

Neurotox News

Nr 7
Sep 2003



**The Scientific Committee on Neurotoxicology and Psychophysiology
of the International Commission on Occupational Health**

Chairman editorial

Dear colleagues,

I am writing the Chairman editorial on behalf of our Chairman Anders Iregren, who asked me to replace him for this issue. He suffered a mild stroke a couple weeks ago and was admitted to the hospital. His conditions are fortunately very good, he is recovering very quickly from some speech and sensory motor impairment. His mood and his sense of humor are good and these are very good signs that I noticed when I talked to him on the phone last week.

There is some important news regarding our committee.

First of all, following the last ICOH International Conference in Brazil, new regulation have been officially approved in ICOH. You can find in this issue of the bulletin some "Short notes of the ICOH scientific committee/network officers' meeting" that took place during the Iguassu conference in Brazil last February.

By reading it you can have the feeling of what are the most discussed issues at the ICOH organization.

I would like to remind that one of the participant at that discussion, prof. Antonio Greco, from the Clinica del Lavoro of Milan, Italy, unfortunately died a short time after the conference from a

skin tumor. For those of you who knew Antonio Grieco, it is not necessary to mention his skilled scientific and historic importance in the field of Occupational Medicine, and his exquisite humanity as well.

A very important change in ICOH regards the possibility for members from the developing countries to pay a reduced fee. Members from Countries with GDP per capita \leq 15.000 USD will pay a subscription fee of 60 Swiss Francs for the triennium 2003-2005, instead of 270. You can visit the ICOH web site to read the ICOH Constitution and Byelaws http://www.icoh.org.sg/eng/core_docs.html including the changes approved at the General Assembly held in Iguassu on February 23 2003. In the Byelaws the necessity to indicate the procedure for the SC'S Chairman and Secretary election is clearly indicated and each SC has to formalize his own procedure. So this will be a task to accomplish in the future.



I am particularly happy to announce that the first proceeding volume from the 8th International Symposium on Neurobehavioral Methods and Effects, that was held in Brescia, Italy, on June 2002, is now available as a special issue of Neurotoxicology, containing 30 papers selected from the 300 communications presented at the meeting. You can find the complete list of these papers in this issue of the bulletin, and you can use the following link to access the abstracts: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/0161813X>.

The next world ICOH International Conference will be held in June 2006 in Milan, Italy. The Scientific Committee has already started to work on the conference outline, and please plan to attend this meeting already. We will have chances to prepare specific workshops and minisymposia within the conference. Therefore, feel free to communicate with me about any possible idea or proposal to be included and organized for this occasion.

In the meantime, I am sure that our Korean friends are probably working hard for the 9th International Symposium on Neurobehavior, etc. (sometimes we should think about this title, that is very nice but a bit complicated...). Do not forget about this next meeting in September 2005.

An important workshop on Chronic Solvent Encephalopathy will be held in Amsterdam in a few days and you can read a brief description of it by the organizer, Gent van der Laan, of the Netherlands Center of Occupational Diseases, Coronel Institute, Amsterdam. It will be very interested to hear about the indications emerging from this meeting.

A report of the INA9 by Christoph van Thriel of the Institute for Occupational Physiology at the University of Dortmund is also included in this issue of the bulletin, telling us some interesting details of that great conference.

We are very happy that the next INA10 will not overlap our 9th Symposium, since it will be held in Helsinki on June 2005 !

And finally I am happy to announce and welcome three new members on our Scientific Committee: Catharina, Helena and Iman !

NEW MEMBERS :

CATHARINA WESSELING

Central American Institute for Studies on Toxic Substances (IRET)
Universidad Nacional, PO Box 86-3000
Heredia, Costa Rica

Elena HERRERO HERNANDEZ

Dept. Of Traumatology, Orthopaedics and Occupational Health, University of Turin, Neurotoxicology Unit
10126 Turin, Italy

IMAN A. NUWAYHID

Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS)
American University of Beirut (AUB)
Beirut, Lebanon

SHORT NOTES AT THE ICOH SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE/NETWORK OFFICERS' MEETING FEBRUARY 22, 2003 IN IGUASSU, BRAZIL

Participants:

(SC = Scientific Committee, OH = Occupational Health , OSH = Occupational Safety and Health)

Stephen W. Borron, SC on OH in the Chemical Industry

Antonio Grieco, SC History of Prevention of Occupational and Environmental Diseases

Daniela Fano, SC History of Prevention of Occupational and Environmental Diseases

Katherine M. Venables, SC Epidemiology in OH

Sergio Iavicoli, SC History of Prevention of Occupational and Environmental Diseases

Kaj Elgstrand, SC OH and Development

Max Lum, Network Information and

Communication Technology in OH

Roberto Lucchini, SC Neurotoxicology and Psychophysiology

Jean-François Caillard, Past President

Bengt Knave, President

Ruddy Facci, Vice President

Daisy Raja Gabaglia, PA to Vice President

Virginia Lepping, SC OH in Nursing

Jenny Serfontein, SC OH in Nursing

Ken Parsons, SC Thermal Factors

Gunnar Nordberg, SC Toxicology of Metals

Håkan Westberg, SC Industrial Hygiene

Annette Jörgensen, SC OH in Nursing

Kaj Husman, SC Health Services Research and Evaluation in OH

Giuseppe Abbritti, SC Indoor Air Quality and Health

Giacomo Muzi, SC Indoor Air Quality and Health

Piet Kroon, SC Education and Training in OH

Ken Takahashi, SC Respiratory Disorders

Laura Punnett, SC Musculoskeletal Disorders

Jyrki Liesivuori, SC Pesticides

Jorma Rantanen, President-elect

Representative of SC Allergy and

Immunotoxicology

Gunborg Jungeteg, PA to the President

1. Opening of the meeting

Bengt Knave opened the meeting and asked the participants to introduce themselves.

2. ICOH Scientific Committees' and Networks' report for 2000-2002

The Triennium Report including the reports of the Scientific Committees and the Networks was briefly commented by the President. He asked the participants to deliver comments to him when they had studied the content.

3. Scientific Committees' issues of special interest for ICOH's global role as OSH expertise

Selected SC Officers had been asked to present their views on the following questions:

- A) Should the number of SCs and Networks be decreased?
- B) Can some SCs/Networks be amalgamated?
- C) Are there new areas to be covered?
- D) ICOH Officers' coordinating role?

Jenny Serfontein, Antonio Grieco and Kaj Elgstrand had accepted to comment the above questions.

Jenny Serfontein:

A) and B) There are some SCs active in similar fields, like the toxicology committees and the committees on unemployment, shiftwork and work organisation.

The area of HIV/Aids needs to be covered by a committee or network.

Kaj Elgstrand:

A) 38 committees and networks for about 2000 ICOH members mean an average of 50 members per committee/network, if all members participate in one committee/network each. This does not seem as too many committees and networks.

It is however surprising that only six of the SCs have their own websites, accessible through the ICOH website. To be able to access all SCs/Networks is of crucial importance to make the whole membership interested in the activities of the SCs/Networks.

B) and C) Some SCs/Networks could probably be amalgamated considering logical reasons related to the subject contents of their activities and/or the small number of persons active in some SCs/Networks. These

two indicators – contents overlapping and number of active members – may, on the other hand, be less relevant than the level of activities and the quality of these activities within the different SCs/Networks. I miss one subject - HIV/Aids in working life, and maybe also – Health effects of globalisation.

D) In spite of definite efforts made by the officers of ICOH, the impression is that the coordination has mainly consisted in attempts to get formal reports from the SCs/Networks. It seems fine that there are both SCs, Networks and Task Groups. It would be a good measure to amplify the coordinating role by including a more active follow-up of the activities in these groups. Why not limit the ICOH Officers' role to coordinate, support and follow-up of the work in the Task Groups, and let each Board member be responsible for coordination and follow-up of the activities in two SCs/Networks each? Such an organisation would provide increased support to the SCs/Networks and a basis for amalgamation of some groups and establishment of new ones.

Antonio Grieco:

A) The opinions on a relevant number of ICOH SCs and Networks are varying and sometimes not in agreement.

B) Those in favour of a large number of ICOH SC emphasize the fact that in the last year the number of problems demanding new knowledge has increased enormously. I think that everyone would agree on having:

- a) appropriate periodical checks on their (not only scientific) productivity and
- b) a real implementation of the aggregation into seven areas, as suggested at the ICOH 2000 in Singapore also in view of strengthening the weaker SCs and developing affinities.

C) New areas to be covered could be:

- a) Diagnostic criteria for work-related diseases
- b) Migration

D) the ICOH Officers' coordinating role is substantial in order to

- Monitor and stimulate ICOH SC and Network activities;
- Increase ICOH SC and Network communication, socialization and proselytism;
- Prepare and upload on the web an annual report of developed activities;
- Stimulate and foster collaboration between ICOH SCs and other bodies.

Bengt Knave thanked the three presenters for their valuable views on the questions posed.

On these presentations a lively discussion followed.

Bruno Piccoli: Consensus position papers are important products for the SCs. The SC on Work and Vision had difficulties to publish a position paper due to lack of referees. It will now be possible in the Ergonomics publication.

Gunnar Nordberg:

Re. Amalgamation of SCs. When a new SC in the field of toxicology is proposed, it has been decided that all toxicology SCs shall cooperate. Such an attitude ought to be more emphasized. If a SC is not active, it should be closed. It is very important that our SCs are seen publicly, especially on the website. Do not in the first case amalgamate or close!

Roberto Lucchini:

We want good SCs with active members. The ICOH Officers and Board could demand more from the SCs, so that the inactive ones could be sorted out. Networking is good.

Stephen Borron:

We need more communication between the SCs regarding conferences and meetings. There are often undesirable collisions between interesting meetings. A well up-dated calendar on the ICOH website would be appreciated.

Giacomo Muzi:

Our SC on Indoor Air Quality and Health is networking very well with other SCs. We had a good conference in China for example. A question is if we shall produce position papers that will not be published!

Bengt Knave commented on the presentations and the discussion:

Kaj Elgstrand's comments are important. The ICOH Board members could be more active towards the SCs. The President-elect and the Secretary-General-elect are listening.

I myself have proposed networks for new topics, as not every interesting area is scientific.

We have tried to have an ICOH journal or be part of an existing suitable journal without success. If the membership fee should be increased, one of the demands is that it should cover an ICOH journal. This is a matter for the next group of ICOH Officers and the next ICOH Board.

A new ICOH Network has been established – GOMECE (Guidelines on Occupational Medicine Education and Competence) led by Ragnar Rylander.

Bengt Knave asked for comments by the President-elect.

Jorma Rantanen:

I must discuss these issues with the new ICOH Board. My opinion is that we shall not increase the number of areas but be really active in the ones already covered. We ought to improve the quality and produce effective products. The global view is important.

Sergio Iavicoli:

ICOH has limited resources but we shall work efficiently with them. Active communication between SCs, Networks and members would be of valuable support in this work as well as increase the number of members.

Comments on the result of the ICOH five-year Programme Strategy with special impact on the activities of the ICOH SCs

Bengt Knave presented in summary the work of the ICOH Task Groups and ICOH Networks during the past triennium. All reports have been published on the ICOH Website.

TG Transparency:

A form for Declaration of Interest was presented in Singapore 2000 that was proposed to be completed by ICOH executives on all levels. This form will be presented to the General Assembly in Iguassu for approval and will come into effect for the triennium 2003-2005.

The proposal of changes to the Constitution and Bye-laws was commented by some of the SC Officers. The danger of conflicts of interest when associated experts are allowed to be active in SCs was emphasized. It was however found necessary to revise the ICOH Constitution and Bye-laws

ICOH Code of Ethics:

The revised text of the Code of Ethics is ready to be published on the ICOH Website. It will be printed in English, French and Spanish.

New SC or Network on HIV/Aids:

Max Lum declared that he is very interested in working with this topic, especially from the information point of view.

At the same time it was suggested that the name of the Network on Information and Communication Technology ought to be changed to Communication Network.

The proposal of the Task Group on Language Matters was also commented. Annette Jörgensen, chair of the TG Language Matter, explained that if more languages should be defined as ICOH official languages the translation work must be done free of charge by ICOH members.

ICOH membership fees:

The Task Group has suggested substantially reduced fee for members from developing countries. Jenny Serfontein asked if it was also possible for such member to pay the fee once a year. As the handling of membership fees by the Banks is expensive it is not likely, but the procedure should be investigated by the Secretary-General.

ICOH Website

The Web-master Bruno Hannemann reported that during the past two years there has been an average of 654 visitors per month. There have been altogether 15053 unique visitors over the past two years. Bruno Hannemann also reported that there are 766 links from the ICOH website and that 80% of the visitors reached the ICOH website by search engines from 100 countries.

Bengt Knave thanked Bruno for his good work.

Responsibilities for the ICOH Officers towards the ICOH SCs

Financial support:

Bengt Knave explained that an amount of 2000 CHF was budgeted for each SC for the triennium 2000-2003. Very few SCs made use of this offer. Kate Venables suggested a "rolling fund" for the start-up of activities that would have the goal to be self-financed but needed financial resources at the beginning.

To the question if there is a special procedure to apply for financial support, Bengt Knave replied that the application should go to the Secretary-General for handling according to the rules set-up by the Finance Committee and the TG Transparency.

Promotion material and communication:

Max Lum presented information on a seminar "New Era responding to New Threats" in which the SC on Education and Training in OSH and the Network on ICT cooperated. The material used for that seminar – a poster and a sticker with the text "Ask me about ICOH" – could be sent by Max Lum to those who were interested. The material can be sent by email.

In this connection Roberto Lucchini asked if it would be possible to exchange SC-material by email or via the website. Bruno Hannemann explained that he is rebuilding the ICOH website in order to facilitate the process of entering material.

It was also stressed that the ICOH National Secretaries and the ICOH SC Officers must be in close contact to be able to make a productive effort to increase the ICOH membership.

Next Mid-term meeting of the ICOH SCs/Networks Officers

It was announced that the next Mid-term meeting will be held in Finland end of January 2005 in connection with the Occupational Health Service Conference.

Other announcements:

The next Exposure Assessment Conference will be held in Utrecht June 17-19 2004

The next Medichem Conference will be held in Paris September 1-4, 2004

Material from the Occupational Health in Nursing Conference in Port Elisabeth in 2002 is now published.

Closing of the meeting

Bengt Knave closed the meeting by expressing his gratitude to all SC Officers for their dedicated work during his time as Vice President responsible for the ICOH SCs and as President of ICOH, 1993 – 2002.

CHRONIC SOLVENT ENCEPHALOPATHY (CSE)

Feasibility of an international evidence-based criteria document on diagnostic procedures and classification

Invitational Conference, Academic Medical Center Amsterdam, 18-19 september, 2003

Harmonization of the diagnostic criteria and procedures of CSE is necessary to foster the quality of the procedures and to get reliable figures that can trigger preventive actions at the level of enterprises, branches and countries. The development of an EU criteria document for the evaluation of solvent induced chronic encephalopathy could be the start of multicentred European studies and should provide more reliable future data for Eurostat. However, the feasibility of an international accepted criteria document is still uncertain and therefore needs to be explored; can the experts reach harmonization?

In this conference existing practices in different countries will systematically be elaborated and a proposal for a model for an evidence based diagnostic protocol on solvent related CTE will be presented and discussed. It will be focused on the aspects: assessment of disease, assessment of exposure, differential diagnostic issues and assessment of causal inference.

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REPORT OF THE INA9 CONFERENCE

Organizers

The unit „Neurotoxicology of Occupational Toxicants“ from the Institute for Occupational Physiology at the University of Dortmund, Germany, especially Andreas Seeber (conference chair), Ernst Kiesswetter (publication), and Christoph van Thriel (congress management) prepared and organised the conference.

They co-operated with Gerhard Winneke, and Herbert Wiegand from the Medical Institute of Environmental Hygiene at the Heinrich-Heine-University of Duesseldorf, Germany, Division of “Neurobehavioral Toxicology” and with Laurence D. Fechter from the Jerry Pettis Memorial Veterans Medical Center, Loma Linda, CA, USA, acting as president of INA in the preparation time of INA-9.

Location

Berufsgenossenschaftliches Institut Arbeit und Gesundheit – BGAG, Dresden in Germany (Institute for Work and Health associated with the Academy of the German Berufsgenossenschaften, the German Employer’s Liability Insurance Association): The staff of the Institute supported the local realisation of the conference.

Participants

Approximately 150 scientists from 33 countries and all five continents participated in INA-9. Within the participants of INA-9 there were large proportions of students, participants from developing countries, and Eastern Europe.

Scientific program

Altogether 135 presentations (55 oral / 80 poster presentations) were given during the course of the conference. They dealt with various topics related to the principal theme of INA-9: *“Neurotoxic Mechanisms of Occupational and Environmental Exposure”*.

Abstract of these preparations were available in the “Book of Abstracts” that was handed over to all participant and that is still available on request (electronic version).

INA-9 was opened on Sunday, June 22nd, by the Jacob Hooisma Lecture given by Hans Rosling from the Karolinska Institutet. His excellent talk dealt with Konzo, a neurotoxic disease occurring mainly in Africa. This opening lecture of INA-9 was one of the most impressive events of the meeting since the association between poverty and increasing risks for a chronic neurological disease was elaborated.

During the remaining five days of the conference 12 sessions with oral presentations and two poster sessions were held.

Sessions were arranged to different topics, namely:

- Food neurotoxicity/ nutrition
- Cholinesterase inhibitors (association to terroristic applications)
- Modelling in neurotoxicology
- Developmental neurotoxicology and children’s environmental health
- Workplace chemicals and noise induced hearing loss (auditory system toxicology)
- Visual system toxicology
- Chemoreception of neurotoxins (trigeminal and olfactory system toxicology)
- Neurobehavioral effects of toluene
- Human neurotoxicology of metals
- Free oral presentations (two sessions)

Additionally, the student symposium was held on Tuesday and five students reported their ongoing and sometimes completed research (mainly their PhD thesis). Furthermore, several students were integrated into the other aforementioned oral and the poster sessions.

There were two poster sessions each with 40 presentations. These presentations covered various topics like neurotoxicity of pesticides, metals, and solvents, toxicokinetic modelling, neurotoxic mechanisms, occupational and environmental neurotoxicology, and some genetic aspects of neurotoxicology.

Only very positive feedbacks were given to the organisers and the scientific committee on the scientific level of the contributions and the discussions. This statement is confirmed by the fact that before closing the deadline 45 manuscripts were submitted for publication, and additional manuscripts can be expected until August-15-2003. After a peer review procedure the manuscripts will be published in "Environmental Toxicology and Pharmacology".

Social program:

In accordance with the traditional time schedule of previous INA meetings Wednesday was used for recreational, social, and cultural purposes.

An outstanding social program provided a guided tour of the old section of Dresden and provided a wonderful historical perspective on this seat of Saxony. Many participants chose to attend the Semper Opera an experience that truly enriched the visit to Dresden. Finally, a side wheel steam boat replete with Dixieland Band and buffet dinner provided an outstanding glimpse of the Elbe River and a visit to the Schloss Pillnitz (a baroque castle). As always, a spirited game of soccer took place bolstered by several new and highly talented neurotoxicologists who had not previously attended INA meetings.

Sponsors:

The extensive list of distinguished sponsors of INA-9 allowed the organising committee to invite young scientists and students from all over the world. About 35 participants from African and Asian countries and also those from Eastern European and South American countries were supported. Additionally, the sponsors supported the travel expenses of more than 30 invited speakers. This extent of financial assistance was a new development in the International Neurotoxicology Association.

The officials of the conference and the recipients of the financial support mentioned repeatedly and thankfully the engagement of the following sponsors:

- American Chemical Council
- Berufsgenossenschaftliches Institut Arbeit und Gesundheit
- CEFIC LRI European Chemical Council
- DaimlerChrysler-Fonds im Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft e.V.
- Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)
- Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD)
- Eastman Kodak Company
- Institut für Arbeitsphysiologie an der Universität Dortmund (IfADo)
- Monsanto Inc.
- National Institute of Health, US Department of Health and Human Services
- Nature
- Toegepast Natuurwetenschappelijk Onderzoek (TNO)
- United States Environmental Protection Agency
- United States Army Medical Research Acquisition Activity

INA10 will take place in June, 2005 close to Helsinki, Finland.

Christoph van Thriel

NeuroToxicology

Volume 24, Issues 4-5, Pages 479-757 (August 2003)

Eighth International Symposium on Neurobehavioral Methods and Effects in Occupational and Environmental Health, Brescia, Italy, June 23-26, 2002

Brescia, Italy, 23 June 2002

Edited by Roberto Lucchini, Lorenzo Alessio, Joan Cranmer



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Song-Yen Tsai, Hung-Yi Chou, Hee-Wen The, Chao-Meei Chen and Chien-Jen Chen

International Meetings

**9th International Symposium
on Neurobehavioral Methods and Effects
in Occupational and Environmental Health**

**September 25 (Sun) - 28 (Wed),
2005, Gyeongju, Korea**

Theme:

*"Linkage between Developed countries and
Developing countries on neurotoxicology"*

Major topics:

Neurobehavioral changes by various
neurotoxic substances

* Environmental Issues by neurotoxic
substances

* Biological Monitoring and Biomarkers

* Work Stress related conditions

* International collaboration on moving
neurotoxic chemicals from developed
countries to developing

<http://home.kosha.net/~neurotox>

**10th International Conference
on Toxicology - ICTX**

11-16 July, 2004, Tampere, Finland

July 2001 ICT X First Announcement and
Exhibition information

July 2001 Reservations for exhibition start

Late 2003 Call For Abstracts and Registration
Brochure

February 2004 Abstract deadline.

ICT X Congress Secretariat

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◆ The newsletter

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*Contributions to the newsletter are most
welcome, preferably as .rtf files via E-mail, or
on diskette by ordinary mail.*

*Preferred file format is Rich Text Format or
MSWord. The newsletter layout is produced
using MSWord.*

*Feel free to contact me when you have any
questions or suggestions related to
contributions and/or the contents of this
newsletter!*



Committee's members

Listing all the E-mail addresses opens up for creation of SPAM-lists by the use of automated crawlers searching the web for E-mail addresses. To avoid this we are listing each member only by name and country. More specific contact information can be asked to the Committee's officers.

Mahmoud Amr Cairo Egypt	Kent Anger Portland USA	Shunichi Araki Kawasaki Japan
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Hae-Kwan Cheong Kyongbuk South Korea	Nicola Cherry Alberta Canada	Sin Eng Chia Singapore Singapore
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Akio Ohnishi Kitakyushu Japan	Krystyna Pawlas Sosnowiec Poland	Harry Roels Bruxelles Belgique
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