



ANNUAL REPORT 2007

New Members

1. On 1 January 2007, the State Agency of Medicines (SAM) of Estonia became the 30th Participating Authority of PIC/S after a long evaluation process started in 2001. South Africa's Medicines Control Council (MCC) was admitted as PIC/S' 31st Participating Authority on 1 July 2007 following a successful evaluation of the South African GMP system and an assessment visit by a PIC/S Delegation in South Africa.
2. Both Argentina's National Institute of Medicaments (INAME) and the Medicines Authority of Malta (MAM) were also invited to join PIC/S as new Participating Authorities but only as of 1 January 2008.

Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme

The Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme (PIC Scheme) is an informal and flexible arrangement between GMP inspectorates. It entered into force in November 1995. It is run in parallel with the Pharmaceutical Inspection Convention (see Annex II). The common logo for both is PIC/S.

The Scheme retains and improves the Convention's main features, i.e. the networking and confidence building between the national inspection authorities, the development of quality systems, the training of inspectors and other related experts and its work towards global harmonisation of GMP. It is open to the participation of the inspectorates of other countries.

The main decision-making body is the PIC/S Committee in which all Members are represented and which meets at least once a year. The Committee is assisted in its task by an Executive Bureau and a Secretariat.

The PIC/S Executive Bureau's task is to prepare meetings of the Committee, implement the latter's decisions and recommendations, monitor the Scheme's activities and prepare the annual budget. The Bureau is composed of the Chairperson, two Deputies as well as two Members of the Committee.

Operation of the Scheme

3. The PIC/S Committee and the PIC/S Executive Bureau met twice in the course of 2007. The Working Group on the Training of Inspectors met once.
4. The PIC/S Committee met under the chairmanship of Mr. Jacques Morénas (France / French Health Products Safety Agency) first in Geneva (Switzerland) on 16-17 May 2007 and then in Singapore on 19 November 2007.

5. During these meetings, the Committee approved the 2006 accounts, discharged the Chairman for the financial year 2006, approved the 2008 budget and revised the Financial Rules. It also adopted a revision of the PIC Scheme (chapter on exchange of information) as well as a new system of classification for PIC/S documents. Members decided to share information on third-country inspections performed by PIC/S Participating Authorities. They also noted the legal opinion of the Depositary on the termination of the Pharmaceutical Inspection Convention (PIC).

6. The Committee reviewed the assessment of new Applicants and the reassessment of older Participating Authorities. It also noted that the Participating Authorities from Belgium and Liechtenstein went through an internal reorganisation.

7. The Committee discussed and adopted a number of guidance documents, including the Guide to Good Practices for the Preparation of Medicinal Products in Healthcare Establishments. It also monitored the activities carried out by the Working on Training and by the Executive Bureau.

8. The Committee extended the mandate of Mr. Jacques Moréas (France / AFSSAPS) as PIC/S Chairman until the end of 2008 and elected Mr. Michel Keller (Switzerland / Swissmedic) as First Deputy Chairman and Mr. Tor Gråberg (Sweden / MPA) as Second Deputy Chairman for the period 2007-2008. Mr. Paul Hargreaves (United Kingdom / MHRA) was also re-elected as Member of the Executive Bureau for the period 2008-2009. The Committee nominated Malaysia / NPCB as ASEAN Liaison Authority for the period 2007-2008 (see also "Relations with other organisations").

9. The Executive Bureau met in Geneva (14 May 2007) and in Singapore (18 November 2007). During these meetings, the Bureau mainly discussed administrative issues concerning the Secretariat (outsourcing some activities) and its staff (salaries, social insurances, etc.).

10. The Working Group on the Training of Inspectors met under the chairmanship of the PIC/S First Deputy Chairman, Mr. Michel Keller (Switzerland / Swissmedic), in Geneva (Switzerland) on 15 May 2007. For more information on the activities of the Working Group on Training, see "Training of Inspectors" below.

11. As in the past, the PIC/S Secretariat continued to provide secretariat services to the various PIC/S bodies (Committee, Bureau, Working Group on Training).

**The Participating Authorities of the PIC/S
(Convention and Scheme taken together)**

By the end of 2007, PIC/S comprised 31 inspectorates from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic (human & veterinary), Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (see also Annex I).

Membership Applications: Cyprus applies

12. The membership application from the Pharmaceutical Services of the Ministry of Health of Cyprus was received on 2 November 2007. At its autumn meeting in Singapore, the Committee appointed a Rapporteur and a Co-Rapporteur in order to assess the application.

13. The following progress was made in the assessment of the other membership applications. The Committee:

- ◆ discussed a follow-up report on the application by Argentina's Instituto Nacional de Medicamentos (INAME). As all outstanding issues had been addressed, INAME was accepted to access to PIC/S membership as of 2008.
- ◆ approved the assessment report on the Medicines Authority of Malta (MAM), recommending MAM's PIC/S membership as of 2008. The representative of MAM made a presentation on the Maltese GMP inspection system.
- ◆ appointed a team in order to carry out an assessment visit to Thailand's Food and Drug Administration (Thai FDA).
- ◆ nominated a Rapporteur and a Co-Rapporteur for the assessment of the application lodged by France's Agency for Veterinary Medicinal Products (ANMV). Following the assessment of the application, a set of questions were submitted to ANMV.
- ◆ noted that the Rapporteur had assessed replies submitted by USA's Food and Drug Administration (US FDA) to the list of questions in connection with its application. The Rapporteur will draft an interim status report listing all outstanding issues.
- ◆ nominated a new Rapporteur for the assessment of application by Israel's Ministry of Health. An on-site assessment was agreed in principle but only once a licensing system would be introduced in Israel.
- ◆ noted an intermediate report by the Rapporteur on the application by Lithuania's State Medicines Control Agency (SMCA) recommending to await the Canadian MRA visit and asking Canada / HPFBI to follow-up outstanding issues.

14. No progress was reported on the membership application of Ukraine's Ministry of Health.

Reassessment of Participating Authorities

Joint Reassessment Programme (JRP)

For many years, only Applicants to the Convention or the Scheme were subject to assessment. Founding Members were, however, never assessed. In order ensure that both new applicants and older members fulfil the same requirements, a Joint Reassessment Programme (JRP) was launched in 2000 under which existing PIC/S members are now also reassessed for equivalence on a regular basis. It is run in parallel with the EU's Joint Audit Programme (JAP) and uses basically the same tools.

15. In 2007 the reassessments of Iceland's Medicines Control Agency (IMCA) and Switzerland's Agency for Therapeutic Products (Swissmedic) were successfully closed. The Committee requested a follow-up report on the reassessment of Liechtenstein's "Kontrollstelle für Arzneimittel" (KA), following the reorganisation of the Competent Authority in Liechtenstein.

16. The reassessment of Austria's AGES PharmMed was launched *. The report on the reassessment of UK's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) was still outstanding at the end of the year.

Training of Inspectors

17. In 2007 the Working Group on the Training of Inspectors reviewed (i) the operation of the Joint Visits Programme (including a pilot project of joint visits for GCP); (ii) a priority list of future guidance documents to be developed; (iii) the activities of all Expert Circles and; (iv) the preparations for the 2007 Seminar (see below) and for the 2008 Seminar on "Good Distribution Practices". It also agreed that the 2009 Seminar would take place in Sweden on "Sterile Aseptic Manufacturing for both APIs and medicinal products". The 2010 Seminar will be held in Malaysia on herbal medicinal products.

18. The Working Group discussed the modalities of a new training programme on coached inspections and designated a volunteer for drafting an SOP.

19. It also agreed to revise the format of joint visit reports. The Chairman of the Working Group on Training agreed to draft the new report template.

Joint Visits Programme

20. At the end of 2007, there were 26 active joint visit groups under the Joint Visits Programme representing around 75 inspectors from 29 different nationalities. Four joint visit groups for GCP inspectors were created on a trial basis. The result of this trial programme will be assessed by PIC/S in 2010.

* By the end of 2007, supporting documents had still not been provided in English, as requested.

PIC/S Joint Visit Groups

Another means of training inspectors of the PIC/S countries has been devised in the form of joint visits to manufacturers by inspectors of different countries. Groups of three inspectors are set up on the basis of applications sent to the PIC/S Secretariat. Each inspector is assigned within his/her group to act in turn as host for one year and guest for the other two years.

Visits are carried out in English or in a language commonly agreed by inspectors. Joint reports are drafted after each visit and sent to the Committee for evaluation.

The organisation of the joint visits has proved an excellent means for the further training of inspectors through mutual exchange of experience and a useful contribution to the maintenance of mutual confidence between competent authorities. Participants have also the possibility to discuss and compare their inspection methods and their interpretation of GMP rules.

2007 PIC/S Seminar in Singapore

21. For the first time in PIC/S history, the annual seminar was organised in Asia. The Seminar took place in Singapore from 20 to 22 November 2007 and was dedicated to the “Inspection of Manufacturers of Solid Dosage Forms”. It was organised by the Health Science Authority of Singapore (HSA).

22. The Seminar was attended by around 130 participants from 45 agencies from all continents (among which 13 from Asia). Inspectors from a number of non-Member agencies coming from Brunei Darussalam, Cyprus, the European Medicines Agency (EMA), Georgia, Hong-Kong SAR ¹, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Macau SAR ¹, NIS ², South Korea, New Zealand, People Republic of China, Philippines, Taipei, Thailand, USA, Vietnam and WHO also participated in the seminar. Both the attendance and the number of agencies represented constituted a record.

23. Among the seminar participants were also a number of speakers, session chairpersons and workshop leaders. Speakers were mainly provided by PIC/S Participating Authorities, academia and industry.

24. The Seminar focused on the following topics in the field of GMP inspection of manufacturers of solid dosage forms:

- (i) challenges and issues (e.g. the interface between GMP inspection and drug evaluation);
- (ii) technological advances and new initiatives (e.g. Process Analytical Technology and process understanding);

¹ Special Administrative Region

² New Independent States' Interstate Commission on Standardisation, Registration and Quality Control of Medicines and Medical Devices

- (iii) production and quality control (e.g. control of starting materials, in-process & packaging controls, cleaning validation for multi-product manufacturing facilities);
- (iv) environmental control and segregation requirements (e.g. air cleanliness classification for manufacturing facilities).

Expert Circles & Working Groups

Expert Circle on Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients

25. A sub-group of the Expert Circle on Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs), met in Saint-Denis (France) on 12-13 September 2007. The purpose of this meeting, organised by AFSSAPS / France, was the finalisation of the draft Aide-Memoire on inspection of APIs manufacturers.

Expert Circle on Computerised Systems

26. The 6th meeting of the Expert Circle on Computerised Systems was organised by IMB / Ireland in Dublin (Ireland) on 1-3 October 2007. It was attended by 25 inspectors from 12 countries. The meeting focused on the revision of Chapter 4 and Annex 11 of the EU-PIC/S GMP Guide and on presentations by regulators and industry on Process Analytical Technologies.

27. The Expert Circle having completed its mandate, it was requested by the Committee to seek a new mandate.

Expert Circle on Hospital Pharmacy

28. The 10th meeting of the Expert Circle on Hospital Pharmacy was held in Oslo (Norway) on 25-27 June 2007. The meeting, hosted by NOMA / Norway, was dedicated to the finalisation of the draft PIC/S Guide to Good Practices for the Preparation of Medicinal Products in Healthcare Establishments (PE 010).

29. Following the adoption of the Guide, the Committee decided to deactivate the Expert Circle as it had completed its mandate. It agreed, however, to create a Working Group in charge of developing an Annex to the new Guide on the preparation of Radiopharmaceuticals.

Expert Circle on Human Blood and Tissue

30. The 14th meeting of the Expert Circle on Human Blood and Tissue took place in Dublin (Ireland) on 1-5 October 2007. It was also organised by IMB / Ireland and was attended by 48 participants from 24 countries (including Japan, Lithuania and the USA). The meeting focused on new technologies, computerised systems and Quality Risk Management. A workshop on the classification of deficiencies was also organised as well as a joint session with the PIC/S Expert Circle on Computerised Systems.

Expert Circle on Quality Risk Management

31. The 1st meeting of the Expert Circle on Quality risk Management (QRM) was organised by AFSSAPS / France in Saint-Denis (France) on 2-3 July 2007. During the meeting, the implementation of QRM in inspection activities was discussed and the

goals of the Expert Circle (which were endorsed by the Committee at its autumn meeting) were defined. The meeting ended with a half-day session with industry associations (ISPE and PDA) on the implementation of QRM in industry.

Why Expert Circles?

PIC/S Expert Circles have been set up by the PIC/S Joint Committee to facilitate the discussions and the exchange of information among inspectors specialised in a specific area of GMP such as blood, hospital pharmacy, computerised systems, active pharmaceutical ingredients, quality risk management, etc. Expert Circles meet regularly to develop draft guidance, recommendations, etc. and offer training in their respective fields of specialisation.

Harmonisation of guidance documents

32. The following PIC/S documents were adopted in the course of 2007:

- PIC/S Guide to Good Practices for the Preparation of Medicinal Products in Healthcare Establishments (PE 010-1);
- SOP on the Preparation of PIC/S Documents (PI 029-1);
- Revised SOP on Editing PIC/S Documents (PI 001-5).

33. PIC/S also revised the format of the PIC/S GMP Guide (PE 009-6) in line with the EU GMP Guide. Chapter 1 to 9 became Part I while the Guide on APIs (PE 007-2) became Part II of the revised PIC/S GMP Guide. The general introduction of the GMP Guide as well as the introduction of Part II were also amended during a second revision (PE 009-7).

34. The list of PIC/S publications is available on the PIC/S web site: <http://www.picscheme.org>

Relations with other organisations

ASEAN

35. A first meeting between PIC/S and representatives from Regulatory Authorities of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) took place in Singapore on 22 November 2007. Representatives from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam attended the meeting. PIC/S was represented by the Executive Bureau.

36. The meeting was the occasion for both PIC/S and ASEAN to present their respective organisation and to explore possible ways of co-operation on GMP training and GMP Guides and Guidance documents.

37. Participants agreed to co-operate in the following fields of GMP: training for inspectors (e.g. joint visits or coached inspections), preparation of application for PIC/S membership, sharing of information (e.g. Rapid Alert System, import for export-only products) and sharing of knowledge on the inspection of herbal medicines.

Europe

38. On 12 July 2007, the Director of the European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare European (EDQM) and the PIC/S Chairman signed a co-operation agreement on the sharing of information, the consultation on guidance documents and training in the field of APIs.

39. A co-operation agreement in the form of an exchange of letters (regarding the training of GMP inspectors, the exchange of information on guidance documents and audits of GMP inspectorates) was negotiated with the European Medicines Agency (EMA). The agreement was signed on 22 December 2007 by the PIC/S Chairman and the Executive Director of the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

WHO

40. The First Deputy Chairman participated in the 42nd meeting of the WHO Expert Committee on Specifications for Pharmaceutical Preparations, held in Geneva (Switzerland) from 12-19 October 2007.

41. The PIC/S Chairman attended a meeting organised by the WHO Department on Immunization, Vaccines and Biologicals (IVB) on the revision of WHO NRA assessment system on 17-19 December 2007 in Geneva (Switzerland).

PIC/S – Industry Joint Workshop

42. PIC/S and the International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering (ISPE) organised in Singapore on 23 November 2007 an interactive joint workshop on “Systems Approach to Quality Risk Management”. It was the first time that PIC/S organised such a joint event with an industry association.

43. The meeting was open to both regulators and industry. It was attended by more than 226 participants (among which, 65 participants from Regulatory Authorities) representing 34 countries.

44. Participants attended plenary sessions with presentations from industry and regulatory authority representatives. GMP inspectors and industry representatives also participated in practical workshops on different aspects of Quality Risk Management.

Information brochure

45. In order to improve communication about its activities, PIC/S has edited an information brochure providing an overview on PIC/S’ role, activities, accession procedure, etc. The first edition has been printed in 500 copies.

**LIST OF PIC/S
PARTICIPATING AUTHORITIES & OBSERVERS**
(as of 31 December 2007)

I - PARTICIPATING AUTHORITIES

(in the alphabetical order of the country in which they are located)

	PARTICIPATING AUTHORITY	ACRONYM
Australia	Therapeutic Goods Administration	TGA
Austria	Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety	AGES
Belgium	Federal Agency for Medicines and Health Products	FAMHP
Canada	Health Products and Food Branch Inspectorate	HPFBI
Czech Republic	Státní Ústav pro Kontrolu Léčiv <i>(State Institute for Drug Control)</i>	SÚKL
	Ústav pro Státní Kontrolu Veterinárních Biopreparátů a Léčiv <i>(Czech Institute for State Control of Veterinary Medicaments and Biologicals)</i>	ÚSKVBL
Denmark	Danish Medicines Agency	DMA
Estonia	State Agency of Medicines	SAM
Finland	National Agency for Medicines	NAM
France	Agence Française de Sécurité Sanitaire des Produits de Santé <i>(French Health Products Safety Agency)</i>	AFSSAPS
Germany	Bundesministerium für Gesundheit <i>(Federal Ministry for Health)</i>	BMG
	Zentralstelle der Länder für Gesundheitsschutz bei Arzneimitteln und Medizinprodukten <i>(Central Authority of the Laender for Health Protection regarding Medicinal Products and Medical Devices)</i>	ZLG
Greece	Εθνικός Οργανισμός Φαρμάκων <i>(National Organization for Medicines)</i>	EOF
Hungary	National Institute of Pharmacy	NIP
Iceland	The Icelandic Medicines Control Agency	IMCA
Ireland	Irish Medicines Board	IMB
Italy	Agenzia Italiana del Fármaco	AIFA
Latvia	Zāļu Valsts Aģentūra <i>(State Agency of Medicines)</i>	ZVA
Liechtenstein	Amt für Gesundheit	AG
Malaysia	National Pharmaceutical Control Bureau	NPCB
Netherlands	Inspectie voor de Gezondheidszorg <i>(Inspectorate of Health Care)</i>	IGZ

Norway	Norwegian Medicines Agency	NOMA
Poland	Main Pharmaceutical Inspectorate	MPI
Portugal	Instituto Nacional da Farmácia e do Medicamento	INFARMED
Romania	National Medicines Agency	NMA
Singapore	Health Sciences Authority	HSA
Slovak Republic	State Institute for Drug Control	SIDC
South Africa	Medicines Control Council	MCC
Spain	Agencia Española del Medicamento y Productos Sanitarios	AEMPS
Sweden	Medical Products Agency	MPA
Switzerland	Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products	Swissmedic
United Kingdom	Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency	MHRA

II – OBSERVERS and PARTNERS

(in the alphabetical order of their acronyms)

	OBSERVERS / PARTNERS	ACRONYM
	European Directorate for the Quality of Medicines & HealthCare	EDQM
	European Medicines Agency	EMA
	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund	UNICEF
	World Health Organization	WHO

**From the Pharmaceutical Inspection Convention
to the Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme**

The Convention for the Mutual Recognition of Inspections in respect of the Manufacture of Pharmaceutical Products (Pharmaceutical Inspection Convention) entered into force in 1971.

The Convention applies to inspection of the manufacture of medicinal and related products intended for human use, which are subject to control under health legislation. It provides that the Contracting States will exchange, on the basis of inspections, such information as is necessary for the health authorities in an importing Contracting State to be able to recognise inspections carried out in the Contracting State of the manufacturer.

In 2000 the Convention was operating between eighteen countries, namely, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom

Due to some incompatibility for the Member States of the European Union (and for the States parties to the European Economic Area) between their obligations under the Convention and under the EU, the conclusion of another type of agreement than the Convention was agreed upon. This is an arrangement between the inspectorates of the present Contracting States to the Convention but also open to the participation of the inspectorates of other countries. The new arrangement called "Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme" (or PIC Scheme) was put into force in November 1995.

The Pharmaceutical Inspection Convention and the Pharmaceutical Inspection Co-operation Scheme are run concurrently by one joint Committee and one Secretariat. The common logo for both is PIC/S.
