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Description Notes Alvin L. Young filed these documents together with others in a folder labeled, "Agent Orange Working Group Science Panel, Current Folder."

**Memorandum**

Date

From Carl Keller, Chair Pro Tem
Science Panel of the Agent Orange Working Group *CK*

Subject Minutes of December 5, 1983 Meeting

To Members of the Science Panel, AOWG

The Science Panel convened at 9:30 a.m. in Room 405A, Hubert Humphrey Building on December 5, 1983. Members present were as indicated on the appended list of attendees.

Dr. Houk pointed out that in June, 1983, the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee had requested the Science Panel to review international studies of the association between soft tissue sarcoma and herbicide exposure. A response that the Science Panel was proceeding with this assignment was provided to Senator Cranston in early July. Since this information will be most useful to the Senate Committee during the early part of the next session of Congress, we should provide them with our review by the end of January, 1984.

It was pointed out that there have been several reviews of this subject during the past four years, including one by a member of the Science Panel in March, 1983. While it is possible, but not likely, that the Science Panel would derive an entirely different viewpoint than those already expressed, it seems more feasible, and should be more useful, to summarize and evaluate those reviews already available. This seems particularly appropriate since there have been no recent contributions to the literature on this subject which have been based on previously unreported research. In addition, we should be able to provide some information regarding ongoing research efforts with which we are familiar.

Several topics which should be included in our review were discussed and can provide guidance to the subcommittee drafting our review. These are listed below:

1. Problems with lumping tumors with different cell types and problems in agreeing on which cell types to include.
2. Problems with measurement or estimation of exposure to herbicides and exposures to other substances.
3. Latency periods.
4. Selection of control groups.
5. Statistical power of various studies to discriminate between alternative hypotheses. A related problem is the interpretation of "negative" results which is often misconstrued as an indication that there is no association.
6. Problems with cause-effect conclusions from epidemiologic studies.

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Several review articles were identified, including the Coggon and Acheson article in Lancet (1982); the AMA Council on Scientific Affairs Advisory Panel (1981); the Remington Critique in the Congressional Record (1980); the EPA Background document for the Dioxin Strategy, and Dr. Hobsons review (both 1983), and others are available. It was decided to designate a subcommittee made up of representatives from various agencies actively engaged in research on this subject. It was also decided that in order to expedite the timely completion of this project, that the chair of this subcommittee be a regular member of the Science Panel and that all members be quite familiar with epidemiologic research methods. The selected subcommittee consists of the following members:

Col. Richard Hodder, Chair,
Dr. Peter Layde, CDC,
Dr. Marilyn Fingerhut, NIOSH,
Dr. Han Kang, VA, and
Dr. Aaron Blair, NCI

The Science Panel meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.