

Issue: Shanghai Benzene Study

AGM Relevance: [one-two sentences]

- The *Houston Chronicle* has been pursuing a campaign to raise the profile of air quality in the Houston Ship Channel area. The same reporter has now published a report tying the situation in the US to the Shanghai study and claiming that the study is biased because of funding from multi-national oil companies, including Shell.

Recent Events: [two-three most important items for the AGM]

- On 29 April, the *Houston Chronicle* published an article on the study alleging that it was biased. The newspaper claimed that results of the study had already been determined, and funding from Shell Chemicals, BP, ChevronTexaco, Conoco Phillips and Exxon Mobil would ensure that the results 'contradicted cancer claims'.

Key Messages: [no more than three specific positive key messages]

- Shell is contributing to a study in Shanghai that aims to better understand the health risks from exposure to benzene. Our support for this study is as part of the company's ongoing commitment to health, safety and product stewardship.
- The study is wholly independent of Shell. It is run by Fudan University in Shanghai, the University of Colorado Health Services Centre and Applied Health Sciences, an independent research firm in San Francisco. The research is being overseen by a scientific and ethics review panel composed of 14 world-renowned independent experts in the field.
- The results of the study will be published in scientific journals.

Q&A/Comment Response: [no more than 2-3 questions you think will be asked]

Isn't Shell funding this study to rebut claims that exposure to benzene causes cancer?

No. Shell is providing funding to this study because we are committed to better understanding the relationship between benzene exposure and health in order to protect industry workers and customers.

Surely the findings will be biased as the study is industry-funded...

No. The study is independent, and is being led by the Fudan University Medical Centre in Shanghai, the University of Colorado Health Services Centre and Applied Health Sciences, an independent research firm in San Francisco. The research is also being overseen by a scientific and ethics review panel composed of 14 world-renowned independent experts in the field.

Haven't the results of the study already been decided?

No. The independent investigators conducting the study have full control over all interpretations and conclusions that may be drawn from the data when the study is completed, which is currently scheduled for 2007.