Minutes of the 43rd Pesticides Forum Meeting: 16 February 2011
Room 808 Nobel House London SW1 2JP

Those present are listed at Annex A.

**Item 1: Introductions and apologies for absence**

1.1 The Chairman welcomed Andrew Bauer from NFU Scotland who is the replacement for Peter Loggie; John Holland from the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust as the replacement for Alastair Leake; and Mark Ballingall who was standing in for Jonathan Cowens from SAC. He also introduced the guest speakers Caroline Drummond from LEAF, Peter Taylor from the Association of Independent Crop Consultants, Paul Chambers from the National Farmers Union (NFU), Jill Hewitt from the National Association of Agricultural Contractors and Steve Hewitt from City & Guilds National Proficiency Tests Council. Finally, he noted that Elizabeth Dowler from the Council of Food Policy Advisors has had to stand down from the Forum following the formal disbandment of the organisation. She has passed on her best wishes to the Forum members in all their future work.

1.2 The Secretary recorded apologies for absence from: Jon Ayres (ACP); Robert Campbell (LEAF); Jonathan Cowans (SAC); Barry Dent (Voluntary Initiative); David Edwards (Co-operative Farms), Jeanette Longfield (SUSTAIN), Angela Rabess (Business Innovation and Skills Department), and Dave Bench (CRD).

**Item 2: Minutes and matters arising from the 42nd meeting: 23rd June 2010**

2.1 The minutes had been circulated and have been agreed as an accurate record. The final version has been placed on the Forum website.

2.2 James Clarke highlighted a number of outstanding issues from the last Forum meeting:

- The Forum had yet to respond to the letter sent by the ACP seeking views of the usefulness of the Pesticides Incidents Advisory Panel (PIAP) data.

- CRD was yet to provide a paper setting out the programme and timetable for the SUD consultation and implementation programme. [Post meeting note: It has been agreed that given the difficulty in establishing clear deadlines for the programme CRD will update members at each meeting both on progress and forthcoming deadlines.]

- Secretariat to arrange a session on the issue of counterfeit products. Nigel Chadwick agreed to liaise with Anne Buckenham on this matter [Post meeting note: A session has been arranged for the June 2011 meeting.]

  **Action:** Anne Buckenham & Nigel Chadwick
- Secretariat to draft a letter to go to Defra highlighting the need for more research in areas not covered by the Technology Strategy Board such as local level data to provide evidence to help drive farmers’ behaviour change. It was agreed that letter would go from James Clarke to Defra’s R&D co-ordinator with responsibility for pesticides and include the need for a LINK-type scheme.

**Action: Secretariat**

### Item 3: Progress with actions from the Container Management Report

3.1 **Nigel Chadwick** explained that progress had been made with the Forum member organisations on individual report recommendations. However, a number of important issues remained outstanding and he agreed to progress these and report back to the next Forum main meeting.

**Action: Secretariat**

### Item 4: Progress/Schedule of the Pesticides Forum Annual Report 2010

4.1 **James Clarke** explained that work was going on to finalise the draft. Information was still required from a number of sources and Nigel Chadwick agreed to chase these responses. [Post meeting note: Draft report has been sent to publishers on 6 May 2011, and proofs are expected shortly. The finished report will be circulated to members for information shortly before publication.]

### Item 5: Update on the Government response to the Sustainable Use Directive consultation

5.1 **Grant Stark** introduced this item by updating members on progress within CRD following the public consultation that took place late last year. Grant noted that responses were along expected lines. However, changes to Government clearance processes had delayed publication of the final response. The response reflected Ministers views that a de-regulatory/minimalist approach should be adopted. Grant also mentioned that other Member States (with the exception of Finland) were reported as on track to implement the SUD by November 2011 as required in the Directive.

5.2 **Tom Bals** asked whether any decision had been made about updating the existing Code of Practice on the safe use of pesticides. **Caroline Kennedy** said that the decision would be made whether to amend/revise the Code before the end of the implementation phase.
Item 6: Delivery of IPM – “How do we define IPM and what measures can contribute to a successful implementation?”

6.1 In the first of the presentations on the subject, Caroline Drummond from Linking Environment and Farming (LEAF) explained that the organisation aims to develop and promote sustainable farming through Integrated Farm Management whilst improving understanding and trust among consumers. She explained that LEAF is working closely with CRD and Defra to ensure that the IPM elements (Article 14) of the SUD are implemented appropriately in the UK. Caroline thought that the implementation process brought with it a number of opportunities for the farming industry although IPM has to be considered holistically. Care also has to be taken on implementation as there are a lot of other initiatives presently going on within the farming industry. She also felt there is a need for more research to support any advisory and extension services. However Caroline is confident that organisations like the Forum, VI and LEAF could all help deliver the correct messages to the right audiences.

6.2 On the implementation of IPM in the member states: Caroline reported that, Sweden and the UK are on target although others (which include the France, Belgium, Denmark and Netherlands) are struggling to meet the timetable in part because they have included risk and use reduction programmes. Caroline believed that the development of a National Action Plan would help make for improved farmer practice although the identification of robust indicators could be a challenge.

6.3 Finally, Caroline outlined the LEAF Green Box initiative which has been developed from an Australian idea and is aimed at building trust amongst the farming industry whilst helping to get more research and improved monitoring from alternative sources. More importantly the public perception is that it helps in the delivery of good quality food.

6.4 On behalf of Assured Food Standards (AFS), Stephen Humphreys explained that the key principles of AFS are food safety, protection against environmental damage and animal welfare. The standards are used across a range of different farming sectors and across the UK but not all are managed by AFS. At present, the livestock module is the only one that did not include an IPM element. The standards are extremely robust requiring all producers to meet a number of requirements. Minor failures could be rectified within 28 days otherwise the producer would be suspended from the scheme and could subsequently not market their produce with the ‘Red Tractor’ symbol.

6.5 Stephen noted that the AFS is working with CRD to help benchmark IPM implementation across the individual farming sectors and to consider how best to monitor and measure progress in meeting the principles of IPM.

6.6 In the final presentation in this session Tony Palmer on behalf of the Fresh Produce Consortium and the British Retail Consortium explained that the food retail industry is already wedded to farm assurance schemes so FPC/BRC see no real need for any additional action to meet SUD requirements. It is always difficult for
retailers to give any kind of positive message about the use of pesticides. Those parts of the industry that do not use AFS already have their own equivalent schemes (e.g. Tesco’s ‘Nurture’) which manages production from farm-to-fork. The ‘Global Gap’ scheme is also widely used for imported produce.

**Item 7: Training: “How can training be provided consistently across all sectors?”**

7.1 **Paul Chambers** opened this session by explaining that the NFU represent 55,000 businesses and most use pesticides professionally. However, because of the diverse nature of the farmers’ work, pesticides can be used in a variety of ways and in very differing amounts. The training needs to reflect this diverse audience and application. Currently most training on pesticides is done through NPTC Pesticide Application Units and NRoSO CPD training courses. Both are widely supported by farmers and spray operators. The NFU expect implementation of the SUD to bring the standards of on-farm use of pesticides across the EU closer to the standards that exist in the UK. Paul noted that the UK still has some gaps in its training programme including awareness of IPM.

7.2 Paul touched upon the phasing out of the ‘grandfather rights’. The NFU supports this move but insists that any change needs to be proportionate, practical and flexible. As a result, the NFU agrees with the Government’s response to the SUD consultation which indicates that CPD will be used during the phase-out period.

7.3 In opening his presentation **Mike Ward** of UNITE agreed with most of the points in the NFU presentation. He explained that, for most spray operators, there are three relevant levels in the Vocational Learning Framework. Level 2 provides for general pesticide awareness, Level 3 is aimed at the pesticide reduction practitioner and Level 4 deals with IPM.

7.4 The Chairman then introduced **Peter Taylor** from the Association of Independent Crop Consultants (AICC). Peter explained that 95% of on-farm advice could be categorised as trade advice by distributors who also sell seed, fertiliser and crop protection products. Cost of advice is largely included in product prices. Independent crop consultants provided guidance for a fee/hectare/year. Although these consultants gain no income related to sales, many source products on behalf of farmers through distributors or buying groups.

7.5 AICC members have to be members of the BASIS Professional Register and have been amongst the first to take the new ICM and BETA qualification. Members also belong to Rothamsted Research Association and a large number have joined the AICC arrangement with ADAS, PGRO and NIAB/TAG. Nationally, members attend the annual (three day) conference, whilst regionally there is a strong structure of regular meetings together with in-house national series trials based in the regions. These allow members to choose the best product and target its use at the best rate.
7.6 Peter believed the correct structure for delivering future training was already in place and that any new IPM mechanisms should be science-based. To achieve this, there is a need for more long term studies to better understand the mechanisms within an IPM strategy and the interactions between the different tools. There was also a need for training in practical monitoring techniques to help review the success of IPM techniques. John Ford (AIC) pointed out that distributor/consultants offered similar knowledge transfer to those given to AICC members. Mike Storey added that integration across all advisors would be key to the successful delivery of the SUD. This would be supported by the levy boards research and knowledge transfer.

7.7 **Jill Hewitt** explained that the National Association of Agricultural Contractors (NAAC) has members in both the amenity and agricultural sectors. Most NAAC members are NPTC qualified to PA 1 and 6 level, plus many have PA 2, 4 and 5. They mostly train staff through direct supervision. One issue is that many companies have a high staff turnover therefore training costs can be relatively high, especially as many of the staff are BASIS qualified. She noted that within the amenity sector a number of non-NAAC affiliated companies have staff with little or no training or qualifications. As a result, with customer pressure to keep costs down, these companies use low capital investment by starting with knapsacks and off-the-shelf glyphosate products. Overall, agricultural contractors compete on price and quality of service and are generally all trained to the legal requirements. On the other hand amenity contractors tend to compete only on price and as a result the requirement for training can be variable.

7.8 Jill believes that there is a need for more training of contract specifiers to ensure that clients understand the pesticide application process and the legal and best practice requirements. These specifiers should also be encouraged to use BASIS qualified advisors. This should help ensure that only trained and professional contractors are used in the amenity sectors.

7.9 **Steve Hewitt** of City & Guilds Land-Based Services (previously called NPTC) explained that current sprayer operator training and certification involves initial operator training in pesticide application (also called PA training) and statutory Certificate of Competence in pesticide application made up of PA units). There is also regular Continued Professional Development and update training (as used for National Register of Sprayer Operators – NRoSO and National Amenity Sprayer Operators Register - NASOR). Finally there is also a requirement for recertification every three years.

7.10 Of the 13 “training subjects” listed within Annex 1 of the SUD, nine are already adequately covered in the PA Certificate of Competence. However, there are 4 training subjects that do not currently comply with SUD. These are:

- PA2 – Counterfeit PPPs
- PA4 – Integrated Pest Management
- PA5 – Choice of pesticides (although this unit is not pertinent to operators)
- PA11 - Water protection areas
Work is progressing between C&G and CRD to agree necessary changes to the syllabuses.

7.11 Operators are registered individually under NRSoN/NASOR and accumulate CPD points over 3 years. Members are expected to attend an annual training event or other approved activities and the certificate is re-issued after 3 years if sufficient update training has been undertaken.

7.12 On behalf of BASIS (Registration) Ltd, Rob Simpson explained that his organisations focused its activities on logistics (store audits), exams and training and Professional Register(s). BASIS operate a range of Certificates of Competence in crop protection covering agriculture, field vegetables and commercial horticulture. Other qualifications include the FACTS Annual Scheme for advisers in plant nutrient management and the Guardian Scheme for garden centre advisers. BASIS also operate a Diploma in Agronomy scheme covering soil and water management, plant protection, biodiversity (including an amenity course) and conservation management. The Diploma courses are accredited with a number of University Colleges.

7.12 A number of new courses are being introduced by BASIS during 2010/11 across a range of subjects from stored combinable crops to nutrient management planning. There is also a revised Forestry and Arboriculture course and more new courses are coming online.

7.13 There are currently 3 independent Registers: BASIS Professional Register (with approximately 4,100 members); BASIS Amenity Register (with 300+ members) and PROMPT – the scheme for pest controllers (with over 800 members). There are between 5,500 – 6,000 CPD points awarded at events every year. These CPD points are required for both crop and produce assurance. CPD continues to gain greater farmer/grower recognition as well as by supermarkets and processors. They are also supported by Government.

7.14 During the discussion which followed the presentations Mike Storey asked whether there is a minimum requirement in the SUD for the testing of equipment. Adrian Dixon said that the Directive required all machinery to be tested on a five-yearly basis until 2020 and then 3 yearly thereafter – the implementing legislation would reflect these requirements.

7.15 Anne Buckenham asked whether the training and certification requirements in the Directive acceded with the current position in the UK. Caroline Kennedy noted that technically the directive does not require compulsory training/certification of, for example, professional users. She explained that the Coalition Government have a deregulatory agenda and there is an obligation not to ‘gold plate’ EU legislation. Caroline noted that the directive requires only that users, distributors and advisers should have access to the training although Article 6 will still require an operator to
hold a Certificate of Competence before being able to purchase professional products. Ministers have suggested these requirements may be implemented using non-regulatory approaches. A number of members raised concerns at the proposed approach and James Clarke agreed to write to Ministers on behalf of the Forum.

Action James Clarke

Item 8: SUD – Other areas of interest and activity in other member states

8.1 Grant Stark provided an overview of how implementation was proceeding in the UK and across the EU.

- National Action Plans (NAPs): The UK, Netherlands, Belgium and Sweden are amongst those member states which have a history of NAPs and would be looking to adapt these. Member states could be expected to display varying degrees of ambition in their plans and, by way of an example, it was noted that France has set a target of reducing 50% of some pesticides used by 2018;

- Controls on sales: The UK would be following the deadlines set out in the directive. It was noted that much of the activity in other member states was directed at creating a differentiation between professional and non-professional products and that the Commission has undertaken to clarify what is meant by having ‘staff available at the time of sale’.

- Equipment testing: Grant referred back to Adrian’s comments that the UK would be following the deadlines set in the Directive and enacting the derogation for knapsacks and other handheld equipment. Other Member states were moving from a variety of positions from no testing, through voluntary to statutory measures. It was expected that there may be differences in the degree of prescription/standardisation employed in testing regimes.

- Aerial spraying: There is a derogation allowed within the SUD for aerial application of pesticides which the UK intended to exercise to deal with spraying of bracken in upland areas inaccessible to wheeled or tracked vehicles. Operators will be required to apply for a permit from a competent authority prior to conducting spray operations. Elsewhere in Europe, a number of eastern member states appeared to rely relatively heavily on aerial spraying but other member states have suggested that they could support a total ban.

- Protection of water: The SUD aims to support the Water Framework Directive. The WFD is going to require a reduction in the amount of pesticides reaching water, and the government believes existing statutory and voluntary mechanisms and measures can be used to target activities to achieve this. CRD is in discussion with colleagues in Defra to clarify how the new pesticide legislation and existing water legislation should interact. Other member states already have water protection as a key part of existing controls.
- Public notification: No member state announced its intention to enact the discretionary provisions from the SUD. In the UK ministers have made clear they do not believe it is appropriate to introduce a statutory requirement for operators to provide advance notice of planned spray operations to members of the public living adjacent to sprayed land. However, we will continue to encourage farmers and spray operators to develop good relationships with their neighbours.

- Specific areas: Grant said that in the UK the government favoured minimising use and that activity would be focussed on the amenity sector improving the quality of advice and guidance. Some other member states employ alternative methods of control to a greater extent than the UK. Research is underway to consider whether alternative control regimes are a practical replacement for spray operations. Some member states are looking to restrict or ban pesticide use in certain amenity areas.

- Handling and storage: Grant noted that the UK range of controls and guidance already cover the areas identified in the Directive. Other member states also feel they meet SUD requirements.

- Indicators: It was noted that there would be a legal obligation to use harmonised EU indicators when they were adopted. It was noted that only a relatively small number of member states had well developed suites of indicators. The UK approach differed from that of other member states relying to a greater extent on user practice and expert judgment.

**Item 9: Items from Members/Chair/Secretariat for next and future meetings**

10.1 It was agreed that the theme for the next meeting would be Application Technology which will include an update on BREAM, a talk from Tom Bals on sprayer technology, and possibly an item on efficacy and nozzle selection. It was unlikely that the ACP/COT working group would be able to report at this meeting, and this item may need to be deferred. [Post meeting note: It has been agreed with Tom Bals to defer this item to the October meeting.]

10.2 It was agreed that the Forum’s 15th Anniversary meeting should be celebrated at the October 2011 meeting. It was also suggested that the Minister (or Defra’s Chief Scientist) could be asked to give the keynote speech. Members were asked to consider and suggest ideas for this item.

10.3 Anne Buckenham agreed to work with the Secretariat to arrange a presentation on the issue of counterfeit products for the June meeting.

**Action: Secretariat and Anne Buckenham**

10.4 Lastly the Chairman suggested a session dealing with pesticides and water quality looking at stewardship options and the catchment-based work that is taking place. Nigel Crane (EA) explained that due to a number of recent changes in the EA senior management team, it would be best to defer this item until next year.
Item 11: AOB and possible press release

11.1 Adrian Dixon (CRD) said that it had been decided to move the location of all future Forum meetings to York to allow CRD to better support each meeting through the provision of relevant experts. He also stated that from 1 April 2011 CRD would not pay travel expenses for members to attend Forum meetings. However, it was hoped that the relocation of meetings to York would reduce the overall cost of travelling.

11.2 The Chairman suggested that given the difficulties in getting Defra/HSE to issue a press release with last year’s Pesticides Forum Annual Report he asked whether member organisations press offices would be prepared to issue on the Forum’s behalf and, if so, to let the Secretariat know. [Post meeting note: No organisations have yet come forward].

Action: Members

Pesticides Forum Secretariat
24 May 2011
Annex A: Attendees at the Pesticides Forum meeting of 16 February 2011

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<tr>
<th>Name of attendees</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Chairman</strong></td>
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<td>James Clarke</td>
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<td><strong>Members</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mark Ballinghall</td>
<td>Scottish Agricultural College</td>
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<td>Tom Bals</td>
<td>Agricultural Engineers Association</td>
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<td>Andrew Bauer</td>
<td>NFU Scotland</td>
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<td>Helen Bower</td>
<td>Women’s Food and Farming Union</td>
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<td>Anne Buckenham</td>
<td>Crop Protection Association</td>
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<td>Caroline Drummond</td>
<td>LEAF</td>
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<td>John Ford</td>
<td>Agricultural Industries Confederation</td>
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<td>Peter Hall</td>
<td>UK Register of Organic Food Standards</td>
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<td>Julian Hasler</td>
<td>National Farmers’ Union</td>
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<td>John Holland</td>
<td>Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust</td>
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<td>Vicky Kindembra</td>
<td>Wildlife and Countryside Link</td>
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<td>John Moverley</td>
<td>Amenity Forum</td>
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<td>Nick Mole</td>
<td>Pesticides Action Network - UK</td>
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<td>Tony Palmer</td>
<td>Fresh Produce Consortium/British Retail Consortium</td>
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<td>Rob Simpson</td>
<td>BASIS</td>
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<td>Mike Storey</td>
<td>Agricultural and Horticultural Development Board</td>
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<td>Mike Ward</td>
<td>UNITE</td>
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<td><strong>Observers:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adrian Dixon</td>
<td>Chemicals Regulation Directorate</td>
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<td>Caroline Kennedy</td>
<td>Chemicals Regulation Directorate</td>
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<td>Cecile Smith</td>
<td>Scottish Natural Heritage</td>
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<td>Grant Stark</td>
<td>Chemicals Regulation Directorate</td>
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<td>David Thomas</td>
<td>Welsh Assembly Government</td>
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<td>Garry Wiles</td>
<td>Health and Safety Executive</td>
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<td>David Williams</td>
<td>Department of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs</td>
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**Invited Speakers:**

- Jill Hewitt | National Association of Agricultural Contractors |
- Stephen Humphreys | Assured Food Standards |
- Peter Taylor | Association of Independent Crop Consultants |

**Forum Secretariat:**

- Nigel Chadwick | Chemicals Regulation Directorate |
- Joy Wilson | Chemicals Regulation Directorate |