



**INTER-COMMITTEE CO-ORDINATION GROUP
(ICCG)**

**Meeting date: 8 June 2010, starting at 10:00
F101 room 02/169 (Rue Froissart 101, 2nd floor), Brussels**

DRAFT MINUTES

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Prof. Dr. H. Greim and Prof. Dr. I. White

2. ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA

The Agenda was approved without modifications except for some re-arrangement of the order of the items to accommodate some time constraints.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

No interest in the items of the agenda was declared.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved without modifications

5. INFORMATION EXCHANGE

5.1. Administrative, procedural, methodological and general matters, horizontal activities and issues.

(a) Follow-up of the survey, in particular the role of the secretariat

The issue was discussed in light of the survey results (17 positive, 10 neutral and 12 negative in respect for an increased role of the secretariat). The conclusion is that whenever possible the committees should tap into the specialist knowledge of the members of the secretariat (It was emphasized that the secretariat's scientific background is essential for the proper functioning of the committees). At the same time, there should be a clear distance between the secretariat's obligations and the independent work of the committees.

(b) Revised rules on indemnities regarding participation in meetings via audio link or electronic means

The issue and its favourable impact in terms of costs and environmental benefit was noted.

(c) General disclaimer for ethical issues on personal grounds

The disclaimer was approved as a general statement to be included in the web-based foreword to the description of the Committees. The text was modified as follows:

All opinions delivered by the Scientific Committees are without prejudice to personal ethical considerations of the experts.

(d) The Journal of the EC Scientific Committees and its Editorial Board

After considerable discussion, the ICCG endorsed the creation of an on-line Journal of the Scientific Committees of the European Commission (JSCEC). By definition, the opinions are peer-reviews of the scientific literature and therefore require increased visibility and recognition. In addition to the opinions, the expectation is that the Journal will also publish reports and discussion papers that are related to other activities of the Scientific Advisory Structure of the European Commission (e.g. the Nano Dialogue, the Risk Assessment Conference, etc.). The goal would be to attract contributions from other SCs across the EU.

It is foreseen that the Editorial Board of the JSCEC will initially consist of the members of the ICCG plus possibly a representative of the Commission.

The Editorial policy and the layout of the JSCEC is to be developed and circulated for input.

(e) Full bibliography for opinions

After some discussion, the ICCG endorsed the idea to prepare for each opinion, as a separate document, a list of all sources of information (cited and not cited in the opinion) that the committee examined during its deliberations.

(f) SCENIHR proposal: Definition of independence, categorization of interests and experts' involvement in Working Groups.

The purpose of the paper, proposed by the SCENIHR, is to outline the meaning of independence, to develop criteria for judging the interests declared, and to consider various possibilities of including scientists in the work of the SCs or allowing them to contribute to such work. In light of this document, the ICCG discussed the possible inclusion of experts with some clear conflict of interest who at the same time may offer unique expertise and wider knowledge of an issue. The ICCG felt that those exceptional cases would be covered by the language used in the document ("rare exceptions"). However, any such decision would have to be well justified and appropriate measures would have to be

taken. The document would be revised to reflect the discussion. Following conversion into the appropriate format it would be proposed to the SCs as an Annex to the current Rules of Procedures.

5.2. Information from/to Chairs on the Committees' activities

5.2.1. Joint activities

(a) TTC

The chair of the *WG* informed the members about the status of the joint opinion on TTC. The next meeting of this inter-committee *WG* is tomorrow and the hope is that there will be a good progress aiming at ironing out some differences between the SCs. The hope is to finalize the opinion soon. On the other hand, the Commission informed the *ICCG* that: (i) there is no rush and if more time is needed to reach a consensus, so be it; and that (ii) there is no specific agenda with this opinion other than a simple statement about the validity of TTC as an approach (and under what conditions). Therefore, a modulated language may be needed.

(b) Nanotechnologies

The chair of the *WG* on nanodefinitions informed the members about the status of the joint opinion on nanodefinitions. The scientific secretary of *SCCS* explained the current activities related to two nano-related opinions.

(c) Improvements in risk assessment

The chair of the *WG* outlined the progress of the work and the expected outcomes. The hope is to have something to report at the 2nd International Conference on Risk Assessment.

5.2.2. SCCS

(a) Summary of ongoing activities

The *SCCS* Vice-Chair and the secretary updated members on the ongoing activities.

5.2.3. SCHER

The *SCHER* Vice-Chair and the secretary updated members on the latest adopted opinions:

- (a) Depleted Uranium**
- (b) Fluoridation of Drinking Water**
- (c) Mercury in Energy-Saving Light Bulbs**
- (d) CMR in Toys**

5.2.4. SCENIHR

The SCENIHR secretary updated members on the ongoing work on the opinions (a) and (b).

(a) Tobacco Additives

(b) Artificial Light

(c) Weight of Evidence/Methodology Paper

The chair of the WG elaborated on the ongoing effort and the need to perhaps merge the uncertainty project with the weight-of-evidence paper. This document is to be endorsed by all SCs and distributed to the Canadians after its approval at the SCENIHR plenary on 28.06.2010.

(d) Nanodefinitions

The chair of the WG on nanodefinitions informed the members about the status of the joint opinion on nanodefinitions. The issue of criteria for a definition was discussed.

6. NEW REQUESTS

a) Mandate for new challenges for risk assessment (joint mandate, SCENIHR in the lead)

The mandate was discussed. Volunteers from all SCs will be needed. For that purpose, the mandate should be discussed at the upcoming plenaries of SCCS and SCHER.

b) Synthetic Biology (SCENIHR)

A possible mandate was discussed and the path to its development through inter-service consultation etc. was outlined.

c) Lead in Drinking Water (SCHER)

The SCHER secretary outlined the issue. A SCENIHR member volunteered to join the WG.

7. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER COMMUNITY BODIES

SCENIHR and SCHER: Guidance document on antimicrobials used in food decontamination (EFSA self-tasking mandate)

The SCENIHR-Secretariat informed the ICCG about the final discussion at the plenary meeting on 17 March.

Establishment of guidelines for collaboration

A document, presenting tentative rules for collaboration between EU-bodies involved in Risk Assessment was discussed. The ICCG endorsed it as a starting point towards the development of future rules on collaboration.

In addition, the role of the Chairs meeting was explained. The Commission emphasized the need for input on part of the ICCG to: (i) identify the common issues that may be of interest to the non-food SCs and the EU agencies; (ii) determine the ways for best communication with the EU agencies; and (iii) reach an agreement about the expected outcomes of such cooperation.

The need to conduct two separate meetings - between the Chairs and between the secretariats - was also emphasized.

8. THE EU AND INTERNATIONAL RISK ASSESSMENT DIALOGUES

Planning and organisation of the 2nd International Risk Assessment Conference, and related activities (*results of the Ottawa meeting*).

The participants in the Ottawa meeting briefed the ICCG about the major outcomes. The importance of face-to-face meetings was reiterated. The 2nd International Risk Assessment Conference will be held on 25 - 28 January 2011.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Information on Synthetic Biology workshop: Brussels, 18-19 March 2010 (*report of the outcomes*)

The secretary of the Workshop reported its results.

The Chemicals Mixtures mandate was discussed and commented. It will be a joint mandate for all three SCs with SCHER in the lead.

The upcoming meeting of the Computational Toxicology was discussed and the need for dialogue between the three groups pointed out (Takis, which three groups?)

The next meeting will be held on 25 November 2010.