

UKEMS AGM AT UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM, 16 JULY, 1996

1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 6 JULY, 1995 AT UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

No amendments to the minutes were suggested at the meeting, but as members had had little time to read them it was decided to accept them subject to anyone having comments within 14 days of the AGM.

This was proposed by Barry Elliott and seconded by David Kirkland.

2. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I would like to begin by complimenting Kevin Chipman and his local team on their splendid and professional organisation of this year's Annual UKEMS Meeting. Next year is the year of the World ICEM meeting, which will be held in Toulouse, September, 7-12. In conjunction with the BTS, we will be holding a satellite meeting to the main conference, which will be in Canterbury, September 14-16, and entitled 'New Rodent Models for Genetic and Target Organ Toxicity'. The majority of the selected speakers have agreed to participate. The UKEMS membership will be circulated with details of this meeting in the near future. The 1998 meeting is set for York, 6-8 April, not September as we originally stated at last year's AGM. York has been a popular venue for past meetings, and we look forward to enjoying it once more.

I am pleased to report that the new UKEMS sub-section, the Molecular Epidemiology Group (MEG), founded by our Vice-President, Colin Garner, has had a successful first meeting on the 10 April at the Wellcome Trust building in London. There were 65 registrants. A meeting report will be published in *Mutagenesis*. The second meeting, a two day event, will be held in York, 26 and 27 March next year. A steering committee for the MEG has been formed, including Colin Garner as Chairman, with David Forman, Peter Farmer, Ann Daly and Alan Boobis as committee members.

Jim Parry will be giving you details of the current situation with our journal, *Mutagenesis*, later in the AGM, but I would like to acknowledge that Jim and others have re-negotiated our relationship with Oxford University Press (OUP) on more favourable terms to UKEMS, and thus the Society's finances should be receiving a major boost for future years. Details of the former contract with OUP are being reviewed at the moment.

This year, we have launched the UKEMS 'Young Scientist Award', largely through the efforts of our Secretary, Bob Combes. I am very grateful to Bryn Bridges, John Evans, Michael Green and David Kirkland, who with me, judged the four excellent applicants that were proposed for this award. The winner, Valerie McKelvey-Martin, gave us a super lecture earlier in this year's meeting.

Brian Burlinson, Michael Green and Leigh Henderson have organised a collaborative trial of the 'comet assay' under the auspices of UKEMS and the Industrial Genotoxicology Group (IGG). This trial was concerned with defining aspects of the methodology of the assay and the results will be outlined by Brian tomorrow. A further trial to investigate the utility of extended lymphocyte cultures for cytogenetic screening is being considered. This methodology involves

the use of mass cultured purified human lymphocyte sub-sets. Thus, well characterised, primary cells can be used, without the need for potentially hazardous blood sampling. Mike O'Donovan gave details of this in the previous oral communication session. Also, the UKEMS committee has agreed at this meeting to reconstitute a group to re-visit statistical analysis of *in vitro* genotoxicity tests, including the use of historical control data. Recommendations will be published in *Mutagenesis*.

We are still concerned to expand attendance at our annual meetings, and with bolstering membership numbers. To this end, a UKEMS homepage has been registered on the Internet (address: <http://www.swan.ac.uk/biosci/ukems/ukems1.htm>), which holds Society information on meetings, publications, news etc. I would like to thank Jim Parry and Jim Harvey from Swansea for designing and maintaining this service for the Society. Society posters, and other UKEMS publicity material, will be produced in the future, which we hope will be put on display in relevant institutions. Please use them to encourage your colleagues to attend our meetings, if you believe it is relevant for them.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that Dr Jane Cole has accepted an offer to become an honorary member of UKEMS. Jane has served our society and the field of mutagenesis with great distinction. Although Jane is to retire from the MRC Cell Mutation Unit this year, she will continue to be interested and involved in environmental mutagenesis. There are several changes to the UKEMS committee from this meeting. Colin Garner succeeds me as President. Michael Green's nomination (the only one) has been accepted as the new Vice-President, as has Steven Dean as the new Secretary. I would like to thank Stan Venitt and Leigh Henderson for their input into the committee as they finish their terms of office. There were two nominations to replace Stan as committee member, David Phillips and Eian Massey. After a postal ballot, David is elected as the new member. Peter Jenkinson joins the committee as the Chairperson for the IGG. Last year, Terry Brooks retired as our Treasurer, after a six year term. Unfortunately, Terry was unable to join us at our last annual meeting, so I would ask him now to join me to accept this gift as a token of our thanks for his service. This year, Bob Combes retires from being Secretary to this society. Bob has put his considerable energies and enthusiasm right behind the UKEMS for his six year term. He has been a great support to me and to previous Presidents, and has done much to nurture the Society as a whole. I would be grateful if Bob would accept this gift on behalf of the Society. Finally, I would like to thank the members of the executive committee as a whole for their support, drive and ideas during my term of office as President. I offer Colin Garner very best wishes as he guides the society over the next two years.

Colin Garner, as incoming President then proposed a vote of thanks to David Tweats for all his hard work during his term of office.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT

The 1995 accounts (attached) have not yet been audited. The opening balance stood at £15K. The main debit item relates to the meeting at Leicester where there was more than £2.5K shortfall. However, this should be offset by the fact that the sponsorship obtained for the 1994 meeting at Hatfield was intended to cover two years. Substantial royalties are still being received for the guidelines books (but a payment of £22 to Cambridge University Press is to be investigated). Also, £400 was received from Unilever as seedcorn money for the Young Scientist Award. Other debits include £827 for the EEMS student award. Although the closing balance of £12K is less than for 1995, the latter was inflated by the sponsorship income. There are currently 211 Society members of which 25 are students. This compares with 190 last year. Also, there are 16 new members who still have to pay their subscriptions, derived from the recent inaugural MEG meeting.

The accounts were proposed for acceptance subject to audit by Barry Elliott and this was seconded by Brian Burlinson.

4. MUTAGENESIS EDITOR'S REPORT

There has been no increase in the size of the Journal for 1996, although it is planned to publish the abstracts for the 1997 ICEM meeting in Toulouse, and to use the relevant issue as the abstracts book for the conference, as done by the EMS in the USA, using its society journal, *Environmental and Molecular Mutagenesis*. This will help in increasing distribution and advertising of Mutagenesis, the total cost is being met by the ICEM organisers. It has been decided not to produce special issues of the journal. The number of manuscript submissions to the European (UK) Editorial Office has remained roughly constant over the last two years. So far this year, 42 manuscripts have been received, compared with 88 for the whole of 1995 (see the attached). Most manuscripts have required revision before acceptance, and the 1995 rejection rate was 26%. The numbers of submissions to the Japanese office remain low, being two so far in 1996, compared with 7 for 1995. The refereeing standards have been high, but unfortunately the Japanese collaborative study on the mouse lymphoma study was published elsewhere. About 30 manuscripts are received per year by the North American office, with an acceptance rate of 33-35%.

There have been three changes to the North American board of editors (see the attached). There are also some planned changes to the European editorial board members. Michael Mercer (Munich) is to replace Ilseadore Adler, Bob Combes is to replace Barbara Sedgwick, David Gatehouse will replace David Tweats and Colin Garner is to join the board. The total number of subscriptions for 1995 was 384, which compares with 407 for 1996 (as at 21 June; the breakdown being: 299 full, 11 personal, 70 members paying, 27 members non-paying; these totals exclude the *gratis* copies sent to Copyright libraries). This is a healthy number of subscriptions, with some 460 anticipated by the end of 1996. This means that the distribution of the journal is increasing, helped by the fact that the personal subscription has been maintained at £78. There was a net profit for 1995 of £20K, although this translated into an accumulated loss of £741. The net profit for 1996 will be larger due to the increased number of subscriptions, and the society will be receiving a good income at last as a result of the new contract with OUP, in

which the publishers have agreed to waive the accumulated loss and to pass on 50% of the profit to UKEMS, as from the beginning of 1996. The existing and new contracts were checked on behalf of the Society by a legal adviser at Glaxo, and the revised amalgamated contract still has not yet been signed due to a couple of small problems which are being sorted out. The new income from the journal will enable us to distribute more free copies to deserving causes. Barry Elliott, as EEMS Secretary, is to produce a shortlist of potential recipients and contacts for countrywide copies within Europe. Also, Jane Cole will receive a free copy as a new honorary member, and Valerie McKelvey-Martin will be receiving a year's subscription as part of her Young Scientist Award.

The question of Executive Editorship of the Journal was discussed at the last UKEMS Executive Committee meeting.

It has been agreed that Jim Parry will serve a further final 5 year term as Executive Editor, and that this shall be deemed to have started in 1995. Thus, he will remain running the European Editorial Office for a further four years, finishing in 2000. During this time, and as soon as possible, a successor will be found and appointed so as to shadow Jim Parry for 2-3 years, and to be ready to take over at the appropriate time. Once the Journal is returning an income for the Society, UKEMS should consider financing the £1,500 a year, and also providing an honorarium for the Executive Editor, as this has been undertaken voluntarily by Jim Parry since the beginning of the Journal. That such an honorarium should be paid annually, and that this should be set up as soon as possible, to be established also for the incoming Editor. The amount will be agreed between the Editor and the President of UKEMS.

5. IGG CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT (given by Steve Dean)

At the last committee meeting, Peter Jenkinson was elected as new Chairperson and Brian Burlinson as the new Treasurer. As a collaborative group member of the DEREK Users Group (DEREK being the expert system: Deductive Estimation of Risk from Existing Knowledge), Glaxo is running a 200 compound test of the system and the initial results looked very promising. The manuscript being written about the collaborative trial on cell cycle effects in chromosomal aberration assays is nearly ready for submission. The joint meeting held with the IVTS in Brighton recently was considered a success scientifically. No financial figures for the meeting are available as yet and the IGG Treasurer is to obtain these from the IVTS Treasurer. The current balance of the IGG accounts is £2,026.31.

Several possible topics for future meetings are under consideration. These include aneuploidy/polyploidy, *in vivo* micronucleus test, high-throughput screening tests, and alternatives to carcinogenicity tests (eg the Nomura oncomouse, p53 knockout mice, the syrian hamster embryo (SHE) cell transformation assay, and short-term oncology studies). The possibility of a joint meeting with the BTS on the latter topic is being explored. Some of these ideas have been suggested for the next meeting to be held in the Autumn (on a date to be determined as soon as possible). The morning session will cover problems and innovations with the Ames test consisting of the following presentations: Ames miniscreen (Terry Brooks), studies using the Xenometrix system (speaker to be announced), Ames versus DEREK (David Wedd and speaker from LHASA), high-throughput screening (Ian Mitchell), finishing with proffered short

presentations. The afternoon session will comprise the following: interpretations of testing guidelines (to include a perspective on practical experience with chemical notification from the HSE and the regulator's viewpoint on the EC mutagenicity testing strategy). There will also be a panel discussion on comparison of various guidelines (ICH, EC, OECD), focusing on points of conflict between the recommended test methods, and with updates on OECD and ICH recommendations.

The comet trial is nearly complete with good consistency of results between laboratories, and the results are being presented at this UKEMS meeting. Discussions concerning problems of interpreting the proposed new OECD test guidelines have taken place at a meeting at Zeneca, and the suggestions arising from this are being compared with the latest OECD draft. It is likely that these suggestions will be discussed further with UKEMS, with a view to making an official UK response possibly via the Guidelines Steering Group. The manuscript on the collaborative trial on testing gases and volatiles is still at an early draft stage. A suggestion for the IGG to provide a bursaries for industrial placement students to attend UKEMS meetings to present their work is being considered. Also, consideration is being given to the IGG having its own internet web page linked to the UKEMS homepage. Leigh Henderson is to be given a suitable presentation for her work over the last six years for the IGG.

6. MEG ACTING CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The first meeting of the MEG was attended by 65 people and a copy of the programme was circulated at the last UKEMS committee meeting. The participants were encouraged to complete and return a questionnaire, which has confirmed that the meeting was considered a success along with the formation of this Molecular Epidemiology Group. The questionnaire also provided names of other people who would probably be interested in joining the MEG, and contact has also been established with people who were not able to attend the first meeting, but who wish to have their names added to a list for further information on future events. The formation of this group has also increased the UKEMS membership by 18, but it is expected to recruit more new members as its reputation grows.

The next meeting of the MEG will be held on Wed, 20 Nov, 1996 at the Wellcome Trust, One Park Square West, London. A letter informing the membership has already been sent and registration forms and agenda will be circulated in Sept, after the next meeting of the Steering Group, which will be held in York on Wed, 4 Sept, 1996. The next MEG meeting will probably have two speakers and proffered papers and/or posters. Dr DW Dockery (Harvard School of Public Health, USA) has been invited to give a talk on the relationship between airborne particulates and human mortality, and Professor F Bottazzo (Dept Immunology, The London Hospital Medical School) will speak on the links between the environment and diabetes. Unfortunately, Dr Dockery's teaching commitments prevent him from accepting. Prof Bottazzo has accepted his invitation. The first two-day meeting of the group will be held in York on 26-27 March, 1997. The format of this meeting will be discussed when the steering committee meets in September, although current arrangements are that 70 single bedrooms with en-suite facilities (at ca £30 per night) in James College, and 10 single standard bedrooms (ca £23 per night) in Wentworth College have been reserved. Lectures will

be given in the Biology department, with poster sessions being held in Wentworth Junior Common Room, where there will be a bar. The college bar will also be open.

7. AOB

7.1 'Emeritus' Members of UKEMS (change to constitution)

The Secretary reported that he had contacted Bryn Bridges, to ascertain his reaction to the proposed change in name of 'honorary' member to 'emeritus' member. This suggestion was not supported since dictionary definitions of 'emeritus' refer to those honourably discharged from duty, and thus the term is inappropriate for honorary members who have not retired. **After some discussion, the term 'UKEMS Fellow' as a replacement to 'honorary member' was proposed by Steve Dean and seconded by Kevin Adams.** The results of voting were: 20 in favour of the proposal, 2 against and 5 abstentions. The proposal was, therefore, adopted, and the appropriate change in the UKEMS constitution will be made.

7.2 Young Scientist Award Scheme

The membership has been circulated with details and rules of the award scheme when calls for nominations were made. The award of a silver medal will be made every other year, and the Society is grateful to Unilever for seedcorn sponsorship to cover the major initial costs for setting up the template for the engraving (the total cost being £492).

7.3 New UKEMS Committee

Colin Garner	(President; Acting MEG Chairperson; 1996-98)
Michael Green	(Vice-President; 1996-98)
Steve Dean	(Secretary; 1996-99)
Kevin Adams	(Treasurer; 1995-98)
Jim Parry	(Editor of Mutagenesis; 1995-2000; EEMS Councillor; 95-97)
Peter Jenkinson	(IGG Chairperson; 1996-98)
Barry Elliott	(EEMS Secretary; 1995-97)
Valerie McKelvey- Martin	(Committee member; 1995-98)
Ian Mitchell	(Committee member; 1995-98)
David Phillips	(Committee member; 1996-99)