R. values more readily accessible to consumers, mobile phone manufacturers should be encouraged to display the information at the point of sale:
  - a. on promotional leaflets and catalogues available in stores;
  - b. on packaging of the mobile phones;
  - c. on the user instruction booklet; and
  - d. on labels affixed to mobile phones (particularly on demo units in stores)
- 3.4. There is a need to strengthen public awareness of and education on the interpretation of S.A.R. values. S.A.R. values measured using the two adopted measuring methods should not be directly compared with each other. Rather, consumers should be advised to compare the S.A.R. values against the recommended exposure limits.
- 3.5. It is recommended that the Administration should conduct random-checks on the actual S.A.R. values of mobile phones available on the market and consider measures to deter manufacturers from making inaccurate claims on S.A.R. values.