Minutes of the 50th Meeting of the Pesticides Forum: 4 June 2013.
Severn Trent Water’s Campion Hills Water Treatment Works, Black Lane,
Leamington Spa, CV32 7UA.

Those present are listed at Annex A.

Item 1: Introductions and apologies for absence

1.1 The Chairman welcomed all to the 50th meeting. He thanked Jodie Whitehead (Senior Catchment Management Planner, Severn Trent Water) and her colleagues for providing the facilities for the meeting and a pre-meeting tour of the water treatment works. Jodie and her colleagues would give further presentations as part of the afternoon’s activities.

1.2 The Chairman welcomed and introduced:
- Chris Stoate (GWCT) attending in place of Alastair Leake.
- Hazel Doonan (AIC) for John Ford.
- Tracey Ware (HSE, CRD).

1.3 The Secretary recorded apologies for absence from the following members: Andrew Bauer, NFU Scotland; Anne Buckenham, CPA; Nigel Crane, Environment Agency; Peter Hall, Organic Sector; Rob Simpson, BASIS; Jeanette Longfield, Sustain: the alliance for better food and farming; Alastair Leake, Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT); Tom Bals, AEA; Garry Wiles, HSE (ICU); Robert Campbell, LEAF; Peter Pitkin, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH); John Ford, Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC); Charles Sadler, FPC/BRC; the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. The following observers also sent apologies: Deborah Currie and Lorraine Turner, DARDNI; Marie Coventry, Scottish Government; Paul Tossell, FSA; David Williams and Mark Wilson, Defra (CET); Adrian Barker, BIS; Pierre Cruse, HSE (ICU).

Item 2: Minutes and matters arising from the 49th meeting – 13 February 2013

2.1 Members’ comments on the draft minutes of the 13 February meeting had been incorporated; these minutes were agreed and accepted as an accurate record. The final record of the February 2013 meeting would be placed on the Forum website.

Action: Secretariat

2.2 The Chairman highlighted the following actions from February’s meeting:
- CRD was to provide an update to the Farming Regulation Task Force (Macdonald) report today, at agenda item 3.
- Update on Water Issues: Catchment Sensitive Farming Initiative; Options for water: Tom Bals (AEA) and Jo Kennedy (EA) to liaise with NFU, VI and NRoSO and consider which messages should be conveyed to users regarding sprayer safety and best practice in the light of recent water pollution incidents caused by overturned sprayers. Jo Kennedy confirmed that this action was still outstanding and noted a further incidence of an
overturned crop sprayer, which had caused land to require decontamination. **The Chairman** asked that the action be followed up and suggested that, once the underlying causes for these incidents were known, they should be fed back to the NRoSO programme and other activities.  

**Action:** Tom Bals and Jo Kennedy

- **The Chairman** asked the Secretariat for an update on progress with the Pesticides Forum Annual Report 2012. Members heard that publication was imminent; members and interested parties would be notified by email when the Annual Report was published on the Pesticides Forum website. A supporting PowerPoint presentation containing the underlying raw data would also be published.

**Action:** Secretariat

Item 3: Final response and conclusion to the Farming Regulation Task Force (MacDonald) Report

3.1 **Grant Stark** reminded members of the terms of the outstanding action relating to Recommendation 9.44 of the Farming Regulation Task Force (FRTF) report, of **David Williams**’ (Defra CET) full update to the February 2013 Forum meeting, and of Defra’s publication of an assessment of progress in response to the report. **Grant** noted that the Pesticides Forum had considered the issue on several occasions, and members had agreed that a further electronic database to access Safety Data Sheets (SDSs) was not necessary because the information was already available on sources such as Fera’s LIAISON database. He suggested that the new Code of Practice could include an appropriate reference to direct users towards the SDSs. Given members’ previous considerations and conclusions and the inclusion of a suitable reference in the Code, **Grant** proposed that the action be closed on the basis that access to SDSs through existing databases meets the needs of the FRTF recommendation.

3.2 Members welcomed the suggestion to increase publicity and aid navigation to the SDSs, via the Code of Practice (and noted that industry publications may also have a role to play here). Noting that the LIAISON database is a subscription service which charges for access, they also recognised that SDSs are required to be available on the manufacturer’s website and that distributors normally attached a copy to products. **The Chairman** concluded that the original issue described in the FRTF had been fulfilled and the action could be closed. He asked CRD to write to NRoSO to help raise awareness of SDSs and where they could be found.

**Action:** Secretariat

Item 4: Update on the Commission decision on Neonicotinoids: potential impacts on farming practices.

4.1 **Grant Stark**’s update covered three main areas:

- The European Commission implementing regulation, 485/2013 amending the conditions of approval for the neonicotinoid insecticides clothianidin,
imidacloprid and thiamethoxam. CRD had published an Information Update 07/2013 on 30 April outlining the new rules. Although some points of detail were yet to be finalised, the timescales were essentially clear (with authorisation for certain key professional uses and all amateur uses to be withdrawn at the end of November 2013).

Grant asked whether the Pesticides Forum considered that more action was required. It was noted that HGCA planned to highlight concerns over the issue of storage of unused treated seed on farms at Cereals 2012.

Members identified a potential issue with amateur use; in particular the challenge of communicating messages relating to the withdrawal of product use and storage authorisations. Members heard that no take back schemes were planned; however some retailers of home garden products had already removed products from sale. It was noted that CRD could use the Amateur Use Liaison Group (AULG) to help raise awareness in this sector.

**Action: CRD**

Members also noted that in future the use of alternative control methods, such as foliar spraying with different products, might increase. Use of these alternative methods may bring about new environmental risks. There may be a need to identify and manage these risks, for example in relation to the Environment Agency’s (EA) ‘watch list’ of active substances. The Forum heard that the VI Strategy Group had discussed the potential implications of alternative controls and the possibility of highlighting the risks to bees from them. The Chairman asked the VI to liaise with HGCA on this topic.

**Action: VI**

The Chairman highlighted the need for greater consideration of alternative control methods and approaches. He requested the Secretariat to mark this as a key topic for 2014 and asked the VI to consider which items they could take further and how to do this.

**Action: Secretariat / VI**

- CRD’s national product review, where following advice from the ACP, Ministers had agreed that it was appropriate to conduct an assessment of the risk of clothianidin, imidacloprid and thiamethoxam on honey bees and other bees. CRD had issued a call for data. Existing and new data will be evaluated according to the data requirements and evaluation criteria of Regulation 1107/2009 and associated guidance documents and considering the risks identified by the ACP at its meeting on 29 January 2013. The evaluation will also consider the key routes of exposure and concerns identified by the draft Guidance Document being developed by EFSA and the EFSA conclusions on the peer review of the pesticide risk assessment for bees for these active substances (published on 16 January 2013). The Chairman underlined the importance of including resistance management strategies in the evaluations.

- R&D work. CRD was considering what further research was needed to reduce uncertainties in this area and, given the new EU restrictions,
whether changes were required to any ongoing R&D projects. Members noted that clarity and communication were key requirements and suggested an immediate need for additional research on bumblebees, with further work on honeybees. Rob Mason confirmed that more research was expected. The balance between government and industry activity was part of the on-going discussions. Defra’s Chief Scientific Adviser had met with stakeholders and was taking a holistic approach focusing on two main areas, pollinators and pesticides. The Chairman requested the Secretariat ensure that the topic of Bees was included in the Pesticides Forum meeting for February 2014.

**Action: Secretariat**

**Item 5: Possible items from Members/Chair/Secretariat for next and future meetings**

5.1 Members identified the following topics for inclusion:

- **Amenity uses of pesticides:**
  The Amenity Forum would provide an update on recent work at the next Pesticides Forum meeting on 16 October. Other amenity themed items would also be arranged for this meeting.

- **IPM:**
  This theme would be included in the 16 October meeting. ADAS would present an item on IPM plans.

- **Biodiversity:**
  This theme linked to developments in SUD implementation and the new agri-environment schemes. An update from CFE might be arranged either for the October 2013 or spring 2014 meeting.

- **The work of the Health and Safety Laboratory (HSL):**
  A presentation covering issues in agriculture and human health.

**Item 6: Any Other Business and communication of related activities**

6.1 The Chairman introduced an information paper (PF 183) outlining proposals for a joint Pesticides Forum (PF) and Voluntary Initiative (VI) Working Group on grassland and forage issues. He expected that the group would look at UK wide issues and only exist for a limited time period. Richard Butler said that the group’s formation was timely and appropriate, particularly in light of new ‘grandfather rights’ rules and known difficulties in reaching the infrequent users in this sector. Some thoughts were offered regarding the background and experience criteria for the Chair, and whether the group should be farm-led, with a focus on Scotland and Wales. Nominations and volunteers for the group were requested from PF and VI member organisations and related bodies. The Chairman asked for all nominations to be forwarded to the Pesticides Forum Secretariat by 14 June.

**Action: All / Secretariat**
Members were informed that CFE would be launching a new conservation management advice for arable business leaflet at Cereals 2013. Also, following their original work on the arable publicity package for the VI, CFE and the VI were collaborating on a grassland leaflet. The Chairman welcomed this news and asked the Secretariat to circulate the leaflets to members once they had been published. [Post meeting note: Links to both leaflets were circulated by email on 27 June.]

Grandfather Rights. Members requested and received an update on progress with arrangements for “grandfathers” sprayer training and certification. CRD was working with City and Guilds NPTC and further details would be available on websites soon. [Post meeting note: a link to Grandfathers Rights for Pesticide Users Changes to Current Rules was circulated to members and observers on 11 June. ‘FAQs’ are available on the VI website.]

Local Authority Chief Executive’s letter. Nigel Chadwick informed members that on 12 April, CRD had sent a letter to all local authority (LA) Chief Executives in England, Wales and Northern Ireland drawing their attention to new regulations relating to use of pesticides and the risks of using pesticides without the proper controls. LA feedback had been good, with several enquirers displaying interest in ensuring that correct procedures were being followed. CRD’s responses had taken the further opportunity to publicise details of amenity related work such as the Thanet project and Amenity Forum. The Chairman welcomed this report and requested a further presentation on the letter as part of the amenity theme at the October meeting.

Action: Nigel Chadwick / Secretariat

The Amenity Forum Conference 2013. Members noted that local authorities (LAs) had shown high levels of interest in attending this conference, which could possibly be associated with the LA Chief Executives letter initiative.

Pesticides Forum Annual Report 2012. Publication of the Annual Report was imminent. Members were encouraged to publicise and circulate the report within their own organisations once it was available. [Post meeting note: Members and observers were notified by email of publication on 20 June.]

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 16 October 2013 [Post meeting note: meeting date has been changed to Tuesday 22 October]

Catchment management at Severn Trent Water and an introduction to the River Leam catchment

Jodie Whitehead (Severn Trent Water (STW)) provided an outline of the STW’s regional responsibilities and of her role and those of her colleagues in the Catchment Management Team. The team’s main objectives were to: reduce the pollution risk to water; implement drinking water safety plans and the catchment strategy; and to take a partnership approach to stakeholder engagement, building and maintaining good working relationships with local farmers and other
organisations. The alternative to catchment management was water treatment, which was expensive and not always viable.

8.2 The Drinking Water Inspectorate had tasked STW to solve issues with metaldehyde in surface water within five years and this featured prominently in their ongoing work. Catchment risk assessments and regular sampling programmes were key activities, and successful interventions by the team had resolved instances of water contaminated with other pesticides. For example, when monitoring and investigation had identified the source of bentazone contaminant in a reservoir catchment the problem had been addressed and resolved through communication with the farmer. An additional initiative rented weedswipers to farmers, to encourage use of pesticides which presented a lower risk to water.

8.3 Members remarked that the reported 50% reduction in pesticides peaks last year indicated that intervention could make a difference, even in a wet year. Further discussion identified that the currently available measures were not enough to enable STW to achieve compliance with Water Framework Directive requirements; more sophisticated and innovative approaches needed to be found within the constraints of limited funding. Although substitution might be an option to address metaldehyde failures it was not the solution for all scenarios, and a range of measures including good stakeholder engagement and new options like targeted monitoring in pesticides ‘hot spots’ was needed. Defra’s Pesticides Options Appraisal report was looking at a complete range of options from total withdrawal of pesticides, to water treatment and catchment measures.

8.4 Katherine Cherry (STW Catchment Management Team) gave a further presentation about the Rivers Avon and Leam catchment, the challenges with regard to peaks in metaldehyde concentrations found in river water at monitoring and sampling sites, and some of the approaches to deciding how to manage the risks.

8.5 The Chairman thanked both Jodie and Katherine for their presentations and concluded the meeting. Members of the Forum went on to visit a local farm to see a recently installed wash-down area and bio-filter system and hear more about the work of the Catchment Officers at farm level.

Close – 15.00
Annex A: Attendees at the Pesticides Forum meeting - 4 June 2013
Campion Hills Water Treatment Works, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of attendees</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>James Clarke - Chairman</td>
<td>ADAS</td>
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<td>John Moverley</td>
<td>Amenity Forum (AF)</td>
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<td>Mark Ballingall</td>
<td>SRUC</td>
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<td>Richard Butler</td>
<td>Voluntary Initiative (VI)</td>
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<td>Jacque Dew</td>
<td>Women's Food and Farming Union (WFFU)</td>
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<td>Hazel Doonan</td>
<td>Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC)</td>
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<td>David Edwards</td>
<td>The Co-operative Farms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julian Hasler</td>
<td>National Farmers' Union (NFU)</td>
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<td>Rodger Hobson</td>
<td>Country Land and Business Association (CLA)</td>
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<td>Jo Kennedy</td>
<td>Environment Agency (EA)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vicky Kindemba</td>
<td>Wildlife and Countryside Link (WCL)</td>
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<td>Chris Stoate</td>
<td>Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT)</td>
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<td>Mike Storey</td>
<td>AHDB</td>
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<td><strong>Observers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rob Mason</td>
<td>HSE (Chemicals Regulation Directorate)</td>
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<td>Grant Stark</td>
<td>HSE (Chemicals Regulation Directorate)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracey Ware</td>
<td>HSE (Chemicals Regulation Directorate)</td>
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<td><strong>Invited speakers</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jodie Whitehead</td>
<td>Severn Trent Water Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katherine Cherry</td>
<td>Severn Trent Water Limited</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Forum Secretariat:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nigel Chadwick</td>
<td>HSE (Chemicals Regulation Directorate)</td>
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<td>Joy Wilson</td>
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