EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate C - Public Health and Risk Assessment
C7 - Risk assessment

INTER-COMMITTEE COORDINATION GROUP (ICCG)

19TH MEETING

28 November 2007

MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair of the ICCG welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from V. Rogiers.

2. APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The draft agenda was accepted with minor modifications.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE 18TH MEETING OF THE ICCG

The minutes were approved and are available at
http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_risk/committees/coordination/docs/coor_mi_018.pdf

5. PRESENTATION ON RA TRAINING AND TERMINOLOGY ON NON-FOOD RA (BY PROF A. HARDY AND DR A. HART)

Prof. T. Hardy and Dr. A. Hart of the Central Science Laboratory, York, UK, presented the results on two projects developed on behalf of DG SANCO which were each followed by a discussion:

1) An inventory of risk assessment training relevant to the non-food scientific committees

The objective of this exercise was to compile a list of formal and practical risk assessment (RA) training schemes and to identify sources of training available within Europe. This was achieved via extensive searches of websites, libraries, and other resources with the help of keywords (limited to English) followed by a questionnaire-based survey of relevant sources identified.

The final report would be circulated for information and published on the website. It was proposed to provide a possibility for feedback on additional courses offered to ensure a regular update of the list. The name of a network providing guidance to students in this field, which could serve as an additional source of information would be provided by a member.

2) A comparative review of risk terminology used by the non-food scientific committees
The aim of the activity was to undertake a comparative review of the terms and expressions used by different former and present non-food scientific committees in order to identify best practices in the expression of complex concepts used in RA. To do so, the concluding sections of 100 selected opinions were analyzed and the relevant terms and expressions used evaluated. Furthermore, recommendations for best practice to promote a harmonized phraseology were developed. The final report would be published.

This issue would be further discussed, e.g. in a specific workshop and at a meeting on terminology to be organized by the European Environmental Agency (EEA) in May 2008. The follow-up would be discussed at the next meeting of the ICCG.

6. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

6.1. ADMINISTRATIVE AND GENERAL MATTERS

The Chairman reported on the results of a meeting on the supply and training of risks assessors in the EU including ICCG-members and experts from national RA bodies, academia, scientific organisations, industry, and EU Agencies. As a follow up, a possible initiative addressed to academic institutions and authorities responsible for universities was foreseen with the aim to raise awareness on the need for training in toxicology and to address the demand for recognition and certification schemes. Furthermore, a promotion of RA training programmes by establishing a network of cooperation and opportunities for traineeship was considered. This would be further discussed at the next meeting.

Furthermore, the Chairman informed about the ongoing international dialogue on RA with US and Canadian governmental bodies in light of the aim to regularly conduct international events on RA. A first international conference was planned for November 2008.

6.2. INFORMATION FROM/TO CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS

for information/exchange/discussion, as appropriate

6.2.1. SCCP

The SCCP Chairman informed about the progress on the opinion of nanomaterials in cosmetics, which was foreseen for adoption in the next plenary meeting. A first meeting of the joint Working Group (WG) on the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) was scheduled for December 2007. A call for information and consultation on the working mandate would be published shortly.

6.2.2. SCHER

The SCHER Chairman informed about the first meetings of the WG on antimicrobial resistance and the joint WG on risk assessment methodologies and approaches for mutagenic and carcinogenic substances (GENTOX). A call for information and consultation on the working mandate on GENTOX would also be published shortly. He also reported on the agenda of the upcoming plenary meeting which would include, inter alia, discussion on 6 draft opinions under the regulation on existing substances, as well as the draft opinions on mercury in dental amalgam, on zinc and on the Spanish National Institute for Agriculture and Food Research and Technology (INIA) model on eutrophication risks.

Furthermore, a potentially emerging issue related to the potential health and environmental risks of high molecular weight persistent substances, using debromination processes in biota as a case study, was mentioned which would also be discussed in the plenary meeting.

6.2.3. SCENIHR

The SCENIHR Chairman informed about the progress on the ongoing work on personal music players, biocides, antimicrobial resistance, dental amalgam and alternative restoration materials as well as nanodefinitions. The agenda of the upcoming plenary meeting would furthermore include the outcome of the public consultations and related follow-up on the preliminary reports on smokeless tobacco products and DEHP (di(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate) in medical devices.

Regarding dental amalgam, it was suggested that the two opinions, prepared by SCHER and SCENIHR respectively, should jointly enter public consultation upon approval in the respective committees.

6.3. NEW REQUESTS TO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES

New mandates have been received by the SCCP on climbazole, on triclosan (general toxicity and bacterial resistance) and a follow-up question on toluene. For the SCHER, outstanding requests under the regulation on existing substances need to be planned considering the deadline of the current mandate of the scientific committees. Possible requests to the SCHER may be on a protocol study on methylenediphenyl diisocyanate (MDI) respiratory allergy and asthma, and on phthalates in school supplies. The Secretariat provided further information on the upcoming requests on electromagnetic fields (EMF) and on tobacco additives and addiction.

7. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER COMMUNITY BODIES

7.1. EFSA *(for information)*

The Secretariat provided feedback from the plenary meeting of the EFSA Scientific Committee in November where 2 opinions related to botanicals and Qualified Presumption of Safety (PPS) were adopted. Ongoing work concerned transparency, benchmark dose, and the mandate on potential risks of nanomaterials in food applications, for which SCENIHR members would be contacted.

7.2. FOLLOW-UP TO MEETING OF CHAIRS OF EU SCS AND PANELS

The Chairman presented the results of the 3rd Meeting of Chairs of the Community Scientific Committees and Panels, hosted by the ECDC in Stockholm (6-7 November 2007). In particular, additional meetings on emerging risks are foreseen for February and March, which would also involve the Joint Research Centre (JRC). Additional activities concern, inter alia, an international seminar on nanotechnologies to be organized in Brussels in October 2008, the international risk assessment conference mentioned above (see 6.1.), a meeting on terminology and weight of evidence (mentioned in point 5.) as well as a meeting on antimicrobial resistance to be convened by DG SANCO in January 2008.

7.3. OTHER

7.3.1. NANOTECHNOLOGIES WORKSHOP DIALOGUE

The Secretariat informed about the ongoing discussion of the results of the SANCO dialogue on nanotechnologies. Possible options would be the organization of an international stakeholder forum or the establishment of an Ad-Hoc Group on Nanotechnologies. A structured action plan on this topic is foreseen by SANCO, including a permanent dialogue group.

7.3.2. RISK ASSESSMENT DAYS 2007

The Chairman reported about activities as a follow up to the RA Days in 2007, including presentations to the committees of the European Parliament (EP) and the ongoing dialogue with the EP on future exchange and collaboration. A new event in June 2008 is foreseen.

7.3.3. PROGRESS WITH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

The Secretariat informed about the discussion in the SCENIHR on the planned publication of the EMF-Opinion and the approach proposed for future publications of other opinions.

8. COLLABORATION WITH JRC + RTD

The Secretariat informed about upcoming calls funded under the RTD Framework Programme, which would include research on EMF (e.g. childrens' use of mobile phones). Co-operation with the JRC was foreseen for activities on emerging risks, terminology, and alternative methods. It was proposed that the work on alternative methods prepared at the 2nd Meeting of Chairs could serve as a basis for future discussion.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The following meeting dates were agreed for 2008:
7 February, 4 June, 24 September, 15 December 2008.

The chairman stressed that opinions should only be adopted upon completion of final editing (except for minor editing) to allow immediate publication. If major editing was still needed, adoption by written procedure, or postponement to the next plenary meeting should be preferred.

Annex I: List of participants

Annex I

INTER COMMITTEE COORDINATION GROUP

19TH MEETING

28 November 2007
in Brussels

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairs and vice-Chairs of the Scientific Committees

Prof. J. BRIDGES, Dr. W. De JONG, Prof. H GREIM, Prof. P. HARTEMANN, Prof. B. JANSSON, Prof. T. SANNER, Dr. J. TARAZONA, Dr. I. WHITE.

Apologies: Prof. V. ROGIERS.

European Commission

SANCO C7 'RISK ASSESSMENT'

Mr. B. DELOGU (Chair), Mr. L. BONTOUX, Ms. K. BROMEN (SCENIHR Secretariat, ICCG Secretariat), Mr. T. DASKALEROS, Ms. D. DUDUTIENE, Ms. K. KILIAN (SCCP Secretariat), Ms. F. GARCIA LIZANA, Ms. M. MARINI, Mr. Ph. MARTIN, Mr. A. VAN ELST (SCCP Secretariat).