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## New Zealand and Australia - National Approaches and Solutions

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Australia and New Zealand are independent countries with their recent origins as Dominions of Great Britain. Australia is a Federated Commonwealth of States whereas New Zealand is a single Realm. Both use legal systems of British origin providing rights to workers in both common and statutory law.

In Australia there are Health and Safety laws at both Federal and State levels although practical workplace management and worker's compensation systems are generally devolved. Australia has a recent and authoritative RF Exposure Standard based on ICNIRP principles and is currently well advanced in preparing an equivalent more broadly based document for ELF. Expertise in NIR is well provided by the Commonwealth Radiation Laboratory (ARPANSA). The potential for common law action arising from work injury, decided at a civil standard, remains in Australia and the consequent pressure to mitigate risks augments statutory protection.

In New Zealand there is a comprehensive no-fault accident compensation system which prohibits common law action and provides universal cover for accidents of any origin. Health and Safety in the workplace is therefore largely assured by statutory means with strict liability and prosecutions requiring a high standard of proof. New Zealand has a relatively simple ICNIRP based RF Standard and uses the 1998 Guidelines at frequencies below 3kHz. Expertise in NIR is well provided by the Government Radiation Laboratory (NRL).

The standard of RF worker health protection in both countries is high and the legislative mechanisms and public resources are adequate. RF worker awareness of RF safety is generally reasonable although there is persistent and recurrent community concern periodically elevated by publicised incidents. Serious RF injuries are very rare but incidents are more common. Any matters of significant concern are generally assessed by one of several specialist occupational physicians associated with both the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) and the Australian Radiation Protection Society (ARPS) and are generally drawn to the attention of the relevant Government agencies.