CSCS Expert Community: The Changing Landscape of Drug Controls

Introduction

Drug controls are a key compliance issue for companies that handle large numbers of research compounds. Legislation has become more complex and changes are being made more frequently. The Controlled Substance Compliance Expert Community brings together specialists from across the industry to discuss areas of uncertainty and enhance best practice.

How things have changed

In the beginning...

International agreements to control drugs were put in place in the 1960s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>List</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs</td>
<td>Yellow List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971</td>
<td>Green List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances</td>
<td>Red List</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These lists were based on named compounds and their salts, stereoisomers, esters and ethers.

1970s - Response to chemical modification

Synthetic compounds start being developed such as MDMA.

Compliance is no longer a matter of checking against a list but requires a sophisticated structural check.

2010 onwards - Explosion of illegal synthesis

Shops appear that sell 'legal highs', synthetic drugs are specifically designed to avoid the law. Countries start to legislate in a much more generic way, with bans based on biological effect or structures that are made of multiple component parts.

Conclusion

The legislative landscape has changed beyond recognition and controlled substance legislation is more complex and rapidly changing than ever before. The CSCS Expert Community brings together experts in a network that aims to improve practice and works together to bring clarity to areas of uncertainty.

References