

TETRA / Airwave Information Sheet

What is TETRA?

TETRA is a mobile radio technology that is being used for a proposed new police communications system, offered throughout the UK by the Home Office.

The system is called Airwave, and in England and Wales the network of masts is being installed by a part of mmO₂ plc, known as O₂ Airwave.

TETRA, like mobile phone systems, uses masts (or 'base stations') and handsets that look very like a chunky mobile phone. The masts usually have three poles, and each pole usually has four flattened loops. Some antennae are straight.

TETRA offers the user fairly secure communications, that, like all other digital radio technologies, delivers clear speech. It allows users with the radios the ability to talk in a group, and to talk to other users with similar digital systems elsewhere. It has a 'help' button that enables the user to call for assistance very quickly. Other facilities, such as looking up police computer information, whilst said to be possible in the future, will not be delivered as promised.

TETRA is a microwave system, like ordinary mobile phones, but the masts 'talk' to each other directly. Unlike mobile phone masts, they transmit constantly, 24 hours a day.

TETRA messages are sent in pulses or bursts that are transmitted at a frequency coinciding with the electrical frequency of the human brain in its waking state. In a report to the Government, this was declared unsafe, and to be avoided. There are many reasons why it is unsafe, but this message was ignored when the Home Office decided only to consider TETRA systems.

And TETRA is not the only available system!

the whole story: www.tetrawatch.net

email: watch@tetrawatch.net

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Why is TETRA a problem?

Interference

Wherever TETRA masts are erected, unless television reception is particularly strong, certain TV stations are subject to interference. TETRA also interferes with heart pacemakers, baby alarms, medical equipment (including first-aid heart defibrillators) and vehicle electronics.

Immediate health effects

Wherever TETRA masts are erected near people's homes, they cause sleep disorders, headaches, itchy skin, nosebleeds, migraines and increased epileptic episodes. Many police officers using the handsets have experienced the same effects.

Long-term health effects

Research about the effects of radio transmissions operating with signals at frequencies used by the human body suggest that they have a number of effects on us:

- harmful (eg cancer inducing)
- healing (eg bone healing)
- disorienting (eg as used in weapons of war)

TETRA masts and radios interfere with people's brains and biological systems.

Costs

As if that were not enough to worry about, TETRA is a very expensive system, and will be paid for year on year out of your Council Tax. Alternative European systems are cheaper.

TETRA is a bad choice by the Home Office
TETRA is poor value for our money

