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Meeting Date: 13 March 2003

Type of Paper: Information

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMISSION

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES

Secretary's Report

ITEM	ACTION	BY	PROGRESS
2	First steps in progressing the work plan		
2.3	Several CBI representatives requested that a standard communications pack be developed to assist volunteers when visiting other committees.	ACTS Secretariat	A communications pack has been developed - refer ACTS/21/2003.
2.4	A LA Representative asked for information on the Local Authority Forum.	ACTS Secretariat	An information sheet on the Local Authority Forum was tabled before the end of the 13 March 2003 meeting.
2.4	A LA representative said that the HSE/Local Authority Enforcement Liaison Committee (HELA) should be added to the list of organisations to be visited.	ACTS Secretariat	HELA has been added to the list of organisations to be visited – refer ACTS/21/2003.
2.5	A LA representative suggested that ACTS consider contacting the Foods Standard Agency.	ACTS Secretariat	ACTS Secretariat has identified the independent committees and working groups that advise the Foods Standards Agency.
2.6	Members agreed that it was important to find out what other committees are doing on chemicals but believed that ACTS Secretariat was in the best position to do this.	ACTS Secretariat	ACTS Secretariat has contacted other HSC AC Secretariats to determine both what work they are currently doing in support of the Chemicals Strategy and possible future work.
2.7	13 members volunteered to act as champions and visit other committees.	ACTS members and ACTS Secretariat	ACTS Secretariat is in the process of contacting individual ACTS members and identifying appropriate committees for members to visit – refer Annex 2, ACTS/21/2003.
3	Stock take of ACTS' sub-groups and proposals for a new scientific and technical sub-committee		
3.9	A TUC representative saw no value in the proposal to have lay members on WATCH, and requested that the working group that is to be set-up to review ACTS' sub-committees consider this point.	Julia Soave	The new Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee will be a Scientific Advisory Committee. To comply with the Chief Scientific Adviser's Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (paras – 16, 18), it would benefit from having at least one lay person to maintain focus on practical outcomes during meetings. Lay persons have increasingly been found to add substantial value to Scientific Advisory Committees.

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			The new Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee will be Scientific Advisory Committee.
3.9	A TUC representative asked ACTS Secretariat to provide an organisational chart of HSE, particularly those elements relevant to ACTS.	ACTS Secretariat	Hard copies of organisational charts were distributed at the 2-week deadline (26 June 2003).
3.14	John Thompson asked for volunteers for the working group to looking ACTS' sub-committees. 7 members volunteered.	ACTS members and Julia Soave	The working group met for the first time on 29 May 2003. A further meeting is scheduled for 8 July 2003. John Thompson will update members at the 10 July ACTS meeting.
4	Proposals for European Week of Safety & Health 2003 on prevention of risks caused by dangerous substances		
4.2	The need for a toolkit to help LAs develop Euro Week initiatives was raised.	Julia Soave	The European Week Newsletter and supporting 'action pack' go some way to providing background information, guidance and publicity material. However, it is more targeted at employers rather than enforcers. HSE's Local Authority has already, through HELA, issued guidance to LAs (LAC42/7) which outlines the priorities for 2003-4. This promotes joint working with HSE, highlights European Week as an opportunity to promote e-COSHH Essentials and the new control guidance sheets/guidance, many of which are directly relevant (and some, specific) to the LA enforced sector.
6	The role of Occupational Exposure Limits (OELs) in setting performance standards for regulating health and safety in selected member states of the EU and the means and effectiveness of achieving compliance.		
6.1	Members requested that a full version of the report be made available to members that wanted one.	ACTS Secretariat	Full versions of the report were provided at the end of the 13 March 2003 meeting.

ACTS Secretariat