Bulletin

Occasional information for members

Institute of Safety in Technology and Research

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General enquiries about the Institute should be addressed to the Honorary Secretary:

istr-secretary@bham.ac.uk

Enquiries about membership should be addressed to the Membership Secretary:

istr-membershipsecretary@bham.ac.uk

ISTR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The executive committee has met at The University of Birmingham in December 2003, March 2004 and the University of Manchester in April 2004. The following is a summary of the matters considered.

Guidelines for Sponsors

Sponsorship of ISTR events/activities was considered. A formal mechanism will be set up and opportunities for sponsorship identified. This venture will be approached with caution.

Skill Development Workshop, March 2004

It was with regret that this had been cancelled because the final number of delegates, 15, was not enough for the workshop organisers HSE/HSL.

Discussion on lessons to be learned included other relevant matters to events organising and improvements that could be made. An “Events Planning” spreadsheet will be used to record detailed progress on the organisation of each event. A second person allocated as “a shadower” working in conjunction with the Events Secretary and with access to the planning record will be nominated for each event to ensure continuity in the absence of the Events Secretary.

November 2004 Symposium

An invitation to co-host a proposed MRC conference on laboratory design was considered. The conference will be held on the premises of the third co-host, Elli Lilley. The possibility of holding a meeting of the ISTR Bio-safety Sub Group at the same venue on the following day will be considered. Delegates will make their own arrangements for accommodation.

Skills Development Workshop Spring 2005

“Measuring and Monitoring for Safety” - an instrument skills update for the average safety practitioner.

AGM/Symposium, 2005

A venue in Edinburgh is being pursued. The theme will be Emergent technologies-Novel risks.

ISTR Award

Following the 2003 AGM approval of the proposal to institute an ISTR Award, guidelines and procedures have been drawn up and will be presented at the 2004 AGM.

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to another issue of the *Bulletin*. The *Bulletin* is a service to and for members. In this issue you will find news of members, details of forthcoming *ISTR* activities, a report on a recent meeting of the Executive Committee and other items sent in by members. If you have any item that may be of interest to other members please let me know.

From time to time, as a further service to members, advertising material may be enclosed with the *Bulletin* but this does not necessarily mean that the ISTR endorses the particular products.

The ISTR is not responsible for individual views expressed in the *Bulletin*.

The Bulletin is edited by: Dr FJ Young, Health and Safety Unit, The University of Birmingham EMail f.j.young@bham.ac.uk

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

The Institute has admitted the following into membership

Further details may be found in the updated, on-line version of *ISTR Members' Handbook* in the members' only section of the ISTR website.

Full Members:

Mrs B Chapman, Mr SJ Evans, Mr RG Hall, Dr NA Logan, Dr PWS Szawlowski, Ms E Tully and Dr SP Tyfield

Associate Members:

Mr S Hoyle and Mr PS Turner

Enquiries about membership should be addressed to the Membership Secretary: istr-membershipsecretary@bham.ac.uk

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2004 AGM and Symposium

The 2004 AGM and symposium will be hosted by the University of Southampton at the "Avenue" campus. The AGM will take place at 3.30 pm on 6 July. A boat trip exploring Southampton's two rivers is arranged between the AGM and evening dinner.

The topic for the symposium on the 7 July is "Moving matters - transport in science and technology". Issues to be covered include legislation, internal transport/deliveries, insurance, training, policies, risk assessment, driving hours, hazardous substances, packaging and labelling. There will be workshops on a field trip to France and the design of a new stores/delivery area.

2004 Autumn Symposium

In association with the Medical Research Council and Elli Lilley a one day conference on building design issues will be held on 10 November 2004 at the Elli Lilley Research Site, Erl Wood Manor. Topics include "Flexibility in design", "Ergonomics in building design" and "Air handling issues in building design." The interface between health and safety professionals and others involved in building design projects will also be covered.

2nd Bio-Safety Sub-Group Symposium

This will be held on the day following the 2004 Autumn Symposium and also at the Elli Lilley Research Site, Erl Wood Manor. The symposium is being organised by the Bio-Safety Sub-Group northern section.

For more information contact the Events Secretary: istr-eventssecretary@bham.ac.uk

ISTR Autumn Symposia, 18/19 November 2003

David Heath, ISTR Events Secretary, writes:
76 delegates attended either one or both of the autumn symposia held at the Windmill Village Hotel near Coventry. The general symposium on the 18 November was followed on the next day by one organised by the ISTR Biosafety Sub-Group, southern section.

LEGISLATION UPDATE

The theme for the first day was a 'Legislation update' covering the following topics:

The 'CHIP' regulations
Desmond Waight, consultant Dangerous Goods Safety Adviser.

The DSEAR regulations
Craig Bell, HSE Chemicals and flammables policy Division.

The amendments to the 'six pack'
Andy Dowie, recently retired HSE inspector.

The amendments to the COSHH regulations
John Dobbie, BP

The Control of Ozone Depleting Substances
Toby Clark, Safety solutions UK.

All the speakers presentations can be found on the ISTR website on the members page.

MANAGEMENT OF BIOLOGICAL RISKS

Heather Sheeley writes. On the second day the first bio-symposium organised by ISTR (Biosafety Sub-Group, southern section) was well attended by 72 delegates from academia, industry and public sector.

Paul Jackett writes. The day was split between formal presentations in the morning and workshops in the afternoon. In tune with the intention to cover a wide spectrum of subjects during the day the morning presentations did not disappoint.

Dr Andrew Cottam
HSE Biological Agents Corporate Topic Group

Dr Cottam reviewed the objectives of the Topic Group within the context of the HSE's overall functions. Amongst HSE's aims, the increased emphasis on 'health' was highlighted. He identified five major strategic themes, which included health and also the protection and security of the public. A key issue for

the HSE is to improve the ways other parties can participate in policy development. Referring to the structure of the Topic Group, Dr Cottam stated that the Group now offered a single point of contact for all matters relating to biological agents, placing hazardous pathogens under the same 'roof' as genetically modified microorganisms.

Dr Cottam welcomed the formation of the ISTR Biosafety Sub-group and looked forward to inviting its views on issues ranging from the strategic to practical guidance.

Dr Martin Vinnell

University of Cambridge

Dr Vinnell adopted an holistic approach to biological risk assessment. He described the plethora of legislation that covered the use of agents in laboratories, whilst reminding the audience of the biological hazards potentially encountered by those working in other environments. The recent publication 'Infection at work, controlling the risk' is focused on the latter group of workers. The talk included reviews of the critical factors addressed in risk assessments for biological agents, genetically modified microorganisms and gene therapy agents.

His final point touched on an issue that faces all safety professionals, in particular perhaps in the research environment; how to raise standards and compliance through the use of the carrot rather than stick. Our task is to persuade that adherence to good practice and compliance with legal requirements aids and abets good research.

Dr Kate Venables

University of Oxford Occupational Health Services

Dr Venables reviewed some of the occupational health issues addressed by her department, including handling of human tissues, pathogens, animals, foreign travel and advice on fitness for work. Although the work environment was predominantly a laboratory, hospital or office setting, other activities include foreign fieldwork, working in gardens, and the work of security staff. She then linked the spectrum of activities with the services they were able to offer, such as appropriate immunisation programmes. Dr Venables gave some interesting examples of questions she had been asked to address, such as whether or not undergraduate medical students should take blood from each other in classes! Perhaps the most eye-catching information was the response to a questionnaire asking organisations to list their major OH concerns. Why are we not surprised that stress is at the top of the list?

Guy Collyer

National Counter Terrorism and Security Office

Regrettably the political climate requires us more and more to think about the security of our people and premises when working with hazardous biological agents and toxins. Guy has formed a positive working relationship with the world of biosafety and in his talk he was able to update those present on current thinking. This included progress on amending the list of agents and toxins presently listed in the anti-terrorism legislation.

Symposium Workshops

The day was completed by two workshops. They were each run twice, enabling all present to attend both. The hard work that had clearly been invested in preparation of the workshops was evident and appreciated.

Biosecurity

Led by Clare Walford and Simon Caidan

Clare Walford and Simon Caidan presented a summary of the experiences of their organisations with the police and were pleased to have the support of Guy Collyer. Issues considered included identifying hazards and evaluating risk when working with specified hazards and consideration of reasonable and practicable means of improving security.

Biological Risk Assessment

Led by Heather Sheeley and Martin Vinnell

Heather Sheeley and Martin Vinnell looked at the process of biological risk assessment, asking participants to consider the hazards, what circumstances might modify the hazardous properties and to evaluate the risks qualitatively.

In conclusion

Overall there has been a positive response to the day which can be regarded as a successful first meeting for a new and growing group. We look forward to the next meeting in November 2004.

Paul Jackett

ISTR BIO-SAFETY SUB-GROUP

Regional biosafety groups have been meeting on an informal basis for a few years, but it became clear that there was a need for a national forum for biological safety. Following members' approval of an informal bio-safety sub-grouping within ISTR at the 2002 AGM, the northern, midland and southern sections of the sub-group have continued to hold their individual meetings as well as the first national meeting at Coventry. Details of recent

meetings of the southern section are listed below. If you would like to be included on their contact lists contact the membership secretary in the first instance at istr-membershipsecretary@bham.ac.uk

Meetings Of The Southern Biosafety Group 2003 - 2004

January 2003 Kings College London

Topics:

- The Salisbury List, schedule 5, HSE GM notifications, security
- Standards, staff vetting, CTSAs
- Autoclaves – siting, testing, validation and records
- Fumigation
- Waste disposal
- Large scale animal units
- LAA HSE inspection & improvement notices at KCL
- ISTR and the Southern Biosafety Group

May 2003 Institute of Cancer Research

Topics:

- NaCTSO update
- Face fit testing of RPE
- Air showers
- FACs sorters
- SARS

September 2003 Cambridge University/Sanger Centre

Presentation:
Demolizer clinical waste disposal system
EAM Medical

Topics

- Recent HSE GM/EMAS LAA inspections at Cambridge
- Changes in biological/clinical waste procedures
- Appropriate inactivation of GM waste – some recent technical issues
- Changes to COSHH re biological agents
- ISTR Biological Safety Symposium
- HSC report on long term effects of using biological agents
- Tour of sequencing facility

February 2004 University of Essex

Presentations:
Control of contractors in laboratories
Clive Parkinson, University of Sussex

Transportation rules for diagnostic specimens
Melvin Danvers, Danvers International

Topics:

- Importation of tissue samples, foetal calf serum and toxins – DEFRA licences
- Gut baths
- Southern Biosafety Group meetings – what information should be recorded
- Tour of GM greenhouse facility

BIOLOGICAL AGENTS - MANAGING THE RISKS IN THE LABORATORY AND HEALTH CARE PREMISES

*The Institute is **indebted to Dr Stuart thompson**, for this response on the Institute's behalf to an HSE consultation. Unfortunately, the short timescale allowed Stuart to consult only a few other members of iSTR. The following is an edited version of Stuart's response.*

Since I started writing these comments, I have been sent a copy of the response from the MRC. I agree substantially with the opinions they expressed.

General

1. It is unfortunate that the draft document was not publicised more widely. It is common for draft HSE or HSC documents to be offered to University Safety Officers for comment, yet I do not think that its existence has been advertised via our E-mail newsgroup.

2. The time scale for comments has been very short so it has been difficult to examine the draft in detail.

3. As the draft seems likely to need substantial changes, perhaps the next version could be more widely circulated, with sufficient time for mature reflection on its content.

4. The document appears to be a "cut and paste" compilation in which text from other publications is embedded within original material. I base this

supposition on the rather uneven styles of the different parts of the document, of which Part 1 seemed to be more wordy and difficult to read and is probably most in need of revision.

5. I list a few examples where it could be improved, but suggest that it needs to be reconsidered line by line. Many paragraphs could be made shorter and clearer by good editing, which should aim to use shorter phrases and sentences, avoid repetition and make more use of bullet points.

6. A contents list, index, and executive summary are urgently required.

7. I support the request from the MRC group that more specific URLs are given and further request that references include the ISBN where one exists.

Specific Points

Paragraph 17 is dangerously inaccurate. I agree with the MRC group that the original definitions of the hazard groups should be included. I feel that they should replace the 4 criteria in paragraph 17, which are confusing.

Paragraph 25; insert “without specialist training for work with biological materials or infectious agents” after “risks to those”

Paragraphs 39 - 40; Management agreements for shared premises (especially those where University personnel are located on Hospital Trust premises) can be a real problem and consideration should be given to providing prescriptive advice or a model agreement. It would be helpful if specific advice on this area could be accompanied by a statement such as that accompanying the HSE’s COSHH ACoP and Guidance to the effect that following the Guidance is not compulsory but following the Guidance will normally be doing enough to comply with the law. Such a statement would be a strong incentive to adopt good practice.

Table 1.1; need to clarify note 2 to indicate whether “contact and duration of exposure” refers to the inactivating agent rather than the infectious material.

Page 15 Table 1.2 on containment levels has not taken into account COSHH 2002 where the requirement at CL2 for negative pressure was removed. This document has the old "No unless mechanically ventilated" statement. As any aerosols should be contained in biological safety cabinets or by other measures surely the requirement for negative pressure at CL 2 should be removed particularly since the organisms by definition are unlikely to spread in the community and not aerosol spread? Also included at the bottom of the table in the section on infected material to be handled in a BSC etc if an aerosol is produced. This is in conflict with COSHH 2002 so which do we go with? I would plump for COSHH as this is only guidance as with all ACDP documents. (Or is COSHH to be changed?)

Infobox 1.3 provides an opportunity to take a stronger line on laundry. I suspect that employers condone staff washing uniforms at home as a cost-saving measure. However there is no control over this process or the detergent and equipment used and every opportunity for members of the employees family and friends to contact the soiled clothing. We should not be conducting decontamination processes that cannot be audited and monitored. This practice is no more acceptable than cost saving by asking staff to take clinical waste home for disposal in the domestic dustbin. Revision of the present document provides the opportunity to raise standards by outlawing, or at least strongly discouraging the unacceptable practice of domestic laundry.

Paragraph 49 should include a mention of RPE options and face fit testing with an appropriate reference, e.g. to
http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/fittesting.pdf

Information, instruction & training, Paragraphs 50-54. It is important that training is appropriate for the experience and roles of individual employees. For example, service personnel (plumbers, electricians, HVAC engineers, cleaners and porters) are often fearful of entering areas where biological or GM materials have been used. There is a danger that they can become so preoccupied with irrational fears about biological hazards that they overlook their own safety precautions. They should be kept fully informed of management arrangements to make areas safe before they are permitted to enter and that they can regard a properly prepared laboratory as being no more hazardous to work on than a piece of electrical equipment with the power supply locked off.

Paragraph 57; emergency plans should consider the role of the emergency services. Their personnel are often over cautious because they are unfamiliar with microbiological hazards. Senior personnel, e.g. divisional fire officers, should be invited to visit to discuss the extent of the hazards and how personnel can be rescued without spreading infection, and any post-rescue that might be required.

Paragraph 66; although COSHH requires that records be kept for 40 years following last exposure to HG3 or HG4 agents, there is no similar requirement for the associated Risk Assessments. It would make sense to keep these for the same period, as interpreting medical records after many years (whether to provide evidence relevant to a criminal prosecution, or in relation to civil litigation) would be greatly helped by having the corresponding Risk Assessments available to put the medical evidence in context.

Info Box 1.4 should contain advice about the management of persons who decline offers of vaccination, e.g. the extent to which they should be kept away from potential sources of infection, and the legal status and value, or otherwise, of disclaimers signed by the person who declines vaccination. Official guidance would be very useful.

Table 1.1a – RIDDOR-reportable infections. Is this complete? It does not refer to typhoid, psittacosis or haemorrhagic fevers, yet two of these are mentioned on the following page.

Page 28, paragraph 1, line 2; should probably read "model agreements", not "modal agreements". This section on transport should carry a warning that regulations change fairly often – see also the warning in bold type on page 31.

Page 29 Paragraph 3 refers to a "Certificate of exemption" to allow use of UN 3373 and packing instruction P650. Please include details of how to obtain it.

The section on carriage is silent on short journeys between parts of a single organisation separated by public roads, e.g. on city centre campuses. Additional advice could usefully be included on page 31 as in my experience people often have trouble finding it and despair of moving anything without subcontracting it to expensive couriers. However that is by no means always necessary, as Schedule 2 includes the following wording:
"**3.** These Regulations shall not apply to or in relation to the carriage of dangerous goods in—
(b) a vehicle which is being used to transfer the goods—
(i) between private premises and another vehicle situated in the immediate vicinity of those premises, or
(ii) between one part of private premises and another part of those premises situated in the immediate vicinity of that first part where both parts are occupied by the same person, notwithstanding that those parts may be separated by a road"

Although Appendix 1.4 lists the classification of animal pathogens, human pathogens are not listed, being referred to only via Reference 24, which does not appear to be available through the link given. Perhaps the full text should be included here as in the 1995 ACDP booklet on "Categorisation of biological agents ……."

I*nfobox 2.1* refers to Universal Precautions. It should list the accepted list of measures to be taken and/or contain a link to the US Government site that describes them.

Page 53 table 2.2 under the heading "airborne route of infection" contains the phrase "consider (see Para)" which appears incomplete – please supply the paragraph number.

There is no mention of Gene Therapy, yet some Biological Safety personnel find good information on this topic difficult to find. They sometimes need to advise laboratory scientists who develop GT techniques in both research and manufacturing environments, pharmacists who prepare the dosage forms, and nurses who adminster the GM material. These individuals can have widely different perceptions of the risk of the overall process, and of their part of the process. Perhaps guidance on Gene Therapy (or appropriate links) could be included in, or close to, paragraphs 115 -116 which refer to the handling of biological agents in a clinical setting.

Paragraph 119 needs a reference to descriptions of the major disinfection techniques including those such as gasous hydrogen peroxide that might become more prominent in the future. It is important that laboratory personnel are aware of the need to check whether materials to be exposed are resistant before they introduce novel disinfection methods.

Paragraph 147 should have a reference to effective decontamination procedures for TSE agents.

Paragraph 148 line 2 should probably read "immunocompromised", not "immunocompetent"?

Table 3.1a – Containment measures for cell cultures; It would be useful to include guidance as to which of these categories would normally carry a strong recommendation for hepatitis B immunisation as best practice.

Paragraph 164 is repeated in a different context on page 79. Should there be a more general statement on the circumstances in which certain CL3 measures can be dispensed with, with a cross-reference from each of these sections? The MRC group's comments on the need to retain managerial vigilance and controls despite derogation are important here.

Current Consultative Documents

The Executive Committee organises formal responses from the ISTR to Consultative Documents (CD's) put out by the Health and Safety Commission, etc. Each such response is intended to be based on the views of the membership co-ordinated by identified individuals. These co-ordinators need to have expertise in a particular area of interest to the *Institute* because the timescales for responses to CD's is sometimes very short and there may be little opportunity for further consultation with the membership.

If you are willing to act in this capacity of "CD" co-ordinator for ISTR please contact Arthur Mitchell, Hon. Sec., and indicate the topic area you have the expertise to cover.

Volunteers are needed NOW for the following.

The documents may be downloaded from the web addresses provided.

Health and Safety Commission

Proposals for new Control of Noise at Work Regulations implementing the Physical Agents (Noise) Directive (2003/10/EC)

This Consultative Document contains proposals to introduce new Regulations to control the risks to health from exposure to noise at work. The draft Regulations have been developed in order to comply with the European Union Physical Agents (Noise) Directive (2003/10/EC) which aims to protect workers from risks to their health arising from exposure to noise.

Key facts about occupational noise induced hearing loss:

- It is usually gradual, due to prolonged exposure to noise, although it can be caused immediately by sudden, extremely loud, explosive noises such as from guns or cartridge-operated machines.
- It is irreversible, but completely preventable.
- Research suggests that just over a million people are exposed to potentially hazardous noise at work.

Closing date for comments 25 June 2004
[http://www.hse.gov.uk/consult/condocs/cd196.htm]

Health and Safety Commission

Proposals for the Export and Import of Dangerous Chemicals Regulations 2004

The Export of Dangerous Chemicals Regulations 1992 came into force on 29 November 1992. The Regulations set the enforcement penalties necessary to implement EC Regulation 2455/92 - The export and Import of Certain Dangerous Chemicals.

Regulation 2455/92 implemented a joint United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nation (FAO) scheme on trade in certain dangerous chemicals. The aim of the scheme was to address concerns over exports of dangerous chemicals to developing countries, which may not have adequate controls on the import and sales of such chemicals.

Closing date for comments 2 July 2004
[http://www.hse.gov.uk/consult/condocs/cd197.htm]

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

A strategy for Non-food Crops and Uses

The document follows up the commitment in the Government's Sustainable Farming and Food Strategy to extend the competitive non-food uses of crops with an underpinning long-term strategy. It defines the scope for and context of the strategy with particular reference to the strategic objectives of this Department and the DTI's commitment to promote industrial innovation and competitiveness. It is envisaged that the Departments would publish the strategy jointly. The document outlines the contribution which non-food uses of crops can make to existing policy areas and defines the actions needed to make further progress. It makes reference to the current consultation on the implementation of the EU Biofuels Directive launched by the Department for Transport on 29 April.

Key questions which you may like you to consider are:

- Is the strategy as drafted sound and useful in terms of style, format, length and level of detail?
- Is the rationale for the strategy set out convincingly?
- Are linkages with other policies across Government properly explained?
- Have the priority action areas been identified satisfactorily in the action plan and, if not, what areas would you either remove from the action plan or propose be added?
- Would you find it useful to have case studies included in the document?

Closing date for comments 23 July 2004

[http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/nonfoodcrops/index.htm]

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Consultation on the New EU Chemicals Strategy (REACH)

The European Commission adopted proposals on 29 October 2003 to establish a new system to regulate the manufacture, import and use of substances - called **REACH** (**R**egistration, **E**valuation, **A**uthorisation and Restrictions of **Ch**emicals). The new regime will also create a European Chemicals Agency and amend current legislation in view of the proposed Regulation. This consultation paper seeks views on both the European Commission's Proposal and on an initial Government approach. This will in turn help inform the UK negotiating strategy.

Closing date for comments 25 June 2004

[http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/reach/index.htm]

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Implementation of New EU Regulations on Traceability and Labelling of GMOs and GM Food and Animal Feed

The Food Standards Agency and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs have published draft documents that describe the scope of the new rules, which will require, from 18th April, all ingredients that contain or consist of GMOs, or contain ingredients produced from GMOs, to be labelled and traceable. The rules also set up a centralised procedure to consider applications to grow and market GMOs in the European Union.

The consultation is on draft legislation that includes penalties for breaking the new rules, a draft regulatory impact assessment and draft guidance notes for stakeholders.

This consultation applies to England only. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will issue consultations shortly.

Closing date for comments 25 June 2004

[http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/gmlabel/index.htm]

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Revision of the Fertilisers Regulations 1991

Statutory Instrument No 2197 - The Fertilisers Regulations 1991 - which currently apply throughout Great Britain, control the composition, labelling and packaging of fertilisers and their enforcement. The Regulations cover the range of lime and fertiliser products from fertilisers primarily used in agriculture to those used for horticulture, for amenity purposes and in the garden. They include some (but not all) organic and organic-based products.

Additional controls apply to ammonium nitrate-based fertilisers where the nitrogen content derived from ammonium nitrate is greater than 28% of the material by weight, through *The Ammonium Nitrate Materials (High Nitrogen Content) Safety Regulations 2003.* These Regulations will remain in force whatever the outcome of this consultation. Similarly, there are no plans to amend *The Fertilisers (Mammalian Meat and Bone Meal) Regulations 1996.*

The Fertiliser Regulations 1991 implement the following EC Directives: *76/116/EEC, 80/876/EEC, 89/284/EEC, 89/530/EEC (all as amended by Directive 97/63/EC), 88/183/EEC, 93/69/EEC, 96/28/EC and 98/3/EC.* These Directives set the conditions and criteria (e.g. minimum nutrient content, labelling and packaging) for fertilisers, which can be traded freely throughout the Community. The European Council recently completed work on consolidating and simplifying these Directives into a single Regulation – EC No 2003/2003 - commonly referred to as the *'Refonte'* Regulation. Because this Regulation is directly applicable, Member States are prohibited from maintaining national legislation which covers the same products.

The Refonte, (which covers only those fertilisers that have been designated as EC fertilisers), entered into force in December 2003. Defra lawyers are currently working on a domestic SI to implement the areas of the Regulation where there is national discretion. As part of that process, they will disapply those parts of The Fertiliser Regulations 1991 that relate to EC designated fertilisers.

What remains in force of the 1991 Regulations, if anything, will therefore cover non-EC designated fertilisers only. These Regulations could, in theory, be left on the statute book without further amendment. However, they contain a number of anomalies and omissions and are increasingly becoming out-of-date.

It is therefore an opportune time to consider revising or even abolishing them.

The Fertilisers Regulations 1991 currently apply throughout Great Britain. Fertiliser legislation is a devolved issue and, in theory, the Scottish and Welsh authorities could operate their own fertiliser regimes. However, this could lead to significant enforcement problems. It is therefore proposed that any revision of the Regulations will apply throughout Great Britain.

Closing date for comments 18 June 2004

[http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/fertilisers/index.htm]

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Remediation of land affected by contamination - a regulatory summary

The guidance has been developed in response to the specific recommendations of the Kirby Report entitled "Remediation Permit - Towards a single regeneration licence", which followed on from a recommendation by Lord Rogers' Urban Task Force. One of the recommendations in the Kirby Report was for a "*Better explanation of the interfaces between different systems*" - that is the regulatory systems that have a bearing on the investigation and remediation of land affected by contamination. The report called for an integrated guide to be developed by government clearly setting out the current regulatory arrangements.

The aim of the document is to improve the understanding of what the different regulatory regimes require in terms of investigative and remedial works. There is currently no one set of guidance that covers all the regimes identified.

It is not the intention of the guide to explain the detail of each regime but to provide an overview and identify boundaries and overlaps. It applies to the regimes in England. Similar regimes apply in Wales and Scotland.

Specifically views are sought in relation to the following questions:
1. Does the guidance provide an adequate summary of the regimes covered?
2. Are there other regimes that should be included?
3. Is the structure and amount of detail for various regimes helpful, for example should the section on waste be shortened?

Closing date for comments 16 June 2004

[http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/land-remediation/index.htm]

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Draft Code Of Practice For The Safe Use Of Plant Protection Products

The Draft Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Plant Protection Products is intended to replace the current version of the *Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings* (the 'Green Code'), which was last updated in 1998.

This Code is intended to provide practical advice on the safe use of pesticides for **all** professional users in agriculture, horticulture, amenity situations and forestry **under the existing legislation**.. It combines and updates the relevant advice contained in the *Code of Practice for the Safe Use of Pesticides on Farms and Holdings* (the MAFF/HSC 'Green Code'), the *Code of Practice for the Use of Approved Pesticides in Amenity and Industrial Areas* (the industry 'Orange Code') and the *Approved Code of Practice for The Safe Use of Pesticides for Non-agricultural Purposes* (the HSC 'Blue Code').

Parts of the revised Code will have official status as a Code of Practice issued under Section 17 of the *Food and Environment Protection Act 1985*, an Approved Code of Practice issued under Section 16 of the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974* (giving COSHH guidance), or an Approved Code of Practice issued under Regulation 21 of *Groundwater Regulations 1998*. Other parts of the Code provide general guidance on good practice in the use of pesticides.

Closing date for comments 30 July, 2004

[http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/safe_use.asp?id=1154]