

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

Horizon scanning update – March 2026

1. This paper presents the standing update on the table of topics raised under horizon scanning since 2024. Additionally other materials of interest flagged to or identified by the Secretariat are described.
2. A presentation will also be provided at this meeting to outline the approach being developed by Bibra supporting the Secretariat for horizon scanning to continue the standing update presented at each COC meeting.

Questions for the Committee

3. Members are invited to consider the draft table and other topics, and:
 - i. indicate whether there are any other topics that the Committee should be aware of; and
 - ii. note whether any topics should be prioritised at this time.

**Secretariat
March 2026**

This is a background paper for discussion.
It does not reflect the views of the Committee and should not be cited.

COC watching brief of horizon scanning topics

Topics for progression

Meeting raised	Topic	Status
November 2024	Chemicals in Hair relaxers	July 2025: Secretariat discussing with OPSS potential consideration November 2025: Secretariat is having ongoing discussion with OPSS; there is interest in progressing the topic, however the scope requires consideration before a request is made of COC. March 2026: OPSS have provided an update for the COC, available in Annex A.
March 2025	Progression of “A case for change: the challenge to develop a better approach to assessing risk of cancer caused by chemicals”	July 2025: Document published. November 2025: Separate discussion paper (CC/2025/09) to review submissions received to date. Need to further consider dissemination and discuss with the smaller group of Members identified in July 2025. March 2026: Separate discussion paper (CC/2026/01) to progress this.

Topics to be kept under a watching brief or not yet prioritised

Meeting raised	Topic	Status
November 2024	Chemicals in air fresheners used in the home	November 2024: Not prioritised to date. Secretariat notes that if prioritised, consideration if required on whether this should sit with COC or other Committees.
November 2024	Risk of cancer from the regular use of mouth wash	November 2024: Not assessed further at this time July 2025: Secretariat note – any consideration would require discussion with OPSS.

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Meeting raised	Topic	Status
November 2024	AI	July 2025: COT is holding a workshop on AI in risk assessment alongside the October 2025 meeting. November 2025: COT workshop held in October – background paper provided to COT for discussion is attached at Annex A of this paper (to note this is reserved as it contains pre-publication material); workshop report to follow in due course.
November 2024	PFAS	July 2025: COT subgroup undertaking review of PFAS; Secretariat will explore involvement of COC when relevant. March 2026: Members may wish to be aware of the recent publication of the Government PFAS plan .
March 2025	IARC 5 year strategy	July 2025: Secretariat noted IARC have a medium-term strategy document. The current version covers 2021-2025, with a 2026-2030 in development. With respect to the IARC Monographs an Advisory Group report is available recommending priorities for 2025-2029.
November 2025	Ultra-processed food	March 2026: A separate paper for information (CC/2026/03) is presented on SACN's work on ultra-processed food to determine any next steps for this.

Topics not considered a priority or outside COC's remit

Meeting raised	Topic	Status
November 2024	The risk evaluation for tris(2-chloroethyl) phosphate (TCEP)	November 2024: Not considered a priority and Secretariat notes this is likely to be within COT's remit if it were to be progressed.
November 2024	A reconsideration of car flame retardants	November 2024: Not considered a priority and Secretariat notes this is likely to be within COT's remit if it were to be progressed.

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Meeting raised	Topic	Status
November 2024	Human risk of exposure to microplastics and microfibres	July 2025: COT has previously published an overarching statement and two substatements on microplastics November 2025: COMEAP has recently published its statement on inhaled nano- and microplastic air pollution . Information on the SETE assessments undertaken to sit alongside this are provided below.

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Other information and topics for COCs awareness

4. At the July 2025 meeting, the COC had a presentation on the COM QSAR statement, and agreed to take forward a consideration of QSARs in the context of carcinogenicity and where they would complement other assessments. This could be added to the list of topics for progression, if Members agree.
5. COC Members will wish to be aware of a recent COT Science and Research Special Topics Report on [Benchmark dose modelling in a UK chemical risk assessment – framework](#). This report is provided in Annex B for ease.

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CC/2026/02 Annex A

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PRODUCTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**Horizon scanning update – March 2026 (Reserved
business)**

Information paper: OPSS update on chemical hair straighteners

This paper is attached for Members; it is provided to the Committee in confidence
and is therefore not provided on the COC website.

**Secretariat
March 2026**