



The European Commission Scientific Committees

Tasks, principles and mission statement

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The EC Scientific advice structure

- Dates back to 1997 when the system of scientific advice was revamped following the BSE crisis
- Latest structure established by Commission Decision 2008/721/EC
- Three Scientific Committees
- Pool of advisors
- Database of experts

Objectives and principles

- To support risk management decisions across a variety of policies by identifying and assessing risks to human health and the environment
- EU policy is to be based on best available scientific knowledge
- The scientific advice structure is based on principles of:
 - **Separation between risk assessment and risk management**
 - **Independence, Excellence and Transparency**



The Scientific Committees

- 3 Committees (SCENIHR, SCHER, SCCS) established for a three-year term
- Mandatory consultation of a scientific committee foreseen by the Cosmetics Directive, Toys Directive, and the General Product Safety Directive
- Committees are consulted on the basis of mandates by the Commission
- 'Customers' are policy and research DGs (SANCO, ENTR, ENV, ENER, RTD, JRC)

Composition of Scientific Committees

- Scientists from academia, research or other scientific bodies, appointed by the Commission in their own personal capacity, following an open call.
- Criteria: competence and independence. As far as possible, geographical and gender balance.
- May associate up to 5 Advisors from the Pool
- External experts may be invited to WG



Pool of Advisors

- Closed list of 189 scientists appointed by Commission Decision for a period of 5 years (set to expire Feb. 2014)
- Qualifications comparable to SC members
- Scientists from academia, research or other scientific bodies, appointed by the Commission in their own personal capacity, following an open call
- Criteria: Competence and independence. As far as possible, geographical and gender balance
- Can be associated in the work of the scientific Committees (up to 5 at a time) on the basis of specific issues, needs, and expertise
- Associated Advisors have full membership rights for the duration of their engagement in the SC

Database of experts

- Online database open to all potential interested scientists
- Any scientist can apply at any time
- Serves to identify experts on particular issues/subjects who can participate in SC Working Groups
- No limitations or requirements for experience all profiles can fit (e.g. younger specialists, highly specialised experts, rare or particular areas of expertise)

SCENIHR: Mandate

The **S**cientific **C**ommittee on **E**merging or **N**ewly **I**dentified **H**ealth **R**isks

Advice on:

- Emerging risks
- Newly identified risks
- Broad, complex or multidisciplinary issues requiring comprehensive assessment
- Issues not covered by other bodies

SCHER: Mandate

The Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks

Advice on risks of:

- Toxicity and eco-toxicity of chemical, biochemical and biological products
- Chemical substances
- Chemicals in toys
- Waste
- Environmental contaminants
- Drinking water quality
- Indoor and ambient air quality
- Endocrine disruptors

SCCS: Mandate

The **S**cientific **C**ommittee on **C**onsumer **S**afety

Advice on risks related to consumer products (non-food)
mostly on Cosmetics

Less so on:

- Toys
- Textiles, Clothing
- Household products
- Non-chemical risks (mechanical, physical, biological)
- And consumer services (for example, tattooing, tanning devices)

Consultation of SCCS mandatory under Cosmetics Regulation

Duties of members

Declaration of commitment, declaration of interests, declaration of confidentiality

- act independently in the public interest
- make complete declarations of any direct or indirect interests that might be considered prejudicial to independence
- attend meetings regularly and contribute actively to the work
- comply with Scientific Committees' rules
- respect copyrights

Communicating science

- Communication adapted to audience
- Two ways process
- Balance between transparency/completeness and readability
- Expression of risks, uncertainty, confidence: qualitative or quantitative approach
- Pollution of communication by “junk” science
- Perception of risk
- Acceptability of risk – level
- Notion of zero risk
- Voluntary versus non-voluntary risks



European
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THANK YOU

*Health and
Consumers*