

New and Emerging Issues 2006 Improvements in Exposure Data Assessments

ANNEX 1: Relevant extract of minutes of WATCH meeting October 2005

2.16	<p>Exposure data assessment</p> <p>A WATCH member commented that the quality of exposure data is a recurring problem, affecting the interpretation of epidemiological studies and the consequences of such interpretation for limit-setting processes, the assessment of priorities for control and the choice of risk management measures. He indicated that several options are available in order to address this problem. One might be to improve the EASE model for exposure prediction. Another member commented that this idea was explored last year at a meeting at the Institute of Occupational Medicine but at that time it appeared that no money was available to develop the ideas. An HSE member commented that in order to further develop EASE, which is an exposure prediction system designed for EU-wide use, a new database of exposure information including data from other European countries would be required to obtain a sufficiently large dataset to facilitate improving the system in a robust, reliable manner. He explored this idea further by suggesting that the way forward was firstly to collect all existing data into a central data set. Secondly, he felt that consideration should be given to how best to combine the real-life data, with data obtained from exposure models, in a system which could deliver the most reliable exposure assessments possible.</p>
2.17	<p>A WATCH member indicated that information about the context (i.e. under what conditions) the exposure data was collected was needed in order to be able to interpret exposure data properly. Two WATCH members indicated that there were a number of initiatives currently ongoing to try to address this issue in Europe, including within industry. An HSE member also indicated that HSE was currently looking into how HSE could improve its intelligence gathering by combining HSE-gathered exposure information with that obtained from external stakeholders. The Chairman then proposed that a short state-of-play paper should be prepared for the February 2006 WATCH meeting. WATCH members agreed to this approach.</p> <p>[ACTION: HSE to prepare a paper of the ongoing initiatives to improve exposure data assessments for the February 2006 WATCH meeting.]</p>