

Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances Minutes		ACTS/MINS/2/2011	
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Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances (ACTS)	
Minutes of the 99th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances held on 29 November 2011 at the Health and Safety Executive, Birmingham.	
<p>Present: Jane Willis - Chair (HSE) Ian Brown - Independent Robin Chapman – CBI Steve Francis - CBI Alastair Hay - TUC John Hopley – CBI (by telephone) Len Levy – Independent Susan Murray - TUC Doug Russell - TUC</p> <p>Apologies: Roger Alesbury - CBI Bud Hudspith – TUC Elspeth Metcalfe - Independent David Tolley - LA</p>	<p>Officials Present: Kären Clayton - Director, Long Latency Health Risks Division (LLHRD) Jenny Hagan – Secretariat Gareth Evans – Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL) Peter Griffin – Corporate Science, Engineering & Analysis Directorate (CSEAD) Rachael Beattie - Long Latency Health Risks Division (LLHRD) Peter Woolgar – Manufacturing Sector Jayne Wilder (as WATCH Secretariat) – Chemicals Regulation Directorate (CRD)</p>
<p>Presenters Item 3: Gareth Evans and Peter Woolgar. Item 4: Peter Griffin and Rachael Beattie. Items 5 & 6: Gareth Evans</p>	

Item	
1	Introductions and apologies
	<p>The Chair welcomed members to the 99th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances (ACTS) and thanked former members Rob Miguel and Ian Carney for their service and contributions to the work of the Committee.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed new members Steve Francis, Doug Russell and John Hopley and introduced Rachael Beattie, Peter Griffin, Peter Woolgar and Jayne Wilder from HSE.</p> <p>The Chair congratulated Roger Aylesbury for receiving the William Steiger Memorial award from the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists (ACGIH) for his work on occupational health and safety and in particular for his international training programme.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Roger Alesbury, David Tolley, Bud Hudspith and Elspeth Metcalfe.</p>
2	Agreement of minutes/matters arising
2.1	<p>The minutes of the 98th meeting were formally accepted. Members agreed that the minutes of the 99th meeting would be made available on the</p>

	HSE website after they had been cleared by members via correspondence and before formal agreement at the following meeting.
2.2	Update on matters arising (ACTS/4/2011) ACTS noted the progress made.
2.2(i)	Current Issues Members were reminded that the report from the Löfstedt review had been published on 28 th November 2011 and that the Government had published its response to the report. The Chair noted that the Löfstedt report highlighted the need for HSE to improve guidance aimed at helping SMEs to comply with the law.
2.2(ii)	<u>COSHH essentials</u> – Kären Clayton updated ACTS with the latest progress in this area. The Chair explained that following the closure of Infoline, HSE was in the process of a major overhaul of its guidance to assist SMEs. Members asked if Global Harmonisation Systems (GHS) (e.g. H statements etc) would be incorporated into COSHH essentials and if there would be harmonisation of COSHH essentials sheets with industry versions, where applicable. These points were both confirmed by HSE.
2.2(iii)	<u>Asbestos</u> – Kären Clayton updated ACTS with the latest developments in this area. A TUC member asked if take up of the free asbestos training would be measured. HSE confirmed this and stated that actions had been taken to promote the training, including through the trade press and on local radio. A TUC member asked how groups such as carpenters and plumbers would hear about the training. HSE stated that several approaches had been adopted, and additionally HSE has developed a Vocational Training Tool which is being rolled out nationwide by HSE FOD colleagues with the support of the Federation of Master Builders and the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. HSE Hidden Killer artwork has featured in the ScrewFix catalogue and been distributed via Jewsons and other suppliers. In relation to the new Asbestos Regulations, an independent member asked how the GP guidance and training for asbestos medicals would be delivered. HSE stated that this would be done in conjunction with the British Medical Association (BMA) and General Medical Council (GMC). The member stated that it would be appropriate for ACTS to be consulted on this. Action Point 1: Secretariat to send members the GP competencies for asbestos medicals to feedback on.
2.2(iv)	<u>Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (CMD)</u> – The Chair reminded members that they would receive regular batches of papers following Working Party on Chemical Meetings, noting that it is important to influence these meetings at an early stage, whenever possible. A CBI member asked if it would be acceptable to share these papers outside of the UK, within Europe. Action Point 2: Secretariat to check if CMD papers can be shared outside of UK [completed]
2.2(v)	<u>Dust</u> – Kären Clayton updated ACTS with progress in this area. ACTS noted and were pleased with developments regarding dust, in particular the decision to review and reinstate EH44. Members agreed that an improved evidence base was needed in order to inform the current situation on dust and supported the planned research proposal. Members also wanted ACTS to have an input into this proposal. The Chair noted that

ACTS members had a role in seeking external support for more research in this area. An independent member explained that he has contact with Professor Sir John Beddington, and suggested raising this with him when they next meet. ACTS asked for more information about the proposed research bid, HSE confirmed that the basis for the bid would be to use existing evidence and carry out a meta analysis of the available data rather than a root and branch review which could take many years.

A TUC member commented that there was emerging evidence that workers could be exposed to dust and fumes from aircraft landings. HSE agreed to pass this information on to the appropriate individuals in HSE. It was noted that that Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM) had been contacted by HSE regarding its incorrect use of Workplace Exposure Limit (WEL) terminology in its correspondence.

ACTS suggested that HSE should focus on what data were missing from the available evidence. Members again stated that HSE needed to consider how to raise the profile of dust and how to consider workers' needs and noted that simply reducing limits would not, by itself, help to get the message across; the important issue was reducing exposures.

HSE explained that more specific evidence was needed to change its current focus and that proportionate use of HSE resource was already targeted on high hazard respiratory disease areas. The Chair reminded members that HSE needs data and other evidence to feed into the European limit setting process and noted this information is not available at present.

Members requested that the redraft of the dust guidance, EH44, should be made available to ACTS for comment.

Action Point 3: Secretariat to send draft dust research proposal to ACTS members for comment at the appropriate time

Action Point 4: Members to take advantage of opportunities to seek external support for further research by HSE into dust

Action Point 5: Secretariat to raise the issues of the risks of dust and fumes to workers from aircraft landings with Chris Barringer in HSE [completed]

Action Point 6: Secretariat to send ACTS draft of EH44 for comment when available

2.2(vi)

WATCH feedback – Members of WATCH and ACTS reported outcomes from the last WATCH meeting.

Action Point 7: Len Levy to send German paper on shift work to Secretariat

Action Point 8: Following the Lesley Rushton presentation to the Board in December 2012, Secretariat to send ACTS the draft HSE Board paper, when available, for ACTS to provide their advice to the Board

Action Point 9: Secretariat to send ACTS further Lesley Rushton publications when available

Action Point 10: Secretariat to inform ACTS of the Board discussions following Lesley Rushton's presentation

2.2(vii)

2.2(viii)	<p><u>Strategic Research proposals (SRP)</u> - Kären Clayton updated ACTS with the latest developments in this area. The Chair invited feedback from ACTS members throughout the life of the projects.</p> <p><u>Reproductive hazards</u> – Gareth Evans updated ACTS with the latest progress in this area. The Chair invited feedback from ACTS members throughout the life of the projects. A member commented that HSE should consider what other Member States are doing in relation to information gathering. HSE responded that this question could be posed via KSS (an electronic Knowledge Sharing System operated by DG Employment) to National Labour Inspectors (NLIs) in other Member States.</p>
3	<p>Metal working fluids (MWF)</p> <p>In response to the earlier request by a member, Gareth Evans and Peter Woolgar gave a presentation detailing HSE and HSL research as well as work with the industry.</p> <p>There was a discussion following this presentation, key points raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE has published advice about good practice for managing MWFs on its website and supported production of web-based guidance by EEF (The Manufacturers' Organisation) and a DVD by the UK Lubricants Association Industry (UKLA) on good practice in managing MWFs. A large number of these DVDs have been distributed to the industry; • HSE is working with other stakeholders in industry to disseminate the findings of the research work; • The studies had demonstrated the need for good management of all types of MWFs to avoid overgrowth of micro-organisms and a build up of microbial toxins (such as endotoxin); this includes newer types of fluids designed to avoid the use of conventional biocides • Whether mists derived from machining with used MWFs contain sufficient bacterial endotoxin to harm health has not been established with certainty and the published research on this topic is currently being assessed and summarised • Investigations had shown that when compressed airlines are used to remove excess MWF, there is a risk of inhaling MWF fine mist particles but the likelihood of exposure was found to be greater for contamination of the arms and lower body of the operator. Applying basic principles of good control and hygiene should reduce these risks significantly; • Concern had been expressed about the potential for <i>Legionella pneumophila</i> to grow in water based MWFs. Following investigation in different types of water mix MWFs, results showed that <i>Legionella</i> and its protozoan host were unlikely to survive and proliferate in these MWFs; • New case definitions for extrinsic allergic alveolitis (EAA) caused by exposure to used MWFs had been developed; this research had also identified questions about symptoms that were found to positively predictive this disease outcome and were therefore of value as screening questions to investigate respiratory ill health amongst those exposed to used MWFs. <p>Action Point 11: Secretariat to forward the presentation to members [completed].</p>
4	<p>Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)</p> <p>In response to the earlier request of a member, Peter Griffin and Rachael Beattie gave a presentation detailing the background to the project and some details on outputs.</p> <p>There was a lengthy discussion following this presentation, key points raised were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HSE to consider if the RPE DVD could be made available on external websites; • No alternatives to beard shaving were given in the HSE guidance shown, although HSE clarified that this issue was addressed in the inspector training

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was concern that RPE appeared to be being given priority ahead of other control measures in the COSHH hierarchy; HSE clarified that the RPE project was part of a broader approach, including the LEV project and other sector based partnership initiatives to tackle dust and fumes; • It was noted that a female character needed better pictorial representation in the guidance; • The guidance on when a mask needs to be worn was considered to be aimed at too high a level and the language could be simplified; • The Cast Metal Federation has been involved in this project to test tools; • People are more likely to take notice of guidance if it has the HSE logo. <p>Action Point 12: Secretariat to forward the presentation to members [completed]</p> <p>Action Point 13: Secretariat to forward HSE Board papers to members from Dec 10 and Mar 11 to illustrate the bigger picture into which this work fits [completed].</p>
5	Flour dust
	<p>In response to a request by a member, Gareth Evans gave a presentation detailing the background to the project and some details on methodology.</p> <p>General points made in the discussion were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This issue was last discussed by ACTS and WATCH in 2006; • Exposure to flour dust is not isolated to bakeries, but also affects meat processing plants, pastry makers etc; • Tasks that could give rise to dust exposure also need to be considered in terms of higher repetition at peak times of day; • Some members were disappointed that the flour dust WEL remained at 10 mg m⁻³; • Behaviour change in this industry will take time; • HSE could consider alternative methods of communicating key messages, such as a Smartphone application; and • ACTS should consider the SWORD and THOR data in relation to flour dust, when available. <p>Action Point 14: Secretariat to forward the presentation to members. [completed]</p> <p>Action Point 15: Secretariat to forward SWORD and THOR data on flour dust to members, when available [completed].</p>
6	Enzymes
	<p>Gareth Evans gave a short presentation outlining an emerging area of biotechnology. Members will consider the work and let the Secretariat know if they have any ideas for future research.</p> <p>Action Point 16: Secretariat to forward the presentation to members. [completed]</p> <p>Action Point 17: Members to let Secretariat know if they have any ideas on the future direction of this work.</p>
7	AOB
	None

7	Next meeting
7.1	<p><u>Location and Date</u></p> <p>Members expressed a preference for alternative venues to Bootle.</p> <p>Oxford, Leeds, Manchester, West Bromwich and Daventry were all proposed as possibilities by members. HSE could offer HSL at Buxton, combining the meeting with a tour of the laboratories. The next meeting will be in May 2012 in Oxford (date to be confirmed).</p> <p>Action Point 18: Secretariat will check availabilities of meeting rooms in Oxford and confirm a date [completed].</p> <p>Action Point 19: Members to let Secretariat know details of free to hire meeting rooms in Leeds, West Bromwich and Daventry.</p>
7.2	<p><u>Future Agenda Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Scientific Committee for Occupational Exposure Limits (SCOEL) activities; and • Update on waste and recycling sector activities. <p>Action Point 20: Secretariat to speak to the HSE waste and recycling sector team to see if there are any areas of work that it would be useful for ACTS to discuss.</p>
8	Summary and Close
8.1	The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and participation and stated that feedback on the presentations was welcome