BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE PROCEDURE

1. Submission of the Dossier

The company Schering AG, Berlin, submitted on 13 May 1994 an application to all EU Member States for Betaferon vials through the Concertation Procedure (No. 81). In application to Article 2 of Directive 93/41/EEC, on 16 January 1995, the company Schering AG, Berlin, transferred to the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products and into the new centralised procedure the application for marketing authorisation for Betaferon, falling within the scope of Part A of the Annex to Council Regulation (EEC) 2309/93 of 22 July 1993.

The Rapporteur and the two Co-Rapporteurs appointed by the CPMP were:

Rapporteur: Dr. Jefferys/Dr. S. Wood/Dr. P. Waller

Co-Rapporteur: Prof. A. Hildebrandt Co-Rapporteur: Dr. P. Le Courtois

Licensing status:

Up to April 2000, Betaferon was authorised in several non-EU countries including USA (23 July 1993) and Canada (19 July 1995).

2. Steps Taken for the Assessment of the Product

- The Rapporteur's initial Assessment Report was circulated to all members of the previous CPMP on 26 July 1994.
- The French Co-Rapporteur prepared additional clinical assessment on 4 August 1994. The German Co-Rapporteur prepared additional preclinical assessment on 18 August 1994.
- The consolidated list on chemical/pharmaceutical issues was sent to the company on 12 October, and on preclinical and clinical points on 18 October 1994.
- The company submitted the responses to the consolidated list of questions on 20 January 1995.
- The Rapporteur circulated the Responses Assessment Report on preclinical and clinical responses provided by the company to all CPMP members on 23 February 1995.
- The Rapporteur circulated the Responses Assessment Report on pharmaceutical responses provided by the company to all CPMP members on March 1995.
- After the Rapporteur/Co-Rapporteur meeting held on 7 March 1995, the CPMP in its March meeting discussed the recommendations presented by the Rapporteur. A revised SPC was circulated to all CPMP members. The remaining pharmaceutical comments were sent to the company on 31 March 1995.
- The company's answers were considered by the CPMP ad hoc Biotechnology Working Party during its meeting on 6-7 April 1995.
- A further list of remaining pharmaceutical points to be answered by the company was prepared. The company responded to the questions on 18 April 1995. The Rapporteur circulated the Assessment Report on the responses on 21 April 1995.
- The company requested a change from trade name Beneseron to Betaferon on 12 April 1995. The CPMP during its meeting of 26-27 April 1995 agreed that all the quality issues which required resolution before granting marketing authorisation had been resolved. A list of further pharmaceutical points for clarification to be addressed in the post-authorisation phase was agreed.

- The revised SPC was discussed and the company was asked to present for a hearing at the May 1995 meeting of the CPMP. It was agreed that the hearing with the company would be focusing on issues relating to the immunogenicity of Betaferon.
- The inspection of the manufacturing plant was planned. It was agreed that, provided there was a positive outcome of the hearing and of the inspection, further clinical data was to be provided by the company after marketing authorisation.
- UK and French inspectors performed inspection of the production facility in the USA on 11-12 May 1995. The outcome of the inspection was favourable.
- During the CPMP meeting on 16-17 May 1995, a hearing with the company took place to address concerns on the immunogenicity of Betaferon. The CPMP considered that, in light of the new data from the 3rd year extension study provided by the company during the hearing, an updated clinical report was to be compiled.
- The CPMP took note of the favourable outcome of the EU inspection of the US manufacturing site.
- During the CPMP meeting on 7-8 June, an additional list of questions to be put to the applicant was agreed, in order to have further clarification on points related to the new clinical evidence provided by the company during the hearing held in May.
- The Rapporteur prepared a further Assessment Report on 3 July 1995, considering that the responses provided by the company were satisfactory.
- Amendments were accordingly made to the texts of the Summary of Product Characteristics and Package Leaflet.
- During the CPMP meeting on 11-12 July 1995, the clarifications given by the company as well as the new Summary of Product Characteristics and Package Leaflet texts were considered adequate in the light of current scientific knowledge, and the CPMP therefore unanimously decided to issue a positive recommendation for the marketing authorisation of Betaferon.
- On 27 November 1995, the European Commission issued a Marketing Authorisation for Betaferon under exceptional circumstances. This implied that pursuant to Article 13 (2) of Council Regulation (EEC) No 2309/93 and Part 4 G of the Annex to Council Directive 75/318/EEC, the Marketing Authorisation Holder had to provide final reports of ongoing clinical studies as listed in Annex II.C to the Commission Decision. These data would form the basis of the re-assessment of the benefit/risk ratio of Betaferon.