

**DRAFT**

**MINUTES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT'S  
HONORARY MEDICAL ADVISORY PANEL ON ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND  
SUBSTANCE MISUSE AND DRIVING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 12<sup>TH</sup>  
MARCH 2008**

**Present:**

Dr E Gilvarry	Chairperson
Dr M Farrell	
Dr N Seivewright	
Dr A L Lowe	
Professor A R W Forrest	
Dr N Sheron	
Dr K Wolff	
Dr N Brind	
Dr K Checinski	
Dr P Rice	
Mr M I J Mopho	

**Ex. Officio:**

Dr C Beattie	Medical Adviser, Northern Ireland
Mr A Burr	Road User Safety Division, DfT
Dr T Carter	Chief Medical Adviser, DfT
Dr L Read	Research Manager, DfT
Dr H G Major	Senior Medical Adviser/Head of Medical Licensing Policy, DVLA
Mrs S Bamford	HEO, DMPG, DVLA
Dr B E Boyd	Panel Secretary/Medical Adviser, DVLA

**Section A:**

**1. Introductions**

Dr Gilvarry welcomed the new Panel member, Dr Rice.

Votes of sincere thanks were expressed to Dr Mike Farrell for his invaluable contributions to Panel's work over his past 10 years service on the Panel; to Dr Tim Carter on the occasion of his forthcoming retirement from the Roads Division, and to Dr Delyth Sheppard for her service as Panel Secretary.

## **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Mr B Colley, Dr M Prunty (Department of Health), Dr P Collins-Howgill (Medical Officer, Civil Aviation Authority), Mr B Jones (DMDG, DVLA).

## **3. Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2007**

The Minutes of the last meeting were confirmed as accurate.

## **4. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Re-para 4.1. The Panel requested evidence be identified to help inform their debate on the issue of driving in those who are prescribed Sativex. Professor Forrest and Dr Read offered to seek relevant information regarding any studies on incapacity with Sativex use. Dr Boyd will collate the number of such cases considered by the Drivers Medical Branch and the subject will be considered again at the next Panel Meeting in October 2008.

### **4.2 Re-para Amended DR1 form**

1. The Panel were satisfied with the alteration to the wording of Question 1 on Form DR1.

4.3 .

Ref. para 7.2 & 7.3 The Panel provided helpful advice and suggestions for design and wording of form DG2C.

The Panel agreed proposed new wording to the advice in At a Glance.

### **4.4 Re-para Primary Care Substance Misuse**

1. Wide ranging discussion occurred regarding the role of primary and secondary care in the treatment of persons with substance misuse, the training and accreditation of specialists and the process for completion of reports for the Drivers Medical Branch at DVLA.

2. It was felt that design of forms could assist in simplifying and streamlining this process. Panel agreed to review a newly designed form and any possible medical training issues identified.

## **5. Minutes of the Chairmen's meeting**

5.1. Dr Gilvarry stated this had been an extremely interesting meeting.

5.2. Items highlighted included membership of the Panels and whether Statisticians or Epidemiologists would add useful expertise to the Panels.

## **6. Presentation of a report on "The Role of CDT as an alternative to GGT as a marker of continuous drinking"**

6.1. A presentation of a preliminary report on the role of CDT as an alternative to GGT as a marker of continuous drinking was made by Dr Kim Wolff.

6.2. The Panel will debate the full findings when available.

6.3. Peer review and commentary will be undertaken.

6.4. Costings will also need to be considered relevant to DVLA's licensing process.

6.5. This topic will be considered again at the October meeting when the final report is available.

## **7. Sativex prescribing**

As per 4.5.

## **8. HRO Scheme update**

8.2. Mr Andrew Burr delivered an overview of ongoing issues with regard to drink driving and review of the HRO scheme.

8.2. The current "Think" campaign was mentioned in the context of how changes in drinking and driving behaviour need to be reflected in this campaign.

8.3. Reference was made to a planned public consultation later in the year to which the Panel would be invited to respond. An extraordinary Panel Meeting may be convened to discuss these consultation documents and provide a considered response.

8.4. Dr Major outlined the current progress of a revised HRO Pilot Scheme, following on from the detailed discussion at the last meeting. A report of the final

outcomes will be presented to the Panel when available and all necessary guidance sought.

## **9. Anabolic Steroid use**

9.1. The Panel were advised of the clinical circumstances where testing is required. It was noted that anabolic steroid use is part of a risk constellation, mainly in young male drivers.

9.2. Little information appears to be available regarding its use in isolation, rather it appears to be used as part of a cocktail of substances.

9.3. The Panel will keep the situation under review and consider any information available regarding illicit steroid use at future meetings.

9.4. The Panel suggested putting forward a possible research project on the prevalence of steroids in driving casualties, for consideration within the DfT Research programme. Professor Forrest and Dr Sheron will consider the wording of such a proposal to be submitted to the Department prior to the next meeting, to comply with the Department's research timetable.

## **10. Recruitment of Additional Expertise to Panel**

10.1. The Panel queried whether an expert in risk behaviour would be a useful addition to the membership. They also queried whether a person with a health protection/public health background would be beneficial.

10.2. The Panel will consider the skills mix required before the next meeting.

## **Section C: New Discussion Topics for Decision or Needing Further Information/Research**

### **11. Prisoners on Methadone programme**

11.1. The Panel have been asked to comment on advice to be given to prisoners being released from prison on a methadone programme. The Panel advised that current good practice require doctors treating those on a methadone programme to advise patients to contact DVLA, notifying of their circumstances.

11.2. The Panel will contact the Home Office Medical Section to clarify what advice is currently given to prisoners on release, before discussing further.

## **12. Cases for discussion**

There were no cases discussed.

## **13. Research Update**

Dr Lily Read summarised a list of the relevant DfT research projects including those recently completed, those ongoing and those currently planned.

## **14. Literature search**

No updates.

## **15. Any Other Business**

Dr Lily Read and Dr Tim Carter advised the Panel on the progress of an ongoing Road Safety Strategy appraisal related to drink/drugs/driving. They advised that a consultation document is planned (see para 8.3) and this would be made available to the Panel for consideration at the earliest opportunity.

## **16. Dates and Times of Next Meetings**

The next meeting will be held on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2008 with a possible starting time of 11.00 am.

An Extra-ordinary meeting will be held at a time to be arranged.

**DR B E BOYD**  
**Panel Secretary**

**15<sup>th</sup> March 2008**