



# Home Office

Lord Henley

MINISTER OF STATE FOR CRIME PREVENTION AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR REDUCTION

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[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

Professor Les Iversen  
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5<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Further to our discussion today, I am writing to confirm my formal request to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs for advice on methoxetamine, pursuant to section 2A of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

As you know, methoxetamine is chemically related to Class C ketamine, which is a dissociative anaesthetic, but is not itself a controlled drug under the 1971 Act. As an analogue of ketamine, the Government's concern is that it shares at least some of the effects and risks of ketamine. We have identified methoxetamine in the UK through seizures and under the Home Office Forensic Early Warning System. Indications are that it is growing in popularity and availability in the UK through internet websites where it is often sold as a "safe alternative" to ketamine.

It is on this basis that I ask the ACMD to consider such evidence that is available and provide initial advice to inform whether the harms (real or potential) of methoxetamine are such as to warrant its temporary control under the 1971 Act - as a temporary class drug - for a period of up to 12 months, pending further and full advice from the ACMD. Your advice will also inform our public health messages.

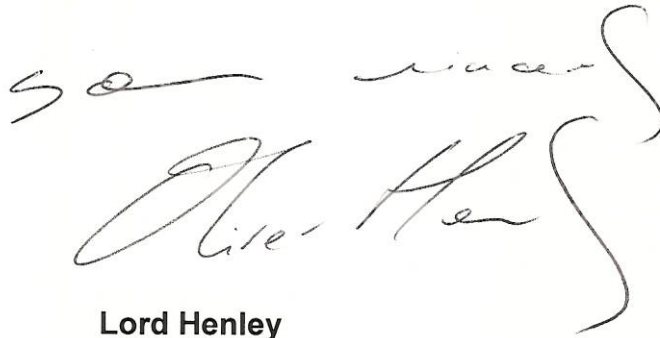
The Joint Working Protocol published last year sets out the consultation and advice process for invoking temporary class drug orders between the Government and the ACMD. In keeping with its terms, we agreed that –

- advice will be provided by Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April at the latest.

- my officials will work with you to ensure that the ACMD has all the latest information available from our early warning systems on drugs and from other government departments.

The Government's drug information service FRANK already provides information about the currently known risks and effects of methoxetamine. It is important that the Government makes its increasing concerns about methoxetamine and the actions that have been set in train today known to the public at the earliest opportunity. For this reason, this referral to ACMD will be put in the public domain and this letter published on the Home Office website.

Should any issues arise from the agreed terms of this referral, please contact my Private Office to arrange a discussion at the earliest opportunity.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lord Henley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

**Lord Henley**