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OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Emerging Contaminants Governance Council Meeting Summary

The second meeting of the Emerging Contaminants Governance Council (EC-GC) was held on September 25, 2007 with representation from a wide spectrum of DoD communities. The Emerging Contaminants (EC) Directorate staff provided a progress report on actions completed since the September 2006 meeting. In particular, the EC Directorate completed Phase I impact assessments for eighteen ECs on the DoD EC watch list. Three new recommendations were approved by the EC-GC at the meeting. A summary of the meeting and decisions is attached for your information.

My POC is Ms. Shannon Cunniff, Director for Emerging Contaminants. She can be reached at (703) 604-1529.

Alex A. Beehler

Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense
(Environment, Safety, and Occupational Health)

Attachment:
As stated



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EMERGING CONTAMINANTS GOVERNANCE COUNCIL (EC-GC)
September 25, 2007

MEETING SUMMARY

EC-GC co-chairs Mr. Alex Beehler, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Environment, Safety & Occupational Health) and Mr. Dan Gardner, Director, Readiness and Training Policy and Programs, provided opening remarks. This was the second meeting of the EC-GC. After introductions of participants, Mr. Beehler reviewed the meeting objectives and agenda. Mr. Gardner noted that a proactive approach was needed to preserve our ability to test and train effectively and protect human health.

Ms. Shannon Cunniff, Director for Emerging Contaminants, Mr. Paul Yaroschak, Deputy Director for Emerging Contaminants, and Mr. Drew Rak, Noblis, provided a briefing divided into the following parts:

- EC Overview & Refresher
 - EC Program Structure
 - Implication of European Union's REACH regulation
- Progress Report
 - Update on strategic priorities
 - Update on 2006 EC-GC decisions
 - Tungsten & nanomaterials work group actions
 - Naphthalene & hexavalent chromium update
 - Recommendations for EC-GC decision.

An open discussion on the EC-GC decision items followed the briefing and was facilitated by the co-chairs. A summary follows.

EC Overview

- The EC-GC enables enterprise-wide consensus on EC risks.
- A three-tiered process called "scan-watch-action" was implemented and tested during the past year.
- Early risk management actions for ECs can protect people, mission, and assets.
- The European Union's REACH regulation will have major implications world-wide including the Defense industry.
- Regulated materials will be more difficult/costly to obtain and there may be supply chain disruptions.
- There are unknown impacts on interoperability (e.g., NATO actions) and foreign military sales – there are narrow, country-specific exclusions for critical defense items

Progress Report and Next Steps

- DoD and federal agency partners agreed on a revised process to improve the national chemical risk assessment process under the purview of EPA – a few remaining issues need to be resolved between EPA and OMB.
- Phase I impact assessments were completed for 18 ECs using subject matter experts from various DoD communities.
- Material champions were designated for all ECs on the action list. Material champions closely follow scientific and regulatory developments and inform the virtual DoD EC team.
- Collaborations and partnerships have been formed with various industries and regulators.
- Examples of risk management investments and benefits for perchlorate and RDX were described.
- Mr. Beehler suggested that perchlorate research results be briefed at the next EC-GC meeting.
- Work groups were formed for tungsten and nanomaterials. Work products such as fact sheets, Q&A packages, and interim guidance are completed or in draft.
- A Phase II impact assessment has been initiated for hexavalent chromium. A Phase II impact assessment for naphthalene is planned for FY-08.
- Mr. Gardner asked for more information on return on investments and benefits derived by DoD as a result of early engagement on emerging contaminants.
- As the level of effort turns toward Phase II assessments, business cases for risk management options will be developed. The next EC-GC meetings will focus on securing enterprise-wide agreement on priorities and which risk management options are adopted as action items.

Recommendation 1 – Beryllium (Be)

- Be is a critical material for DoD due to high strength and light weight.
- EPA is revising the toxicity values and lower values are expected.
- Air Force concerns regarding exposure and health effects from Be in aerospace applications are being investigated by National Academies of Science.
- The Phase I impact assessment showed high-medium risks in 4 of the 5 DoD functional categories.
- Participants noted the Defense Production Act Title III action to design and construct a production facility due to Be availability issues.
- The EC-GC unanimously approved the elevation of Be to the EC action list and development of a Phase II impact assessment with risk management options.

Recommendation 2 – Perfluorooctanic acid (PFOA)

- PFOA is fire-retardant chemical with critical uses in DoD platforms/systems in high-performance gaskets, o-rings, seals, and protective coatings.

- PFOA is accumulating in humans and EPA completed a draft risk assessment that will lead to low toxicity values.
- Manufacturers are phasing out production and the chemical may become unavailable.
- Participants discussed the use of PFOA in DoD's supply of aqueous film-forming foam (AFFF), the potential for exposures, and the potential need to clean up fire training pits where AFFF was used.
- The EC-GC unanimously approved the elevation of PFOA to the EC action list and development of a Phase II impact assessment with risk management options.

Recommendation 3 – Health Risk Assessments for Munitions

- The tungsten work group has been following and coordinating all studies related to tungsten alloys and tungsten-nylon bullets.
- A USD(HA) memo of July 8, 2007, noted the potential carcinogenic properties of — tungsten/nickel/cobalt alloys used in penetrator munitions and recommended that program managers delete this alloy from future design considerations.
- Col George Johnson, OUSD-HA, mentioned the studies completed by two different DoD laboratories and the reasons for this memo.
- Health Risk Assessments (HRAs) are conducted during the munitions development process and examine the risks in the manufacture, transportation, storage, use, and disposal of munitions. However, the tungsten work group noted that the HRAs do not assess the risks from “friendly fire” (e.g., the risks from embedded fragments) and questioned whether the HRAs should include such risks.
- The work group solicited EC-GC opinions on whether this issue should be pursued further or dropped.
- The EC-GC directed that the issue be focused on embedded fragments specifically versus “friendly fire” and that the work group research the issue more thoroughly and return with a recommendation.

The co-chairs adjourned the meeting and thanked the participants.