Committee on CARCINOGENICITY

CC/MIN/2015/02

COMMITTEE ON CARCINOGENICITY OF CHEMICALS IN FOOD, CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Minutes of the meeting held at 10.30am on Thursday 9th July 2015 at Department of Health, Skipton House, 80 London Road, Elephant and Castle, London, SE1 6LH.

Present

Chair:	Professor D Phillips	
Members:	Mr D Bodey	
	Dr G Clare	
	Dr J Doe	
	Dr P Greaves	
	Professor R Kemp	
	Dr D Lovell	
	Professor J Peto	
	Dr C Powell	
	Dr L Rushton	
Secretariat:	Ms F Pollitt	PHE Scientific Secretary
	Dr D Gott	FSA
	Miss B Gadeberg	PHE
	Dr K Burnett	PHE Toxicology Unit, Imperial College
	Dr K Vassaux	PHE Toxicology Unit, Imperial College
Assessors:	Dr H McGarry	HSE (by teleconference)
Officials:	Dr O Sepai	PHE

ITEM 1: Apologies for absence and announcements

1. The Chair welcomed the Members and Assessors to the meeting. Apologies were received from Professors N Pearce, H Wallace and K Warnakulasuriya, Dr R Waring and Dr D Benford (FSA Scientific Secretary) who was represented by Dr D Gott. Apologies were also received from assessors Professor T Gant (PHE), Drs C Ramsay (Health Protection Scotland), M Roberts (Defra) and H Stemplewski (MHRA), and Messrs S Fletcher (VMD) and I Martin (EA).

2. The Committee was informed that Professor Neil Pearce had been appointed to the Committee after the last meeting. His areas of expertise are epidemiology and biostatistics. He was unable to make the meeting and had sent apologies.

3. Members were reminded to declare any interests they may have in an item before its discussion.

ITEM 2: Minutes of meeting held on 23rd April 2015 (CC/MIN/2015/01)

4. Minor amendments were made to the minutes in paragraphs 10, 14, 15, 17 and 36. In addition, a post meeting note was added after paragraph 10.

ITEM 3: Matters arising

Item 5: Request from ACNFP for advice on the novel food ingredient cycloastragenol (CC/2015/01)

5. Following the COC consideration of cycloastragenol in April, the genotoxicity data were referred to the COM for review in June. Overall, the COM considered that the data package provided was as expected and did not raise concerns for genotoxicity. However, the mode of action was interesting and it was not clear how the tumours observed in the animal study had arisen.

6. The COM had recommended that an expert on telomeres be contacted to review the data. They had commented that the activity of cycloastragenol lifts an important block preventing cell division, which is of concern if it occurs in pre-malignant cells.

7. The finalised minutes of the COC and COM meetings would be sent on to the ACNFP, along with a paragraph on the expert opinion once this has been reviewed by COC and COM. In the meantime a verbal update on the COC and COM meetings was given at the last ACNFP meeting.

ITEM 4: Alcohol and Cancer risk

8. Dr Clare declared an interest as a shareholder in Diageo. This was considered a personal, non-specific interest. It was agreed that Dr Clare would not participate in the discussion or conclusions of this topic.

9. Dr Rushton declared that she had helped with the drafts of a number of these papers. It was agreed that this was not a conflict and Dr Rushton could participate fully in the discussion.

Item 4.1: Alcohol and cancer risk: Commissioned report on mortality and morbidity risks to CMOs' review of alcohol guidelines (Reserved business) (CC/2015/09)

10. This item discussed prepublication data and was held in reserved session. The minutes will be made public when the results are published.

Item 4.2: Summary of epidemiology studies investigating interactive effects of alcohol intake and genetic susceptibility factors on cancer risk (CC/2015/10)

17. This paper presented a collation of the data on alcohol intake and genetic susceptibility factors previously considered by the Committee separately for each cancer type.

18. Overall, the Committee considered that the data did not indicate that there was any identifiable subgroup which was particularly susceptible to the effects of alcohol. Likewise the data did not provide any insights into the mode of action of alcohol. The data for each polymorphism did not show consistently increased or decreased risk across cancer sites.

19. It was agreed that any conclusions on polymorphisms from the COM statement on alcohol would need to feed in to the summary in the draft COC statement on alcohol, and reference should also be made to the latest IARC statement on the effect of polymorphisms on alcohol and cancer risk.

Item 4.3: First draft statement on consumption of alcoholic beverages and risk of cancer – consideration of significance to public health (CC/2015/11)

20. This paper presented a first draft of the COC statement on alcohol and cancer. A few of the sections were yet to be drafted but would be circulated for comment by correspondence at a later date. It was noted that, to be timely with the CMOs' work, the next draft for the November 2015 meeting would likely be the final draft of the statement and the aim was for publication at the end of the year. It was likely that the Committee would be contacted outside of the meetings for further comment and contribution.

21. It was agreed that the overall aim of the document should be to make clear that the risk of cancer increases with any consumption of alcohol and, where possible, for each site assessed to give a view as to what doses lead to an increased risk and what the shape of the dose response curve is. With the available work on burden as well, it was hoped that it may be feasible to make some comment on the burden of alcohol on cancer.

22. There was discussion of whether and how to define categories of drinking, but this would likely require some further work looking back through the tables of the previous papers looking at each cancer site. It was also important to highlight consistencies and differences in the data, and how these compared to the last IARC review of alcohol and cancer.

23. A number of suggestions were made for amendment to the text for the next draft. It was also agreed that a Lay Summary should be prepared and possibly an abstract of the work.

ITEM 5: Guidance Statement G07- Alternatives to the 2-year Bioassay – Introduction, parts a and b – second draft (CC/2015/13)

24. This paper presented an updated draft of the Guidance Statement and a further amended copy had been circulated before the meeting containing comments from a Member.

25. The Committee discussed the benefits and issues of the RasH2 and p53 transgenic animal models. It was noted that the RasH2 model was most commonly used, partly because there were concerns over regulatory acceptance of the p53 model in the US in particular. While these studies were unlikely to replace the 2 year rodent bioassay completely, they can help avoid some of the confounding factors with older animals and can replace a carcinogenicity study in a second species.

ITEM 6: Assessing the risks of acute and short-term exposure to carcinogens (CC/2015/12)

26. This paper presented developments in approaches that could be used to assess risk following acute or short-term exposure to carcinogens, to aid preparation of a COC Guidance Statement on the topic.

27. There had been concern previously that suggested approaches incorporated quantitative assessment of animal carcinogenicity data, which is not endorsed by the COC. More recently, papers have been published using similar principles but based on a Margin of Exposure (MOE) approach. The approach mirrored the approach used by some agencies where the Threshold of Toxicological Concern (TTC) is staged depending on the duration of exposure to genotoxic compounds.

28. Caution was expressed over the assumption that non-genotoxic compounds were of less concern with short-term exposure. However, overall it was agreed that this paper could form the basis of a Guidance Statement.

ITEM 7: Any other business

29. Members were informed that the COC statement on Vitamin E and prostate cancer risk had been cleared by Chair's action and would be published on the website in due course.

ITEM 8: Date of next meeting

30. The date of the next meeting is 12th November 2015.