

NATIONAL DOSE ASSESSMENT WORKING GROUP

PAPER 6-08: RESPONSE TO THE COMMENTS MADE ON THE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY DOSE ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY MADE AT THE 5TH NDAWG MEETING

At the 5th meeting of NDAWG the FSA made a presentation on its current methodology for assessing prospective doses. Numerous comments were made on the methodology both at the meeting and later in writing. The FSA has considered these comments and intends, in light of these comments to make changes to its dose assessment methodology. The main features of these changes are detailed below. It is intended that these changes will be incorporated into the FSA's methodology in time for the consideration of proposed revised authorisations for the British Energy sites in summer 2005.

If the recommendations of ICRP Committee 4 do suggest the use of age weighted dose coefficients or age weighted habit data it may be necessary to reconsider these changes.

Identification of the Critical Group

The FSA methodology will be amended so that instead of the 97.5th and 50th percentile of the distribution of total doses being used the mean dose of all those individuals who receive a dose >1/3 the maximum dose will be used. This will bring the FSA methodology into closer alignment with the current ICRP recommendations especially where homogeneity of the group is considered.

Location of Agricultural Production

Currently the FSA methodology assumes that crops and animal produce are grown/produced at the location, where production could take place, with the highest deposition. It is recognised that this is a very cautious assumption. Local food, the consumption of which is recorded in habit surveys, will be sourced from a much wider area. The current method gives an upper bound on the dose that a member of the public could receive and it is intended to continue with this calculation. To provide a more representative estimate of the dose that could be received from the consumption of local terrestrial foods calculations will be carried out using the average deposition between the site fence and 5 km from the discharge point. The nomenclature to be used for these different estimates of the dose is to be decided.

These changes and a number of other minor changes will be made to the FSA's assessment guidance documents.