

Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances Minutes		ACTS/MIN/2/2010	
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Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances (ACTS)

Minutes of the 96th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances held on 12 July 2010 at the BIS Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET

Present

Jane Willis – Chair (HSE)
 Roger Alesbury - CBI
 Ian Carney - CBI
 Robin Chapman - CBI
 Alastair Hay - TUC
 Bud Hudspith - TUC
 Len Levy - Independent
 Susan Murray - TUC

Apologies

Ian Brown- Independent
 Elspeth Metcalfe - Independent
 Rob Miguel - TUC
 David Tolley - LGA

Officials Present

Steve Coldrick - Director, Long Latency Health Risk Division (LLHRD)
 Kären Clayton - Director of LLHRD from 26th July 2010
 Paul Buckley - HSE Statistician
 Gareth Evans - Observer, Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL)
 Jenny Hagan - Note taker
 Joyce Levy - Note taker
 Gill Smith - Secretariat

Presenters

Item 4: Ian Carney and Paul Buckley. Item 5: Steve Coldrick

Item	
1	Introductions and apologies
1.1	People
	The Chair welcomed members to the 96 th meeting of the Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances (ACTS) and introduced Kären Clayton, who will be taking over from Steve Coldrick on his retirement; Gareth Evans, an invited observer from the Health and Safety Laboratory; and Paul Buckley, HSE statistician, who was giving the presentation on the monitoring of work-related ill health. Apologies were received from Ian Brown, Elspeth Metcalfe, Rob Miguel and David Tolley.
1.2	Opening remarks
	The Chair opened by outlining the changes in ways of working under the new Government, including leaner regulation, 'guidance' being seen as a form of regulation, the impact of the cuts in public expenditure and Lord Young's review of the operation of health and safety laws.
2	Agreement of minutes/matters arising
2.1	The minutes of the 95 th meeting were formally accepted. Action point 3 on REACH remained outstanding due to its complexity. However a reply will be sent to members as soon as possible. Action Point 1: ACTS role in relation to REACH to be sent to members once it has been clarified

3 (i)	Reconstitution of ACTS
3(i).1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconstitution should be completed by the end of April 2011 and ACTS will continue to operate until then. • Once a job specification has been drawn-up, it will be copied to members for information. • Due to the freeze on HSE's Communications Budget, adverts for membership of ACTS will only appear on the internet and not in the press. • HSE will also write to tripartite representative bodies asking for nominations. • Clarification is being sought on how the appointment system should best operate. <p>Action Point 2: Secretariat will copy the ACTS job specification to members</p>
3(ii)	ACTS Workplan 2010-11
3(ii).1	<p>Members were generally content with the draft workplan but suggested a few amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add "reproductive health" to the item on diversity • Make it more explicit that dust is a common thread in HSE's health priorities as identified in the HSE Board paper 'Delivering for health – a future work plan in response to HSE's Healthier Workplaces Strategic Goal'. • Add a link to the electronic version of the Board paper. • Following a discussion on ACTS working groups and sub committees, it was decided that the Working Group on European Exposure Limits (WEELS), the European Risk Management Advisory Group (ERMAG) and the Standing Committee on Hazard Information and Packaging (SCHIP) were no longer required and the workplan should reflect this. • When considering the need for a working group, the workplan should include 'defining reporting relationships/responsibilities between ACTS and its working groups'. <p>The TU side asked about the status of the COSHH Essentials working group and whether any new COSHH Essential sheets had been commissioned. It was confirmed that apart from a suite of Offshore sheets which were in preparation, no new sheets have been commissioned.</p> <p>Action Point 3: Secretariat will amend the work plan to include the above suggestions Action Point 4: Secretariat will provide an update on COSHH Essentials before the next meeting</p>
4	Monitoring of work-related ill health
4.1	<p>Ian Carney gave a presentation on ICI's Health Assessment Performance Index. ICI wanted a simple, standardised system on reporting work-related illness so they could measure performance, assess progress against health objectives and allow benchmarking with other organisations. The Chair thanked Ian for his presentation.</p> <p>Paul Buckley gave an update on HSE's work on monitoring work-related ill health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examining what data is received in HSE and identifying any gaps – report due shortly • Commissioned work on finding out what data is available - report due shortly. Indications are there are 30-40 useful data sources • Contacting GPs (with individuals' consent) to find out if they agree with their patients self diagnosis – report due April 2011. It is hoped the report will show the degree of debilitation as this is a gap in knowledge. • University of Manchester is collecting data from THOR – report due end of August 2010. • TNO Netherlands are carrying out a literature review of studies on the reliability of self reports.

	<p>Action Point 5: Secretariat will send copies of the reports to members when they are published</p>
4.2	<p>The TUC mentioned it was difficult to find a breakdown by gender of the statistics on HSE's website.</p> <p>There were discussions about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of European statistics and the advantages of Germany's reporting system and • Whether the reporting of work-related ill health could be included in the proposed worker and employer surveys. It would be better to have a small, focused survey that could be extrapolated. <p>The Chair thanked Paul Buckley for his contribution. ACTS found the presentation and discussion of interest but could not identify how or where they could become involved at the moment.</p> <p>Action Point 6: Statistics branch will look into the presentation of statistics broken down by gender</p>
5	<p>Dust</p>
5.1	<p>Steve Coldrick presented this item, re-iterating the Chair's comments regarding the current political and economic climate. It was important that any further work on dust is not seen as a burden on business but was beneficial to its target group. The partnership teams are an example of current government thinking on 'big society – small government' and they aim to identify the key influencers in a specified area and use them to spread the message.</p> <p>HSE have commissioned Ipsos MORI (an independent market research company) to undertake work to determine the thoughts and behavioural attitudes of those working in the key industry sectors. A report will be available soon and will be sent to ACTS.</p> <p>During the discussions, members made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People were not aware that dust was bad • Simply highlighting numerical values would not deliver results. Although the economic restraints on a campaign were recognised, it would be a backwards step if economics were preventing HSE getting the message about dust across. • The current dust standards of 10/4 mg.m⁻³ were not preventative • Effects on lung function were seen in the data that had been considered by WATCH. • There was little evidence that current legislation was enforced. • There was an evidence base for a dust campaign. <p>ACTS members advised the HSE to have a campaign aimed at raising awareness of the effects from occupational exposure to dust.</p> <p>The Chair concluded that this had been a useful discussion and that ACTS members were unified in the need for a dust campaign.</p> <p>A paper will be put to the HSE Board to put forward the views from ACTS members.</p> <p>Action Point 7: Secretariat to send members the report from Ipsos MORI when it is available</p> <p>Action Point 8: Secretariat to invite comments from ACTS members on an HSE Board paper for the October 2010 Board meeting.</p>

6	Current issues and updates
6.1	<p>Indicative Occupational Exposure Limit Values Directive (2009/161/EU). (IOELV 3rd List) – Consultation Document</p> <p>The Consultative Document (CD) and HSE Board paper are being rewritten in line with the new government's stance on regulation. The revised CD will be sent to members and the Chair would welcome their comments.</p> <p>A TUC member informed ACTS that the Scientific Committee for Occupational Exposure Limits (SCOEL) had raised with the REACH secretariat the issue of setting Occupational Exposure Limits for substances that had good data, rather than having DNELS. SCOEL wished the REACH secretariat take this to Defra who have the policy lead.</p> <p>Action Point 9: Secretariat to send members the revised CD for comment</p>
6.2	<p>HSE Enforcement</p> <p>A copy of the HSE Board paper 'Review of Enforcement by FOD' was circulated for information at the meeting. The paper has several paragraphs relating to ill health issues and the way forward. Work has already started with asbestos.</p>
6.3	<p>Future papers/topics going to the HSE Board</p> <p>A paper on the waste industry is being put forward, including work-related ill health issues, and will be copied to members when it is available.</p> <p>The Chair will keep members informed of other relevant papers or topics as they arise.</p> <p>Action Point 10: Secretariat will copy the Board paper on waste to members</p>
7	Next meeting – 11.11.2010.
7.1	<p>Location</p> <p>It was agreed to hold the next meeting at HSE's headquarters in Bootle.</p>
7.2	<p>Agenda Items</p> <p><u>Information on REACH and ACTS role</u>: Robin Foster from International Chemicals Unit, and a member of the UK REACH Competent Authority will be invited to talk about REACH.</p> <p><u>Diversity</u>: Cath Cottam, External Diversity Team, to talk on HSE's Diversity Action Plan.</p> <p><u>Research</u>: update on current research connected with work-related ill health and discussion on the future direction of ill health research. Patrick McDonald, Chief Scientist, and Isla Fairhurst, Occupational Health and Safety Research Co-ordinator will be invited.</p>
8	Summary and Close
8.1	<p>Paper on Committees with related interests to ACTS</p> <p>Members identified two committees to add to the paper; the Veterinary Products Committee and the Food and Drink Committee.</p> <p>Action Point 11: Secretariat to add the two committees to the paper and recirculate it.</p>
8.2	The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.