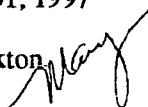


American Petroleum Institute
1220 L Street, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20005



memo

Date: January 31, 1997
From: Mary Paxton 
To: Benzene Task Force (BTF)
Re: Results of January 29 meeting

Enclosed are minutes of our meeting in Houston last Wednesday with copies of Gary Williams' slides and information from Michael Bird that should be considered as we frame our requests for the 1998 budget.

**BENZENE TASK FORCE (BTF)
of the
American Petroleum Institute**

Wednesday, January 29, 1997

**Pecos Room
Houston Airport Marriott**

Meeting Minutes - Subject to Approval

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Bea, Don	Chevron
Beatty, Pat	Chevron
Bird, Michael	Exxon
Del Pup, John	Texaco
Divine, Barbara	Texaco
Fairbrother, Carol	Exxon
Irons, Richard	University of Colorado
Mahagavkar, Suneeta	Pennzoil
Paxton, Mary	API
Raabe, Gerry	Mobil
Schnatter, Rob	EBSI
Steup, Dave	Shell
Strother, Dale	BP
Williams, Gary	American Health Foundation

Chairman Pat Beatty convened this meeting of the Benzene Task Force (BTF) at 8:35. He explained that the BTF was seeking to **re-evaluate its objectives** in light of the biologically-based risk assessment (BBRA) model's approaching completion and the perspective that the proposed cancer risk assessment guidelines give into where EPA is headed. Our guests, Drs. Irons and Williams, then made presentations on research areas concerning **bone marrow differentiation and genotoxicity**, respectively, that might resolve outstanding issues associated with the risk of leukemia posed by benzene exposure. The rest of the morning session was spent in group discussion of the possibilities.

When our visitors left after lunch, the BTF members briefly went over updates on **issues and projects**:

Mary Paxton reported that there still is no word on when the **revision of the U.S. EPA's benzene document** will be released for external review.

More detail has recently been obtained on how **North Carolina** has been deriving RfCs and RfDs for numerous chemicals including benzene. This information will be conveyed to David Bayliss at U.S. EPA, and possibly followed up with a letter expressing our concerns.

Pat Beatty reported that WSPA has contracted with EBSI to produce an advocacy document for submission to **California EPA** this spring. It is expected that benzene will be listed as a reproductive / developmental toxicant. The associated no-significant-risk level (NSRL) has not been determined, but is expected to be higher than the current value for cancer.

Rob Schnatter reported that ESBI's benzene risk assessment has been submitted to the European Union through the rapporteur country, Germany, and comments are expected by June. The EU's objective is for benzene to be one of five compounds for which the process is completed in 1997. The Dutch Health Council recently concluded that, even with the body of information presented at Benzene '95, there is not enough evidence to merit change of their benzene risk assessment.

ACGIH will be passing its recommendation for a benzene TLV at 0.5 ppm with a 2.5 ppm STEL on to its membership for vote in late May. The change would then be considered officially adopted, and it would appear in the new TLV booklet in August. At the BTF's next meeting, we will compile our concerns about the process (not taking any further issue with the numbers for benzene) for a letter to be submitted in the summer.

Note was made of the fact that benzene symposia are on the agendas at both the Toxicology Forum in Washington on February 26 and at the Society of Toxicology in Cincinnati on March 11.

It was decided to respond positively to ChemRisk's proposal to prepare a rebuttal article on the Utterback and Rinsky (1995) of the Paustenbach estimates of benzene exposure in the Pliofilm cohort. It was noted that working from the comments that API submitted to ACGIH on the subject should minimize their effort.

A draft of DynCorp's report on its development of a database of benzene monitoring results was circulated for comment.

The three chemical-specific work groups have received their instructions from ILSI's "genotoxicity panel," and the drafted case studies are expected in the early summer. Gerry Raabe will speak to Jeff Foran about the BTF's concern that the project has become too focused on the proposed EPA paradigm and suggest that, if the project proceeds as now planned, it should be more restrictively entitled "How Non-tumor Data Could Be Used in EPA's Proposed Cancer Risk Assessment Guidelines."

In discussing plans for the 1998 budget, it was decided that minimal provision should be made for the BBRA model. Overall, however, the group sees so many up-coming challenges to benzene that a budget nearly level with current funding would be advisable. The three topics proposed by Rich Irons (B-Lymphocyte Differentiation and Metabolism, Lymphocyte Biology, and Long-term Bone Marrow Culture) should be pursued simultaneously. Gary Williams should be asked to prepare a letter proposal with costs on the four-step project he suggested, with the first (Comprehensive Review of Genotoxicity Data) being a definite priority. Having Otto Wong prepare a paper on non-Hodgkin's lymphoma was raised another possibility.

A date for the next BTF meeting was not selected at this time. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Burr Paxton