

Open Government status: Fully open	Paper Number: ACTS/15/2004
	Meeting Date: 25 March 2004
	Type of Paper: Below the line
Exempt material: None	Paper File Reference: HD/342/1005/02

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON TOXIC SUBSTANCES

ANNUAL REPORT ON THE WORK OF COSHH ESSENTIALS WORKING GROUP

Issue

1. Annual report from the COSHH Essentials Working Group.

Timing

2. Routine.

Recommendation

3. That ACTS notes the work of the COSHH Essentials Working Group.

Background

4. This paper covers the work of the ACTS COSHH Essentials Working Group for 2003/04. Current membership is provided at Annex 1.

Argument

5. The working group met once, on 29 April 2003, but did further work by correspondence, signing off 70 control guidance sheets (CGSs) in May and July. These sheets formed phase 2 of COSHH Essentials, launched in October 2003. Annex 2 shows the areas covered by the 70 new sheets. Nearly half were developed in response to local authority requests for guidance similar to that already available for industrial processes. Thus the service and retail series of sheets cover common tasks involving chemicals in premises enforced by Environmental Health Officers.
6. The remainder fell into 2 groups: sheets contributing to HSC's strategy on occupational asthma (flour dust in craft bakeries and flour mills, use of isocyanates in motor vehicle repair, wood dust in woodworking and health surveillance); and sheets on process dusts and fumes not previously covered by COSHH Essentials (foundries and rubbermaking). Finally the working group cleared revised sheets giving advice on chemicals causing harm by skin and eye contact and one on design points for new LEV systems offers employers advice on items to cover in contracts to design, install and commission new local exhaust ventilation systems.

7. The working group was involved in peer reviewing the revised website www.coshh-essentials.org.uk on a testbed prior to launch of phase 2 on 8 October 2003. The main change to navigation of the site is a new direct advice option, which is organised by industry and then sub-sector. Where the health surveillance or LEV sheets are relevant these are offered automatically. Besides the website, a revised hard copy of COSHH Essentials (HSG193) is available from HSE Books to meet the needs of those who do not have access to the Internet.
8. The next meeting of the working group will take place in May 2004 when it will discuss the future development of COSHH Essentials.
9. ACTS will be interested to know that some 115,000 assessments have been completed using e-COSHH Essentials since the launch in April 2002 up until February 2004. COSHH Essentials also has a feedback account, from which we can see that there have been few problems with the revised site. Correspondents generally comment that it is a useful tool.

Action

10. ACTS members are invited to note the information provided in this paper.

Contact

Andrew Maxey (CFPD5)

Tel: 020 7717 6369

Email: andrew.maxey@hse.gsi.gov.uk

MEMBERSHIP OF COSHH ESSENTIALS WORKING GROUP

Chair: John Thompson (HSE)

Members: Steve Bailey (Ind)
Simon Clark (LA)
John Dobbie (CBI)
Alastair Hay (TUC)
Bud Hudspith (TUC)
Heather Jackson (CBI)
Chris Money (Ind)
Martin Newell (CBI)
David Tolley (LA)

Secretariat; Chris Turner (now replaced by Barbara Riley) and Andrew Maxey, CFPD5

HSE officials involved with the drafting, project management and marketing of COSHH Essentials also attend meetings.

COSHH Essentials Working Group: Papers considered in 2003/04

- 70 draft control guidance sheets (subsequently launched on Internet in October 2003 and in HSG193 in November 2003) covering the following topics:
 - Flour dust in craft bakeries and small flour mills
 - Foundry fume and dust
 - Isocyanates in motor vehicle repair
 - Rubber fume and dust
 - Service and retail (eg hairdressing)
 - Wood dust in woodworking
 - Health surveillance for occupational asthma sheet 402
 - Design points for new LEV systems
- CE 1/2003 Illustrations for phase 2 control guidance sheets
- Health and Safety Laboratory user consultations in bakeries, foundries, MVR, rubber and woodworking
- Technical Developments to COSHH Essentials – Selection of Personal Protective Equipment and First Aid Measures for Emergencies, report by A N I Garrod and R Rajan-Sithamparanadarajah (circulated May 2003)