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From: Paula Podhasky <podhaskyp@api.org>
Cc:
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Received Date: 2000-11-14 15:42:49 GMT
Subject: FW: Benzene Research Consortium Stakeholders Meeting - December 14, 2000

Benzene Research Consortium Stakeholders:

Please find attached, for your information and consideration, a brief update of activities and a call for membership for a Public Relations and Communications Work Group from Dr. Patrick Beatty.

We would like to schedule the next Stakeholder meeting as follows:

Date: Thursday, December 14
Time: 10 AM - 3 PM
Location: API Offices
1220 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005

Agenda items will include:

1. Status Report on Scientific and Ethics Activities (Patrick Beatty)
2. Funding Issues
 - Funding Formula Proposal (Carol Fairbrother)
 - Program Cost Estimate (Patrick Beatty/Lorraine Twerdok)
 - Proposed Cost Schedule (Lorraine Twerdok)
3. Consortium Structure
4. Other Issues??
5. Path Forward

A pre-meeting information package, providing information for review on the various agenda topics, will be distributed by email approximately a week before the meeting.

Please RSVP your availability for this December 14th meeting to either Lorraine Twerdok (twerdoki@api.org <<mailto:twerdoki@api.org>>) or Elsie Barbaza (barbaza@api.org <<mailto:barbaza@api.org>>).

Thank you,
Lorraine Twerdok

Lorraine E. Twerdok, Ph.D., DABT

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Attachments:

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Benzene Research Consortium Stakeholders

We have made tremendous progress in addressing the ethics issues that are involved in our proposed Shanghai research program. As will be reported in other premeeting materials for the proposed December stakeholders' meeting our bioethicists, Drs. Brody and Kopelman feel confident that the ethical issues involved in the proposed research have been identified and that the investigators will be able to address them adequately in the research protocols. In addition we have identified a Chinese bioethicist in Shanghai whose credentials are more than acceptable to Drs. Brody and Kopelman. We are currently contacting this individual to recruit his participation in our ethics review panel.

However, resolution of ethical issues to the satisfaction of an institutional review board does not assure that public perception of the research will be favorable. Several companies have made it clear that efforts must be included in the project to assure that public perception of the research is favorable. This requires adequate communication of the goals, methods, and results of the project and also a plan to attempt to mitigate the higher benzene exposures that we believe some workers may be exposed to during the course of the study. These efforts will be designed to have a good chance of success and must be conducted in a culturally sensitive manner.

As we did in August to create a funding allocation formula to propose to the potential consortium member companies, we wish to form a working group to develop a plan to address the public relations and communications issues discussed above. We are asking companies to identify an appropriate person from their organization to participate in this working group. Since public affairs groups will likely provide input about the acceptability of any mitigation/communication plan, we anticipate that these individuals may come from public affairs groups within potential member companies. In any event it is important that the participants at least be empowered to represent their companies' interests in these areas. We would like to have a plan that can be presented to stakeholder companies in January 2001.

Individuals who are willing to be part of this working group or want additional information should contact Lynn Russo of ExxonMobil as soon as possible to organize the group. Her contact information is: telephone - (972) 441-1163; e-mail - lynn.b.russo@exxon.com.

Patrick Beatty, Ph.D.
Chevron Research and Technology Co.
Chair, Benzene Task Force