

BRITISH CROP PRODUCTION COUNCIL

EXPERT WORKING GROUP – APPLICATION (EWG-A)

Minutes of the **95th meeting** held on **2nd October 2007** at Silsoe SAU

EWG members present

R. Bateman (Chairman)	J Clayton
J. Fisher	R Glass
P. Miller	T. Swan
J. Tobbutt	R Makepeace
W Taylor	T Robinson

95.1

95.1.1 Apologies

Apologies for absence had been received from:
W. Basford, G. Matthews, H Dobson Tom Bals

95.1.2 Minutes of the 94th meeting held on 21st March 2007 at Syngenta, Whittlesford, Cambs.

These were accepted.

95.1.3 Matters arising from the minutes

It was pointed out that the TOPPS project outlined by Bill Taylor at the last meeting was Europe wide.

Spray quality definitions in the Code of Practice remained of concern as the inclusion of numbers (probably taken from section 4.1 of Pesticide Application but not noticed at the draft stage) sent the wrong message to critics. There was a need to register concern as the COP was in print but informally.

ISO is revising spray classification –concerns should go to Andrew Hewitt preferably from PSD.

All other matters would be covered as agenda items.

95.2 CURRENT ISSUES

95.2.1 LINK Project

‘Optimising pesticide use in arable agriculture by improving nozzle selection based on product efficacy to give optimised use and improved spray drift control’

The project started formally on 1st September 2007 and would run for 30 months.

Principle topics for investigation were:

- i) Spray drift
- ii) Efficacy and how spray characteristics could be defined for a wider array of nozzle types

Spray quality definition for efficacy was not easy but a tool box was needed for practitioners that linked spray quality, efficacy and drift. Efficacy was a function of product, target and environmental issues. Drift was more easily dealt with. The LINK project provided an opportunity to change both terminology and definitions as well as offering a sounder basis for practitioners to take decisions.

95.2.2 BCPC Publications

Application Booklet Series. W Basford reported that progress was now finalising the draft of Using Pesticides. Small Scale Spraying and Field Scale Spraying had now in publication for some months and good responses had been received.

Granule Spreaders. A first draft had gone to practitioners for comment in October. A wide range of disparate uses would be covered including insecticide granules (potatoes), slug control and total weed control for amenity.

95.2.3 Standards Development

The Environmental Committee of the EU had initiated a series of WGs as follows:

WG4 Spray drift in wind tunnels

WG5 Hand-held sprayers

WG7 Drift Classification Part 1 (Ganzlemeier) but part 2 Spray Drift Classification from Boom Sprayers was still under discussion.

WG9 Colour Coding for Nozzle Tips

WG11 Induction Hoppers

WG12 Deposits from Field Crop Sprayers

WG13 Drop Size Classification for International Standards – not yet known whether this would lead to standard reference nozzles.

Drift measurement and drift classification involve heavy commitment

95.2.4 Consultation on proposed consolidation of pesticide legislation (1987-2007)

Primary focus was on compulsory record keeping for all pesticide applications – this will require a change in regulation – as attention had been focused on residues in food and by-stander exposure following the RCEP report. A good neighbour scheme was under development by AIC/NFU/Voluntary Initiative and others while ADAS had recently completed a trail scheme in the midlands on notification that had reportedly provoked a very low level of enquiry from neighbours and by-standers over a 6 month period. Notification can clearly present considerable difficulties particularly where urban expansion and arable areas meet.

Responses were due in by 30th November 2007 but there was a strong feeling that under the cover of consolidation other factors could emerge including the implications of lower volume spraying and the fact that the technical data base for risk assessment dates back to 1987. There *may* be more modern work available from EU states and PSD *may* have seen it.

The EWG had a need for more information, the reasoning was that if uncertainty existed among the experts in this group how could farm operatives be given best advice?

It was decided that low volume spraying and the regulatory implications would be a major topic at the next meeting. It was thought that the meeting could be at or close to York and that Paul Hamey or someone equivalent be asked to provide a review.

95.3 Any Other Business

Discussion focused on the relative roles of BCPC and the EWG. From a scientific point of view the role of BCPC was considered to have diminished dramatically. This was exemplified by the restriction of 2 pages per paper for the last Congress – this was a strong disincentive for anyone to report scientific progress at a future BCPC Congress especially since the industry and its customers were not looking toward Glasgow as either a focus for networking or a source of technical information.

At the very least there should be a European focus for the industry.

John Fisher was asked to present a BCPC response to the next meeting.

95.4 Date of Next Meeting

It was convenient to have the EWG and LINK PMC meetings on the same day but next time the LINK PMC should be in the morning.

Dates for LINK meetings were fixed as:

Tuesday 12th February 2008 at Silsoe

Tuesday 9th September 2008 at a venue to be confirmed