

## NATIONAL DOSE ASSESSMENT WORKING GROUP

### PAPER 9-05: RESPONSE TO COMMENTS ON FSA ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY MADE AT THE 8TH NDAWG NOVEMBER 2005

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At the 8<sup>th</sup> NDAWG meeting held in November 2005 discussions took place on the inter-comparison between Food Standards Agency and Environment Agency prospective dose assessments and on the progress that had been made since the Consultative Exercise on Dose Assessments (CEDA). The conclusions of these discussions were that:

- There should be better co-ordination of dose assessments between the FSA and the EA with more commonality in the methods used.
- There should be greater transparency in the reports of dose assessments.

In response to these comments the FSA has held internal discussions on desirable changes in its assessment methodology. In addition a meeting has been held with the EA. As a result of these discussions it has been decided to make the following changes the FSA assessment methods.

#### **Co-ordination with the EA**

As the first stage of their assessments both the FSA and EA will identify the initial assumptions to be used such as:

- Location of discharge points
- Effective stack heights
- Identity of unspecified radionuclides
- Chemical forms and deposition velocities
- Release fractions from incinerators
- Location of agricultural production and occupancy

This information will be exchanged and any discrepancies identified. Discrepancies will then be resolved, if necessarily, by asking the EA site inspector to obtain definitive information from the site operator.

### **Use of Habit Data<sup>1</sup>**

Both the FSA and the EA will make use of the 'profiles' method developed for reporting combined doses in the RIFE report [Ref. 1]. This method will be slightly modified. Firstly the consumption rates will be rounded to avoid undue impression of precision. Secondly in those cases where the 'profiles' method gives zero or low occupancy rates a conservative assumption for occupancy will be assumed. As with the basic input assumptions the consumption and occupancy rates to be used will be agreed between the FSA and the EA.

### **Presentation of Assessment Results<sup>2</sup>**

The contents of the reports used by the FSA to communicate the results of prospective dose assessments will be changed. Use of the 'profiles' method to interpret habit data will enable the consumption and occupancy rates used in the assessment to be reported explicitly. Also the report will contain the calculated dose received per unit consumption of all the foodstuffs and per unit occupancy. This will enable readers of the report to carry out their own calculations to reflect a different set of habits.

The situation in Scotland is different. SEPA do not carry out prospective dose assessments. The only dose assessment apart from that carried out by the operator is that performed by the FSA, but the same principles used for assessments for sites in England and Wales will be applied to sites in Scotland.

It is proposed that these changes are brought in with the next assessment carried out by the FSA.

### **References**

Ref. 1 Methods for assessment of total dose in the radioactivity in food and the environment report. NDAWG/2/2005.

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<sup>1</sup> Use of habit data in assessment will be reviewed, if necessary, in the light of recommendations from the NDAWG habits sub-group when these are published.

<sup>2</sup> The methods used to present the results of assessments will be reviewed in the light of recommendations from the NDAWG communications sub-group when these are published.