



BOHS COMMENTS ON THE FRAMEWORK FOR BODIES ESTABLISHED UNDER THE GOVERNANCE OF THE HSE BOARD – HSE/08/06

The British Occupational Hygiene Society (BOHS) is a learned society with the objects of improving scientific knowledge and practice in the prevention of ill health from occupational and environmental hazards. Its members are drawn from a wide range of multidisciplinary specialities and include leading academics and practitioners in the field. Our organisation includes the Faculty of Occupational Hygiene, which provides examinations and qualifications in occupational hygiene. Our publication, the *Annals of Occupational Hygiene* is acknowledged as one of the leading global scientific journals in the field.

General comments

BOHS supports this review and the proposals made. In particular, the proposal to put Scientific Advisory Committees under independent chair-persons is welcomed and will bring HSE into line with other government agencies/departments.

In the consultation paper proposing the merger of HSC and HSE, the importance of involving external stakeholders *including professional bodies* was stated. BOHS supports this and would welcome opportunities to assist HSE in identifying the key individuals who could contribute to appropriate committees.

Toxic substances

The key HSE committees dealing with toxic substances are the Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances (ACTS) and the Working Group on Action to Control Chemicals (WATCH). The structure and operation of the WATCH Committee is already broadly in line with the intent of the proposals for Category 1 Scientific Advisory Committees. WATCH is a body that has credibility for its scientific expertise and objectivity.

The current membership of ACTS and WATCH includes a number of BOHS members, including members of the Faculty of Occupational Hygiene. BOHS supports continuation of WATCH or a body based on the same principles and structure. In addition BOHS supports the continuation of a tripartite committee on toxic substances, similar to the current ACTS, to consider issues of practicability of advice on chemicals and to complement the role of WATCH.

BOHS supports the ongoing work of these Committees and welcomes the recognition of our members' expertise when selecting individuals to serve on them. BOHS would be pleased to continue to encourage our members to contribute to these committees or their successors.

Disclaimer

The views in the document provide a considered opinion of the issues as they relate to the objects of the Society to improve scientific knowledge and practice in the prevention of ill health from occupational and environmental hazards. They may not necessarily coincide with the views of individual members or their employing organisations. The document is not intended to convey any legal interpretation.