ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–6154–6]

Science Advisory Board; Notification of Public Advisory Committee Meetings

Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, Public Law 92–463, notice is hereby given that two committees of the Science Advisory Board (SAB) will meet on the dates and times described below. All times noted are Eastern Time. All meetings are open to the public, however, due to limited space, seating at meetings will be on a first-come basis. For further information concerning specific meetings, please contact the individuals listed below. Documents that are the subject of SAB reviews are normally available from the originating EPA office and are *not* available from the SAB Office.

1. Strategic Ranking Criteria Subcommittee (SRCS)

The Strategic Ranking Criteria Subcommittee (SRCS), an ad hoc subcommittee of the Science Advisory Board's (SAB) Executive Committee, will meet on Friday, September 18, 1998, beginning no earlier than 9:00 am and ending no later than 5:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the SAB Conference Room (Room 3709) at the EPA Waterside Mall Complex, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460.

Purpose—The purpose of the meeting is to engage in a consultation with Agency staff from the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) on possible criteria that could be applied to evaluate and compare Agency programs and activities in order to inform Agency planning and budgeting.

Background—Under the Agency's strategic planning and budgeting framework, EPA aligns all of its resources, people and activities under 10 strategic goals, 42 objectives and approximately 126 sub-objectives. Over the last two years, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) facilitated a comparative analysis of the risks addressed by EPA's strategic sub-objectives. The results of the comparative analysis were used to better inform EPA's planning and budgeting priorities. OCFO's short-term goal is to improve the scientific basis for the existing comparative risk ranking process and to introduce cost and economic measures into the comparative analysis of the Agency's sub-objectives and relevant activities for use in the FY2001 planning and budgeting process.

Charge—OCFO is asking the Science Advisory Board to engage in a consultation on possible criteria that could be applied to evaluate and compare Agency sub-objectives and activities. OCFO has also begun work to develop cost and economic measures for evaluating sub-objectives. Although the primary focus of the consultation will be on the risk criteria, OCFO is also requesting feedback from panel members on proposed categories of economic evaluation criteria and possible measures for evaluating the relative benefits and costs of EPA's sub-objectives and activities.

OCFO plans to utilize the results from the consultation to develop guidance on comparative analysis for Agency program offices to use in the FY2001 planning and budgeting process. OCFO is also requesting the SAB consider reviewing the results of the program offices' analyses at a subsequent meeting. The primary purpose of the second meeting would be to assess the extent to which the information provided by the program offices scientifically support the comparative analysis of the sub-objectives and relevant activities.

Finally, OCFO is interested in lessons learned from the SAB's past and present efforts (*e.g.*, the SAB's Integrated Risk Project—IRP) that may complement, or have applicability to, developing long-term, scientifically robust approaches for conducting comparative risk and benefit-cost analyses.

Comparative Risk Analysis

Comments are solicited on both the overall approach and the specific sections of the existing and the proposed future risk ranking approach to contribute to the FY 2001 planning and budgeting process. OCFO requests that SAB panel members comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the existing approach, suggest additional factors for consideration, and otherwise provide recommendations for both short-and long-term improvements or alternatives to the existing process.

The following questions apply to all three types of risk (health, ecological, and quality-of-life) used to evaluate the strategic sub-objectives in the previous comparative risk-ranking exercise.

(a) Were the attributes and dimensions used to define the risk ranks adequate? What other risk attributes/dimensions should be incorporated (*e.g.*, sustainability)?

(b) Are three levels of risk (high, medium and low) sufficient to distinguish differences among the various EPA programs? Can additional levels be added and still be defensible given inherently large uncertainties? How many levels would be useful and still feasible and defensible?

(c) Were the threshold values of the attributes/dimensions that define the ranks adequate? Given that any set of values will be somewhat subjective and arbitrary, can the SAB recommend another set, or a process for developing more useful values?

(d) The information for the initial rankings developed for the previous comparative analysis was completely qualitative. How well does the new protocol characterize risk for the risk ranking process, both overall and the specific sections?

(e) How should uncertainty be characterized for the purposes of risk rankings?

(f) Are there alternative ranking methods and/or analytical approaches that should be considered for comparative risk analysis in this context?

(g) What long-term improvements should OCFO consider in conducting comparative risk analysis for planning and budgeting purposes?

(h) What past/present SAB activities (*e.g.*, IRP) complement this effort and what lessons can be learned from these activities?

Comparative Cost, Benefit and Economic Analyses

As noted above, the Agency is working to develop cost and economic measures for evaluating Agency sub-objectives to support the annual planning and multi-year-planning processes and to establish a baseline and framework for utilizing economics in strategic planning.

The most immediate requirement for OCFO is to develop useful cost and economic criteria for evaluating investments and dis-investments for the FY2001 annual planning process. Four categories of economic measures are proposed: agency costs, social costs, benefits (human health, ecological and quality of life, whether monetized, quantitative or qualitative), and equity considerations (*e.g.*, effects of agency actions on sensitive sub-populations, localized geographic effects, and environmental justice). The benefits component of this analysis should correspond closely to the risk reduction information to be acquired as part of the comparative risk analysis.

OCFO requests feedback from SAB panel members on the following areas:

(a) Is the general approach the OCFO is considering adequate for characterizing the relative costs and benefits achieved by EPA's sub-objectives and relevant activities?

(b) Are OCFO's suggested cost and economic measures adequate for characterizing the relative costs and benefits achieved by EPA's sub-objectives and relevant activities?

(c) Are the linkages between the benefits and the reductions in risks for the same sub-objectives and activities clear and unambiguous?

For Further Information—Copies of the materials provided to the Subcommittee are *not* available from the SAB Staff. Single copies of these documents may be obtained from Ms. Anita Street, Office of the Chief Financial Officer, telephone (202) 260–3626, or via E-mail at: street.anita@epa.gov. For additional information, including a draft agenda, contact Ms. Mary Winston, SAB Committee Operations Staff, at tel. (202) 260–2554 or via E-mail at: winston.mary@epa.gov. Any member of the public wishing to submit oral or written comments to the Subcommittee must contact Stephanie Sanzone, Designated Federal Officer for the Subcommittee, *in writing*, no later than 4:00 pm Eastern Time on September 14, 1998 at Science Advisory Board (1400), U.S. EPA, Washington, DC 20460, tel. (202) 260–6557; fax (202) 260–7118; or E-mail: sanzone.stephanie@epa.gov. Oral comments will be limited to 5 minutes per individual or group. Written comments in any length may be provided to Ms. Sanzone at the above address prior to the meeting. See below for details on providing comments to the SAB.

2. Quality Management Subcommittee (QMS)

The Quality Management Subcommittee (QMS), of the Science Advisory Board's (SAB) Environmental Engineering Committee, will meet from Tuesday, September 22, 1998, beginning no earlier than 9:00 am through Thursday September 24, ending no later than 5:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the SAB Conference Room (Room 3709) at the EPA Waterside Mall Complex, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460.

Purpose—At its April 27–29, 1998 public meeting, the Subcommittee reviewed the Agency's quality management program and project-level documents (for further information, the charge, and document availability, see 63 **Federal Register** 17000, April 7, 1998). The purpose of the September 22–24 meeting is to review the implementation of EPA's quality system.

For Further Information—For additional information, including a draft agenda, contact Ms. Mary Winston, SAB Committee Operations Staff, at tel. (202) 260–2554 or via E-mail at: winston.mary@epa.gov. Any member of the public wishing to submit oral or written comments to the Subcommittee must contact Kathleen White Conway, Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for the Subcommittee, *in writing*, no later than 4:00 pm Eastern Time on September 16, 1998 at Science Advisory Board (1400), U.S. EPA, Washington, DC 20460, tel. (202) 260–2558; fax (202) 260–7118; or E-mail: conway.kathleen@epa.gov. Oral comments will be limited to 5 minutes per individual or group. Written comments in any length may be provided to the DFO at the above address prior to the meeting. See below for details on providing comments to the SAB.

Providing Oral or Written Comments at SAB Meetings

The Science Advisory Board expects that public statements presented at its meetings will not repeat previously submitted oral or written statements. In general, each individual or group making an oral presentation will be limited to a total time of ten minutes. This time may be reduced at the discretion of the SAB, depending on meeting circumstances. Oral presentations at teleconferences will normally be limited to three minutes per speaker or organization. Written comments (at least 35 copies) received in the SAB Staff Office sufficiently prior to a meeting date, may be mailed to the relevant SAB committee or subcommittee prior to its meeting; comments received too close to the meeting date will normally be provided to the committee at its meeting. Written comments, which may of any length, may be provided to the relevant committee or subcommittee up until the time of the meeting.

The Science Advisory Board

Information concerning the Science Advisory Board, its structure, function, and composition, may be found in The FY1997 Annual Report of the Staff Director which is available from the SAB Committee Evaluation and Support Staff (CESS) by contacting US EPA, Science Advisory Board (1400), Attention: CESS, 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460 or via fax (202) 260–1889. Additional information concerning the SAB can be found on the SAB Home Page at: http://www.epa.gov/sab.

Copies of SAB prepared final reports mentioned in this **Federal Register** Notice may be obtained immediately from the SAB Home Page or by mail/fax from the SAB's Committee Evaluation and Support Staff at (202) 260–4126, or via fax at (202) 260-1889. Please provide the SAB report number when making a request.

Meeting Access

Individuals requiring special accommodation at SAB meetings, including wheelchair access, should contact the appropriate DFO at least five business days prior to the meeting so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Dated: August 26, 1989.

Donald G. Barnes,

Staff Director, Science Advisory Board.

[FR Doc. 98–23506 Filed 8–31–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[OPP–00535A; FRL–6025–2]

Changes to Registration Priority System Involving Organophosphate (OP) Alternatives and Reduced Risk Candidates

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of availability.

SUMMARY: EPA has issued an updated policy for the prioritization and expedited review of applications for significant organophosphate (OP) alternative new active ingredients and new use registration applications for conventional pesticides handled by the Agency. The policy is available as a Pesticide Registration (PR) Notice entitled ''Changes to Registration Priority System Involving Organophosphate (OP) Alternatives and Reduced Risk Candidates.'' EPA proposed this policy for 30 days of public comment on May 13, 1998. Interested parties may request a copy of the Agency's final policy as set forth in the ADDRESSES unit of this notice.

ADDRESSES: The PR Notice is available from Peter Caulkins; by mail: Registration Division (7505C), Environmental Protection Agency, 401 M St., SW., Washington, DC 20460. Office location, telephone number, and e-mail address: Rm. 713B, CM #2, 1921 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA, (703) 305–5447, fax: 703–305–6920, e-mail: caulkins.peter@epa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter Caulkins at the telephone number or address listed above.