

Code of Understanding for Cooperation within the Permanent Senate Commission for the Investigation of Health Hazards of Chemical Compounds in the Work Area and Its Working Groups

1. The Permanent Senate Commission for the Investigation of Health Hazards of Chemical Compounds in the Work Area was established by the DFG (German Research Foundation) to create the basis for an independent, interdisciplinary, and scientifically guided discussion forum on workplace-relevant hazardous substances. Based on the evaluation of all available scientific studies and documented observations, the Commission derives maximum workplace concentrations and assessment values in biological materials such as blood and urine and justifies these determinations. It also assesses carcinogenicity, reproductive and germ cell mutagenic effects, respiratory and skin sensitization, as well as dermal absorption of workplace substances. The results of these consultations are compiled in the annually published List of MAK and BAT Values. Furthermore, the Commission develops, examines, and evaluates analytical methods for detecting exposure to hazardous substances in air and biological material. The List of MAK and BAT Values, all documentation, and method documentation are publicly available in the MAK Collection. The documentation is funded by the DFG as part of the Commission's work.
2. The Commission consists of members appointed by the DFG Senate to serve on the Commission. The chair and overall responsibility are assigned to one member. Scientists from federal or state authorities involved in tasks relevant to the Commission's work may participate as Permanent Guests. Additionally, guests may be temporarily invited by the Commission or its working groups for specific topics. These guests should support the evaluation and decision-making process of the Commission with their expertise.
3. The Commission has established several working groups whose areas of focus relate to the Commission's overarching goals. All results from the working groups feed into the Commission's decision-making processes. The heads of each working group, with the support of the scientific secretariats, are responsible for ensuring ongoing information exchange with the Commission and among the groups to fulfill the Commission's mission. Once a year, the Commission members formally decide on the working results in a plenary session.
4. The work of the Commission and its working groups is accompanied and supported by scientific secretariats. Their main tasks include literature research and evaluation, compiling data for scientific documentation, and preparing and following up on meetings and discussion processes. Detailed information on the tasks of the scientific secretariats can be found at:
<https://www.dfg.de/resource/blob/176142/9d3a23a9aafcb9767ea88a63200c0598/aufgabe-kommissionssekretariats-en-data.pdf>

5. All decisions relevant to the Commission's work processes and procedures are made by the Chair of the Commission, involving the heads of the working groups.
6. During meetings of the Commission and its working groups, discussions are conducted openly and continue until consensus among members is reached. Suggestions to optimize processes or critical remarks about the Commission's working methods are always welcome and should be openly voiced and discussed. To facilitate overarching discussion, such comments should be raised via the group leaders. Mutual trust is a fundamental requirement for the successful fulfillment of the Commission's tasks.
7. Given that the Commission's objectives can only be achieved through collaboration between the Commission and its working groups, all of its publications are fundamentally joint works. This must be reflected accordingly in the authorship. Members, Permanent Guests, Guests, and/or staff from the scientific secretariats may be listed as individual authors if their substantial personal contribution to the publication justifies it. The particular role of working group leaders and the Commission Chair also justifies listing them as authors in Commission or working group publications.

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8. Due to the Commission's subject matter overlap with interest groups in occupational health and the economic relevance of many of its recommendations, there is a high level of public interest in its work. Even the appearance of undue influence due to conflicts of interest could harm the Commission's credibility. All individuals involved in the Commission must pay special attention to this issue. The involvement of scientific secretariats, the interdisciplinary structure of the Commission, the multi-stage consensus-based discussion process, and the public comment phase already provide essential safeguards against unscientific influence. Additionally, the DFG's established procedures for handling conflicts of interest (DFG Form 72.01) must be observed. This includes early reporting and disclosure of circumstances that might give the appearance of a conflict of interest.
9. Members of the MAK Commission, Permanent Guests, Guests, and staff of the scientific secretariats are expected to carry out their work in accordance with this code of understanding and to support the Commission in fulfilling its tasks. Participation in the Commission and its working groups implies agreement with the principles outlined in this code.

Title to address:	
Title to the name:	
Given name:	
Surname:	
Business address:	
Business e-mail:	

I hereby confirm that I recognize the above-mentioned code and will comply with the above-mentioned regulations in the context of my work in the Commission, including all working groups.

Place, Date

Signature