MICHIGAN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE BOARD

CHILDREN'S STANDARDS INVESTIGATION PANEL
MEETING SUMMARY
WEDNESDAY JUNE 16, 1999
COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT
7799 CONFERENCE CENTER DRIVE
BRIGHTON, MICHIGAN

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT
Dr. John A. Gracki, Chair
Dr. George T. Wolff
Dr. Michael DeVito
Dr. Michael A. Kamrin
Mr. Keith G. Harrison, Executive Director

MDEQ/OSEP SUPPORT STAFF PRESENT
Mr. Jesse Harrold, Environmental Officer

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. John A. Gracki, Chair, called the meeting of the Michigan Environmental Science Board (MESB) Children's Standards Investigation Panel (Panel) to order at 9:15 a.m.

II. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Mr. Harrison noted the absence and apologized for the lack of a stenographer for the meeting. One had been requested and, as of 5:00 p.m. June 15th, was scheduled. Given the unexpected absence of the stenographer, Mr. Harrison indicated that the meeting summary for this meeting would be highly condensed since he had neither any recording equipment nor staff prepared to take detailed notes of the meeting. He indicated that a formal complaint would be lodged with Dolman Associates.

Mr. Harrison provided a brief summary of the material that had been submitted to the Panel to date, including three letters from Representatives Elizabeth Brater and Laura Baird, the Science and Environmental Health Network, and the Natural Resources Defense Council. Mr. Harrison indicated that he would be responding to the three letters on behalf of the MESB thanking them for their input.

III. REVIEW OF GOVERNOR'S CHARGE

Dr. Gracki briefly reviewed the Governor's letter and the specific request for response from the MESB. He indicated that up to this point, the Panel had been working on overview papers and necessary background needed to respond to the Governor's request. The Panel now would need to focus its attention on developing responses specifically addressing the questions given to MESB.

IV. STATUS OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS AND DISCUSSION

The Panel briefly discussed the status of the various writing assignments. Mr. Harrison indicated that Dr. Etzel had informed him that she was still working on her component (food and water exposure) of the report.

Dr. DeVito briefly discussed his contribution regarding reference does (RfD). He stressed that not all RfDs are equal and that it will be important for the report to distinguish between RfDs that are based on considerable information (animals studies, human epidemiological data, etc) and a low uncertainty factor versus those that are based on much less information but have a very high uncertainty factor. This difference is generally not communicated or communicated poorly to the public and causes confusion and misunderstandings.

A discussion of the applicability for use of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) 10x Safety factor methodology in conjunction with the Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) risk assessment program took place. The FQPA of 1996 requires that in the case of threshold effects, an additional tenfold margin of safety for pesticide chemical residue and other sources of exposure be applied to infants and children to take into account potential pre- and post-natal toxicity and completeness of the data with respect to exposure and toxicity of infants and children. In order to determine if the FQPA factor is needed, several factors need to be assessed, including (1) the contribution of hazard and dose response evaluations; (2) the contribution of exposures assessments; (3) the characterization of hazard (toxicology data base); and (4) exposure (dietary food, dietary drinking water and residential) data bases and the degree of concern regarding the potential for pre- and post-natal effects.

Dr. DeVito indicated that the FQPA methodology only applies to developmental risks, and that it is chemical independent and could be used for chemicals other than pesticides. Based on his initial review of the methodology, he stated that if Michigan was to follow the FQPA methodology guidelines regarding the use, as needed, of an extra safety factor in its risk assessment process, its risk characterizations probably would be conservative enough to address current issues of infants and children.

Mr. Robert Sills, MDEQ, indicated that the department had not yet completed its review of the USEPA document but that the initial reaction to it has been fairly favorable. Having stated that, there are some problems that would still need to be resolved. First is that the proposed methodology would result in the need to recalculate RfDs which would be very time consuming and could not be done all at once for all the chemicals that MDEQ regulates. Second, the methodology only takes into consideration pesticides, fungicides and rodenticides. There is no indication that the USEPA would adopt the methodology to evaluate all chemicals. Dr. DeVito indicated that he would try to get some clarification from his colleagues as to what the USEPA's intent might be in regards the need for new RfD development and the use of the proposed methodology.

Mr. Harrison pointed out that since the proposed methodology is chemical specific, there would still be a need to look at multiple exposures. Dr. Charles Cubbage (Department of Agriculture – MDA) indicated that the pharmacological industry was working on combinent research issues and has developed some new tools that may help to address this concern. He indicated that he would provide the MESB with the name and number of an individual to contact for additional information. Mr. Dennis Bush, MDEQ, indicated that a draft USEPA multiple exposure guidance document was available on the Internet and that he would provide the MESB with the address.

Mr. Harrison asked if the DEQ had the flexibility in its regulations to incorporate better information when needed. Mr. Sills indicated that it did but that the additional use of new safety factor might result in the need to for rule changes.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Charles Cubbage, MDA, provided the Panel with an overview of his department's role in regulating pesticides. The MDA is responsible for registration of pesticides, establishing training and certification requirements for private and commercial applicators, ensuring that commercial pesticide applications adhere to the various posting requirements, and for investigating various complaints. He shared several instances where the MDA was involved in investigations concerning misuse of pesticides and tracking the fate of pesticide applications on various foods.

Ms. Mary Beth Doyle, Ecology Center, expressed concern regarding the absence of the March 31, 1999 Children's Panel meeting summary on the MESB web site and inquired about the status of the April 29, 1999 meeting summary. Mr. Harrison apologized for not having the March summary posted yet on the web and indicated that he would get that done after the meeting. The April meeting summary will still in the process of being completed.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Keith G. Harrison, M.A., R.S., Cert. Ecol.
Executive Director
Michigan Environmental Science Board