



## INTERDEPARTMENTAL GROUP ON HEALTH RISK FROM CHEMICALS

### STEERING COMMITTEE

#### *Thirteenth Meeting*

### **AGREED MINUTES**

Minutes of the 13<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> December 2009 at the Medical Research Council, Park Crescent, London, commencing at 12.30pm

Present:

Dr Diane Benford	FSA
Dr Ian Dewhurst*	HSE
Dr Paul Holley*	DH
Professor David Harper (Chair)	DH
Professor Michael Moore	NERC
Dr Ovnair Sepai*	HPA
Mr Henry Stemplewski	MHRA
Dr Ruth Bevan (Secretariat)	IEH, Cranfield University
Ms Elaine Jones (Secretariat)	IEH, Cranfield University
Professor Len Levy	IEH, Cranfield University
Professor Joe Lunec	Cranfield University

Apologies:	Ms Alison Gowers	EA
	Dr Carolina Mailhos	MRC

### **Action**

#### **1. Welcome**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all members to the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IGHRC Steering Committee (SC).

The Chair invited members to introduce themselves for the benefit of new committee members (\*) and thanked Professor Levy for continuing to chair the IGHRC EC Committee.

The Chair gave apologies for SC members who could not attend the meeting (see list above) and tabled thanks to Dr Mailhos who would replace Ms Heike Webber as the representative for MRC on the SC at future meetings.

#### **2. Minutes from the Previous Meeting and Matters Arising (IGHRC/SC/min/01/08)**

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted to be a true and accurate record of the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 2.2 All matters arising were covered by the Secretary's Report (Item 3).

**Action****3. Secretary's Report (IGHRC/SC/01/08)**

- 3.1 Dr Bevan updated the SC on progress / completion of actions from the last SC meeting in November 2008 (12<sup>th</sup> meeting). Dr Bevan noted that several actions were ongoing:
- 3.2 Action 3.2 – *'Secretariat to ensure offers of contributions are fully explored and that every activity is allocated a "champion" from an IGHR/ member organisation'*:  
Dr Bevan informed members that staff resources for each activity had been resolved, with each having been allocated a lead author/facilitator.
- 3.3 Action 3.3 – *'Secretariat to ensure long-term feedback mechanism is developed and to seek CPD accreditation if and when appropriate'*:  
Dr Bevan notified committee members that this action was ongoing. A feedback mechanism for IGHR/ activities in the form of either a paper questionnaire or a web posted format was under development. Dr Bevan informed members that the procedure to obtain CPD accreditation for IGHR/ courses was being investigated by the Secretariat. **Action ongoing – Seek CPD accreditation**
- 3.4 Action 4.2 – *'Secretariat to forward all concept notes to SC members for Phase 3 documents'*:  
Dr Bevan informed members that all Phase 3 documents had been allocated a champion. Concept notes had been developed for all documents with the exception of the 'Mapping Risk Management' document. Dr Bevan stated that Phase 3 documents would be covered in more detail in Agenda Item 6.
- 3.5 Action 4.3 – *'Secretariat to send newsletter notification to all IGHR/ members'*:  
Dr Bevan informed members that the draft IGHR/ Annual Newsletter had been sent to both Executive Committee (EC) and Steering Committee (SC) members for comment. As no comments had been received by the Secretariat, the newsletter would now be added to the IGHR/ website. Professor Harper suggested that the newsletter be sent to both EC and SC members for wider dissemination within departments and agencies. Dr Bevan stated that a copy of the newsletter would be included in the delegate pack for the forthcoming 'REACH workshop' to inform a wider audience of IGHR/ activities. **Secretariat to add IGHR/ Annual Newsletter to IGHR/ website.**
- 3.6 Action 4.4 – *'Secretariat to invite speaker from nanotoxicology to the next EC meeting'*:  
Dr Bevan reminded SC members that at each EC meeting the agenda included a standing item called 'watching brief', during which an expert is invited to talk on specific topics that are of interest to IGHR/ and which may feed into future workplans. Dr Bevan informed members that at the 31<sup>st</sup> EC meeting held in July 2009, Professor Bob Maynard (HPA) kindly gave an overview on Nanotoxicology and at the 32<sup>nd</sup> EC meeting in November 2009 Dr Ovnair Sepai (HPA) gave an overview on Human Biomonitoring and Biomarkers.
- 3.7 Action 5 – *'Secretariat to circulate document to SC members for sign off'*:

**Action**

Dr Bevan notified members the Phase 2 IGHRC document entitled '*Chemical Mixtures: A Framework for Assessing Risks to Human Health*' had been published and was available on the IGHRC website in electronic format. Dr Bevan stated that following discussions with Professor Harper it was decided that in order to try and keep printing costs of IGHRC documents as low as possible, an electronic copy would be made available on the web-site with printing of a limited number of hard copies available by request. Professor Lunec enquired whether there is a facility within the website to obtain information regarding the number of hits the IGHRC website was receiving. Dr Bevan stated that monthly web statistics were being closely monitored and collated. Professor Harper suggested that future IGHRC Secretary's reports could contain statistics on the IGHRC website for SC member information.

- 3.8 Action 6.1 – '*Secretariat circulate document to SC for sign off in Spring 2009*':

**Secretariat to circulate document to SC for sign off**

Dr Bevan informed members there had been a delay with the remaining Phase 2 document '*Current Exposure Modelling in UK Government Departments & Agencies*'. The draft document had been returned to contributing authors for final checking and updating and would be at the stage for technical editing in early 2010, with sign-off anticipated in Spring 2010.

- 3.9 Action 10.2 – '*SC Members to provide Devolved Administrations (DAs) to Secretariat for Secretariat to contact DAs*':

Dr Bevan advised members that due to a change in SC representative for the Department of Health (DH) this item was on going. Dr Bevan informed members that the Secretariat would contact Dr Paul Holley (new SC representative for DH) to obtain the IPCS mailing list

#### **4. Summary Report from Executive Committee Chair IGHRC/SC/02/09**

- 4.1 Professor Levy updated SC members on the '*Descriptive vs. Quantitative Risk Assessment of Genotoxic Carcinogens*' workshop that took place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2009. The workshop was attended by 24 delegates from government department/agencies and members of CoC. Professor Levy informed SC members that a short workshop report with speaker presentations was available on the IGHRC website and that following discussions at the workshop it had been agreed that, at present, there was no need for a new guidance document in this area.

- 4.2 Professor Levy also informed SC members that a round-table discussion on 'Current Awareness and Use of Predictive Approaches to Hazard Identification and Ranking' had taken place in September 2009. Dr Benford enquired as to the outcome of the discussions. Professor Levy stated that a list of lead contacts from each department/agency had now been drawn up. Dr Bevan informed members that this list had been passed to the lead author, Dr Howden, who was waiting to see how CRD were taking a similar initiative forward in order to avoid any overlap; Dr Howden anticipated that he would contact departments/agency representatives in early 2010.

**Action**

- 4.3 Professor Levy advised SC members that the document ‘*Chemical Mixtures: A framework for assessing risk to human health*’ had been disseminated fairly widely and had been very well received. Dr Philippa Edwards (HPA) had given a presentation on the document to an EU meeting on risk assessment of mixtures, and had received positive feedback. Professor Levy also stated that he had sent a copy of the document to number of risk assessment experts in the US.
- 4.4 Professor Levy stated that there are five Phase 3 reports currently in progress. Dr Benford commented that the ‘*Uncertainty in Risk Assessment*’ document seems to be duplicating what CoT are currently doing and that it may be beneficial to await the outcome from the CoT workshop, which is expected to be available in April/May 2010, before progressing the IGHRC document further. Professor Harper enquired whether the CoT workshop would be open to non-members which would make it possible for either Dr Bevan or another member of IGHRC to attend, therefore gaining an oversight of what is happening in both areas. Professor Levy notified members that Dr Gott is drafting a concept note for ‘*Guidance on Susceptible Groups*’. Mr Stemplewski commented that he had a meeting with Dr Slack discussing susceptible groups including children at different ages. Dr Bevan informed members that Dr Slack (IGHRC Secretariat) had written a meeting report which has been passed to Dr Gott.
- 4.5 Professor Levy notified members of the forthcoming IGHRC ‘Understanding REACH’ workshop which would give an overview of how REACH legislation works and the impact on regulatory areas for Government Departments/Agencies.
- 4.6 Professor Levy informed members that IGHRC website statistics are monitored on a monthly basis at Cranfield University and collated by the Secretariat. Professor Levy stated that links were available on the website to other committees including CoT and CoC. Dr Benford stated that she had reservations about whether a link should be available on the CoT website to the IGHRC website, as it might appear to conflict with CoT’s independent status.
- 4.7 Committee members were updated regarding ‘Watching Brief’ topics that had been covered in EC meetings and advised of planned topics for future meetings.
- 4.8 Professor Harper requested the Secretariat to pass on his thanks to EC members for the work that is currently taking place.

**Secretariat to enquire about attending COT workshops**

**5. Current Approaches to Exposure Modelling in UK Government Departments/Agencies**

- 5.1 This item was introduced by Dr Bevan who noted that the document would be technically edited by Spring 2010. Dr Bevan asked members for their thoughts on how the document should be signed off. Professor Harper enquired, subject to technical editing, when the document would be available to be signed off and placed on the IGHRC website. Dr

**Action**

Bevan advised that this should take place by April 2010. Professor Harper asked members how the process of sign off should be handled. Committee members were content for Professor Harper to sign off the document as Chair of the IGHRC SC Committee.

**6. Phase 3 courses, workshops and documents**

6.1 Dr Bevan updated members regarding the workshops that had taken place since the last SC meeting and indicated that any further planned workshops were linked to guidance documents in preparation.

**Secretariat to look into past IGHRC courses and contact departments to see which IGHRC course may want to be repeated.**

6.2 SC members were asked for suggested areas for future training courses/workshops. Dr Benford enquired if there were plans to repeat IGHRC courses that had been very successful in the past. Dr Bevan informed members that the 'Understanding Epidemiology' course which IGHRC had run in 2006 may be repeated as a non-IGHRC course at Cranfield University. Dr Bevan informed members that Cranfield University were also planning a Toxicology course to run in 2010 which had been discussed at a recent EC meeting. Members were asked to consider if the courses could run in conjunction with IGHRC. Professor Levy asked members whether IGHRC should run a basic Epidemiology course. Professor Harper suggested the Secretariat contact departments to ask which of the previous IGHRC courses should be repeated. Dr Benford suggested that the area of Systematic Review, which is increasingly required, may be an area to consider.

**Committee members to contact the Secretariat with suggested courses**

**7. Financial statement Oct 2008-Sept 2009 and funds available to September 2010**

7.1 Professor Lunec presented the financial statement to SC members, noting that the predicted expenditure of £110,000 had not been realised due to some activities being delayed. Moving towards Year 3 of the current work programme, actual expenditure had been nearer £48,000 leaving current unspent funds of £166,902. Professor Lunec informed members that further financial information was available on request. Professor Harper suggested that if unspent funds were still available one possible option was to extend Phase 3 by one year to enable current projects be completed.

**8. Brainstorming/suggested topics for Phase 4**

8.1 This item was introduced by Professor Levy, who asked for discussion of future topics were IGHRC to be extended to include a Phase 4, and opinions on whether a brainstorming discussion involving both SC & EC members would be required to identify a consensus for the need of further IGHRC activity. Mr Stemplewski stated that a future discussion session would encourage free flow of ideas which he thought would be of value. Dr Dewhurst suggested the future direction of IGHRC could be in the form of an annual seminar where departments/agencies could meet and discuss work that had been carried out over the year and issues arising from that; this slightly structured approach may be a more useful one for formulating future activities. Professor Harper recognised the need for further discussions regarding a possible Phase 4 programme and the form

**Secretariat to arrange a date/venue for further discussion**

**Action**

that this may take. Professor Lunec offered services of a 'facilitator' from Cranfield University. Professor Harper suggested that any 'brainstorming' meeting should be followed by a short Steering Committee meeting to discuss any funding issues.

**9. IPCS: role, relevance to UK government and relationship to the IGHRC**

9.1 Dr Dewhurst informed SC members that there was little scope for IPCS and IGHRC to work directly together. The next planned IPCS meeting would be taking place in March 2010.

**10. Any other business/date of next meeting**

10.1 The next SC meeting was proposed to take place November/December 2010.

10.2 The meeting closed at 16.15pm

**Secretariat to  
arrange the next SC  
meeting**