

Federal government consultation yields surprising common ground: the proposed 5G mmWave auction is premature, at best

OTTAWA - November 8, 2022. Citizens advocating for safer wired telecommunications, and companies utilizing wireless frequencies seem to agree that an auction of millimetre wave (mmWave) radiofrequency spectrum in 2024 is premature at best. The surprising finding arises from a recent consultation held by Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED).

"At this time, the equipment ecosystem and business cases for mmWave spectrum are not mature enough to justify significant deployments in most locations," wrote Rogers Communications in their submission—a view that was echoed by many industry respondents. Québecor Média, one of the largest regional telecommunications providers stated, "holding this auction in 2024 is premature."

"Canada has no standards to protect the environment against wireless radiation, and no substantive research on mmWaves on which to base any guidelines whatsoever. This is just one of several reasons why ISED needs to re-think," said Meg Sears, Chair of Prevent Cancer Now. She pointed to the close to 300 individuals who submitted comments to the process, with 100% coming out against the auction of mmWave spectrum. A Joint Statement, signed by over 30 Canadian NGOs and experts, calls for a moratorium on the release of mmWave spectrum until long-term health and environmental impacts of this technology are better understood, and until Canada develops demonstrably safe human and environmental exposure limits, establishes transparent emissions monitoring and enforces industry compliance.

"With Canada hosting the UN Convention on Biodiversity COP 15, it is crucial that we get this right," stated Sears. "Experts are sounding alarms that wireless radiation harms wildlife and plants. As ambient radiation ticks past a quintillion [1,000,000,000,000,000,000] times historical levels, plummeting biodiversity is likely in part a consequence of escalating wireless radiation."

"Fibre is the answer," said Frank Clegg, CEO of Canadians for Safe Technology and former President of Microsoft Canada. "This auction proposal is all about competition for the wireless last mile," he said. "Wireless technologies consume 10 times more power than wired, and 5G will require far more base stations. Canadians deserve better. ISED must prioritize fibre to the premises – not wireless; it is the only way to close the digital divide, while protecting human health and our environment," he said.

Sears asks: "Industry is in no rush to deploy mmWaves and there are good reasons not to. Why not just forgo higher frequency auctions and focus on safer solutions?"

For an in-depth understanding of this issue, see
<https://preventcancernow.ca/common-ground-5g-mmwave/>

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CONTACT	Meg Sears, PhD	Prevent Cancer Now	613 297-6042
	April O'Donoghue	Canadians for Safe Technology	450-292-3456 x 228

[Prevent Cancer Now](#) is a Canadian not-for-profit volunteer group, including experts who advance science and policy to eliminate preventable contributors to cancer, through research, awareness, education and advocacy.

[Canadians For Safe Technology](#) is a not-for-profit, volunteer-based coalition of citizens and experts whose mission is to educate and inform Canadians about the dangers of exposure to unsafe levels of radiation from technology and to work with all levels of government to create healthier communities.