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Received Date: 2004-05-12 00:49:13 GMT
Subject: Benzene Medical Surveillance program - Review of Meeting
Summary

This note is to summarize the discussion regarding future capability for epidemiological study of the Benzene Medical Surveillance program (BMSP) in US manufacturing sites. For those copied, please note the conclusions/recommended actions, and please advise if you do not agree.

Participants:
Patsy Clegg
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Jerry Ransdell
Shan Tsai

Date: 8 April 2004

Background: Benzene medical surveillance program was initiated in the 1970's and then modified to be in compliance with the OSHA 1987 Benzene Standard. Epidemiological studies of the Benzene Medical Surveillance program were done first in 1990 and then again in 2004 to evaluate the medical data for possible benzene-related effects. There were no benzene-related health effects found in either study.

In the current administration of the Benzene Medical Surveillance program:

- (1) sites review exposure data and identify jobs/employees that are eligible for BMSP per the OSHA Benzene Standard medical surveillance criteria
- (2) There appears to be variation between sites on how the eligibility criteria is applied
- (3) Once employees are eligible and participate in the BMSP, they remain in the program regardless of job changes and further benzene exposure (this exceeds OSHA requirements)
- (4) The number of eligible jobs/employees is gradually reducing as the exposure levels decrease below the OSHA medical surveillance criteria
- (5) Some employees choose not to participate in the testing, but the level of effort to promote conformance to the requirements is not clear.

Issue: The gradual reduction of eligible employees for BMSP could limit future epidemiology capability

Discussion: Significant information has been achieved by the recent and previous studies of the BMSP. Since there have been no positive findings of benzene-related health effects and exposures are not expected to increase and may actually decrease further, there is no clear benefit at this time for future epidemiology of the BMSP.

Conclusion: There was general agreement that the BMSP should not be changed at this time but should continue to be administered in accordance with the OSHA benzene Standard. This decision can be revisited as results become available from ongoing research (e.g. Shanghai Study). The

practice of "Once in Always In" exceeds OSHA requirements. Employees not currently exposed to benzene are remaining in the program indefinitely. However, It was not clear to those in this meeting whether continuing the medical surveillance for those no longer exposed was effective for early warning of leukemia and therefore a medical review of this practice was considered appropriate.

Recommended Actions:

- (1) The Benzene medical surveillance criteria should be reviewed with sites to promote consistent implementation with documented declination where the eligible employee elects not to participate
- (2) Shell Health Services (Rob Donnelly) would review the current BMSP and recommend appropriate actions regarding an exit criteria for employees are no longer exposed to benzene.

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