

Minutes from Reproductive Hazards Committee Business Meeting at the ICOH Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, March 25, 2009

Time: Wednesday 25.3.2009 at 17:00-18:30

Participants:

Gunnar Toft (DK)
Li-Ching Chu (Taiwan)
Pau-Chung Cheng (Taiwan)
Aquiél Dalvie (South Africa)
Ane Marie Thulstrup (DK)
Danuta Kielkowsky (South Africa)
Brammoh Bello (South Africa)
Yun Kyang Chung (Taiwan)
Helene Taskinen (FI)
Jens Peter Bonde (DK)

1. Approval of minutes Costa Rica Business Meeting

The business meeting was announced by mail to all members of the Scientific Committee more than one month before the meeting. The minutes from the Costa Rica business meeting at June 9, 2008, were approved without comments.

2. Approval of meeting agenda

Furthermore, the meeting agenda was approved.

3. Appointment of referee

Kielkowsky was appointed chair of the meeting.

4. Activities past year

The main activities of the main Scientific Committee of the past 3 years since the ICOH in Milano 2006 have been:

- Establishment of a website (www.aroem.dk) which is the link to the main ICOH website
- Elaboration of a detailed work programme 2006-2009 which was endorsed by the Executive Board and which can be read at the website
- Updating of the Scientific Committee Member List by emailing to some 70 ICOH members with potential interest in reproductive issues
- An Executive Board of 5 members was established to strengthen the leadership of the Scientific Committee
- The Committee has organised 2 seminars in:
 - Banff, 2007: Endocrine disruption from an occupational angle
 - Sct. Jose, June 2008: Reproductive health in relation to pesticides and agricultural work

- The Commission has elaborated a News Letter for the ICOH bulletin in June 2008 authored by 6 Scientific Committee Members with the main message that the reproductive health is a matter of concern in relation to pesticides.
- The Committee has reviewed papers for oral and special sessions at The ICOH 2009 Congress

The Chair of the Committee Jens Peter Bonde provided a brief report of past activities. According to the work plan the Committee was supposed to organise a reproductive health stand alone conference and to write a position paper, but these objectives have been delayed until the next period for reasons of limited resources.

5. Work Programme 2009-2012

The chair suggested the following programme for the next period:

Organise seminars or special sessions in reproductive health in Taipei, Taiwan, 2010, and in Oxford in 2011, and in South Korea in 2012. The 2 first seminars will be held in relation to EPICOH Conferences, and the latter in relation with the ICOH Congress in 2012.

It is suggested to identify important current issues in reproductive health in order to write an ICOH position paper. Criteria are scientific excellence, impact and ethical high standing. Some ideas for such a position paper include:

- Male mediated development toxicity (epigenetics)
- Endocrine disruption in the occupational arena (considering the fact that so far this topic has been entirely based upon environmental issues)
- Gene-environment interaction in reproductive health (an emerging field)
- The risk conferred by physical strain during pregnancy (where we still are in lack of reliable answers)

It is a major objective to organise the first international ICOH SC Conference in Occupational and Possibly Environmental Reproductive Health. The next seminar at Taipei will be a full day seminar with several invited speakers and will be seen as the first step towards an international stand alone conference in the field.

Enhanced cooperation with other SCs and international scientific societies should be given priority.

Other fields of importance are enhanced visibility and impact of relevant findings in the field – evidence based advocacy? All over there is a need to accelerate initiatives with respect to occupational health guidelines, training, occupational health services and code of ethics. Finally, there is a need to maintain and develop the organisational structure of the Sub-Committee including updating of website and member list to strengthen the recruitment of young scientists to the Committee. The latter is an issue of high priority.

The Business Meeting discussed the proposal for a work plan, which was approved.

6. Election of Chair and Secretary

Jens Peter Bonde was elected for his second and last period as Chair of the Scientific Committee. The secretary elected at the Milano-meeting Olga Sirochalova (Russia) has not been able to take part in the activities of the Committee. Gunnar Toft, at the Department of Occupational Medicine at Aarhus University, was suggested as new chair for the next period. Jens Peter Bonde will ask for his approval at the ICOH Board. Gunnar Toft has actively been creating the website and has updated the website regularly.

7. All Other Issues

None

Referee: Jens Peter Bonde
Copenhagen, April 2009