

### ***VERA* (Verifiable Estimates for Risk)**

Under the *VERA* project, *TERA* scientists develop risk estimates for interested parties. Generally, risk estimates are developed for chemicals that have either not been evaluated by other agencies (e.g., U.S. EPA), or the available assessments are not up-to-date. The product of an assessment under *VERA* may take many forms, depending on the need of the sponsoring party. The assessment may be in the form of a report, a manuscript suitable for publication, or in the format used by U.S. EPA for their risk assessment files. Upon completion of a *VERA* assessment, the sponsor may opt to submit the new or updated assessment to a government agency (e.g., U.S. EPA) for their consideration, or may opt to bring the assessment to a *TERA*-sponsored peer review meeting for consideration of inclusion on our *ITER* database.

In the first half of 1996, *TERA* worked on several assessments (some of which are ongoing) under *VERA*, including:

- \* ethylene glycol butyl ether (1st draft completed)
- \* diethylene glycol butyl ether (1st draft completed)
- \* methyl ethyl ketone (1st draft completed)
- \* methyl isobutyl ketone (1st draft completed)
- \* formaldehyde
- \* acrylonitrile

In addition, we submitted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal the work on chromium that we started in 1995 and completed in the early part of 1996. The manuscript is currently undergoing journal peer-review.

### **State HELP**

In keeping with our mission, *TERA* has a project called “State Help” under which each state can receive annually up to 10 hours of technical support from *TERA* scientists free of charge. In the first half of 1996, the States of Texas, Vermont, Ohio and Washington took advantage of this project by requesting either technical support for risk assessment problems

over the telephone, or requesting a written review of one of their States' risk assessments.

### **Society of Toxicology, 1996**

One of *TERA's* exciting activities in the first half of 1996 was attending and giving presentations at the annual Society of Toxicology (SOT) meeting which was held in Anaheim, CA in March. Michael, Sue, and Jacqueline all went to this meeting and *TERA* had a booth in the exhibit hall where we provided information about our company and demonstrations of our *ITER* database. Overall, the meeting was highly successful as well as a lot of fun.

### **International Toxicity Estimates for Risk (*ITER*)**

*ITER* is a database of human health risk assessment values from health organizations, government agencies and other groups world-wide. A pilot version was launched on the Internet in February, 1996 and is available at no charge. It includes over 50 toxicity values for 21 chemicals and compares values from Health Canada, the U.S. EPA and the U.S. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). Approximately 20 more chemicals and 60 more values will be loaded in the summer of 1996. *TERA* staff compile risk values from existing publications of health organizations into a consistent format, so that comparisons can be made easily. Details are provided on the basis for cancer classifications and quantitative risk values. *TERA* compares the values and explains the source of differences. The information on *ITER* is useful to risk assessors and risk managers needing human health toxicity values to make risk-based decisions. *ITER* allows the user to compare values from different organizations to determine the best value to use for the human exposure situation being evaluated.

*TERA* has been supported by Health Canada, Syracuse Research Corporation, U.S. Borax, and the Chemical Manufacturers Association in developing *ITER*. *TERA's* goal is to include all available toxicity values from major risk assessment agencies, including WHO and European agencies; additional sponsors are currently being sought to make this possible. *ITER* will also include independently-derived values which have undergone external peer review at a *TERA*-sponsored peer-review meeting (see below).

***TERA* is on-line! (<http://www.tera.org>)**

*TERA* went on-line with its home page on the world wide web in February, 1996. We have received many favorable comments and hundreds of different users access our site. The *ITER* database is accessed from our page, along with information on our various programs, our trustees and staff, and a listing of staff publications. During the second half of 1996 we plan to link our sites to other appropriate sites and add information about current *TERA* activities.

***ITER* Independent Expert Peer Review Program**

*TERA* has scheduled the first peer review meeting for the International Toxicity Estimates for Risk (*ITER*) data base on September 19 and 20, 1996. Additional information on peer reviewers and the process of review and reviewer selection will shortly be added to this home page.

Two chemicals are scheduled for reviewed at our September meeting in Cincinnati: acrylonitrile and hexachlorobutadiene. The first chemical is sponsored by CYTEC Industries and the other by Health Canada. Sponsors are paying *TERA* \$6250 per assessment to cover costs. Peer reviewers are donating their time. These meetings are open to the public.