

International Harmonization of Accreditation of Toxicologists

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ABSTRACT : In the past, IUTOX engaged in dialogue with various international toxicology organizations to address this important issue. IUTOX Executive Committee engaged in activities that support accreditation and/or registration of toxicologists around the world. As a result of discussions held during the IUTOX-sponsored workshop at the 2000 Annual Meeting of the SOT in Philadelphia, it was decided to create an international forum, the "International Assembly for the Recognition of Toxicologists" (IART). The mission of IART was defined as threefold: 1) to establish a forum for development of criteria for recognizing qualified experts in toxicology; 2) to assist "recognizing organizations" in establishing these criteria; and 3) to promote identification and training needs to enhance expertise in toxicology. The membership of IART is open to all organizations (e.g., registries, boards, academies, etc.) whose purpose is the recognition of expertise in toxicology.

Key Words : Toxicologists, Recognition, Certification

1. Formation of the Ad Hoc Committee

The mission of IUTOX is to "foster international scientific co-operation among national and other groups of toxicologists". As part of this mission, IUTOX has committed to leading efforts to establishing a coordinated process that will work towards improved inter- and intranational recognition of public and occupational health scientists engaged in the practice of toxicology. Starting with discussions held at the 1992 International Congress of Toxicology in Rome, and continued at additional workshops held the 1998 ICT in Paris and 1999 4th Congress of Toxicology in Developing Countries in Antalya, Turkey, IUTOX engaged in dialogue with various international toxicology organizations to address this important issue.

In 1999, IUTOX Executive Committee decided to form the Ad Hoc Committee of the International Harmonization of Accreditation of Toxicologists (IHAT), and Tetsuo Satoh (Vice President) and James Bus (Director) were appointed as the co-chairs of the committee.

The list of the Ad Hoc Committee:

Prof. Tetsuo Satoh Dr. James Bus

(IUTOX)	(IUTOX)
Prof. Arthur Craigmill	Dr. Richard Morrissey
(ABT)	(ABT)
Prof. Edmond. E. Creppy	Dr. Richard Morrissey
(EUROTOX)	(ATS)
Dr. Frank Galey	Dr. Il Je Yu
(ABVT)	(KST)
Dr. John S. Fowler	Dr. Maurizio Manno
(EUROTOX)	(EUROTOX)
Dr. Ikuo Horii	Dr. Frank Galey
(JST)	(ABVT)

1) Ad Hoc Committee
will be composed of representatives of existing accrediting organization and bodies worldwide.

will assess the certification/registration requirements of the existing accrediting organization and bodies worldwide.

will establish a procedure for harmonizing international certification/registration of toxicologists.

2) The mission of the committee
is to establish a strategic plan including long range goals and **specific objectives** to be accomplished by **2001**.

3) What elements need to be demonstrated to be an

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List of abbreviations : IUTOX, International Union of Toxicology; IART, International Assembly for the Recognition of Toxicologists; EUROTOX, European Society of Toxicology

expert?

- a. Training
- b. Experience
- c. Expertise
- d. Active Practice

4) How may these elements be demonstrated effectively?

- a. Publications
- b. Reports
- c. Awards

5) Similar aspects of all the systems

- a. Training requirement (BS, MS, MD, D.V.M., Ph.D.)
- b. Experience requirement, active practice of toxicology
- c. Presence of theoretical and practical components of toxicology in training and practice
- d. Objective expert evaluation of qualifications
- e. Test (not all systems)

6) How do we proceed to adopt these as "recognized" by all parties?

- a. Intra-organizational
- b. Inter-organizational

7) Criteria for a satisfactory registration scheme (EUROTOX model)

- a. National level, one scheme per country
- b. Definition of syllabus for a toxicologists both general and within the context of local/national needs
- c. Objective review process for applications, with or without examination
- d. Impartial and authoritative review process

2. Benefits of certification (ABT case)

1. Benefits to **Toxicologists**

- a. The certification often an advantage in the job market and career development.
- b. The certification enhances credibility in consulting and legal testimony.

2. Benefits to **Employers**

- a. The certification is recognized by the national registries in several European countries
- b. The certification supports scientific credibility.

3. Benefits to **Society**

- a. The certification is recognized as the standard for competence in general toxicology.
- b. ABT's certification process is recognized worldwide, thus providing a consistent international standard of competence and expertise on toxicology issues.

3. International Board Option:

If the committee decides that an international accreditation of toxicologists is desirable, then the following issues must be addressed:

1) Possibility of harmonization of the certification/registration procedure for examination/registration between the existing accrediting organizations and toxicology societies in **developing countries**.

2) Procedures for qualification of international certification/registration of toxicologists who are certified by the individual organizations.

3) Qualification of the applicants for international accreditation

4) Procedure for recertification of authorized qualification

5) Payment of the fee for examination of the individual organization and registration for international certification/registration by registration (examination)

6) Establishment of the international organization for certification/registration of toxicologists

- a. The new international organization which is independent of IUTOX shall be formed to achieve the secretarial business of certification/registration smoothly.

- b. IUTOX shall be responsible for the secretarial business of international certification/registration.

4. Formation of the International Assembly for the Recognition of Toxicologists (IART)

Using information and feedback gained from these earlier dialogue workshops, IUTOX-sponsored a full-day workshop held at the Society of Toxicology 2000 Annual Meeting with the purpose of developing definitive working plans to formalize international coordination in this arena. Under the leadership of IUTOX Executive Committee members Dr. Tetsuo Satoh (Japan) and Dr. James Bus (USA), representatives from organizations engaged in activities that support

accreditation and/or registration of toxicologists gathered to discuss the develop plans that would results in enhanced recognition of toxicologists around the world. In addition to IUTOX, representatives from the following national and international organizations participated in the workshop: Academy of Toxicological Sciences (ATS), ALFA-OMET, American Board of Toxicology (ABT), American Board of Veterinary Toxicology (ABVT), EUROTOX, International Academy of Toxicologic Pathology (IATP), Japanese Society of Toxicology (JST), Korean Society of Toxicology (KST), and the Society of Toxicologic pathologists (STP).

As a result of discussion held during the workshop it was decided to create an international forum, the **"International Assembly for the Recognition of Toxicologists" (IART)**. The need for such an international collaborative body was based on the recognition that toxicologists plays a significant role in evaluating the potential health effects of chemicals in the workplaces and environment at large. Because the work of toxicologists is vital to the maintenance of public health in the various media in which people work and live, toxicologists must be recognized by both the public and national and international governing bodies as highly trained and appropriately experienced.

In order to support these important these important objectives, the mission of IART was defined as threefold: 1) to establish a forum for development of criteria for recognizing qualified experts in toxicology; 2) to assist "recognizing organizations" in establishing these criteris; 3) to promote identification and training needs to enhance expertise in toxicology. The overall strategy of IART is to serve as an international working group whose task will be to develop an action plan supporting future coordination of activities. The membership of IART is open to all organizations (e.g., registries, boards, academies, etc.) whose purpose is the recognition of expertise in toxicology.

To move the efforts of IART forwards, the workshop

participants created a working subteam to draft the principles of an action plan. These principles will be incorporated into a memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that can be endorsed by both IUTOX and IART at the International Congress of Toxicology in Brisbane, Australia in 2001. The purpose of the MOU will be to define mutually complementary and supportive activities activities for both IART and IUTOX in accomplishing their respective missions of enhancing the international prectice of toxicology.

The representatives from the IART working subteam were designated as : Drs. T. Satoh (Japan) and J. Bus (USA) representing IUTOX, Dr. A. Craigmill (USA, American Board of Toxicology); Dr. J. Fowler (UK, EUROTOX); Dr. I. Horii (Japan, Japanese Society of Toxicology); and Dr. A. Albores representing from a developing country (Mexico).

The present members of the IART (as of August 15, 2000)

The following organizations have officially applied for the IART members.

American Board of Toxicology
 American Board of Veterinary Toxicology
 Japanese Society of Toxicology
 European Society of Toxicology
 Italian Society of Toxicology

CONCLUSION

The membership of IART is open to all organizations (e.g., registries, boards, academies, etc.) whose purpose is the recognition of expertise in toxicology.

For additional information on the activities of IART, please contact Dr. Tetsuo Satoh at satohbri@plum.ifnet.or.jp, or at the mail address: Biomedical Research Institute, 2802-1, Hiratsuka, Shiroy, Inba, Chiba 270-1402, JAPAN.