Participant	Impurities reported in CCQM-K55.a	Mass Fraction (mg/g)		
		w	*u(w)*	$U_{95\%}$
BAM	Major impurity (Me estradiol ?)	4.9	0.2	0.4
	Combined minor organics	3.0	0.92	1.9
	Estrone	1.22	0.02	0.04
	Water	0.79	0.03	0.06
BIPM	Combined real and artefact minor "organics" [(a)]	7.94	0.63	1.26
	Water	7.48	0.44	0.88
	4-Methyl estradiol	4.81	0.016	0.03
	Combined real minor organics [(b)]	1.91	0.37	0.74
	Estriol	1.39	0.004	0.01
	Estrone	1.21	0.17	0.34
	9,11-Didehydroestradiol	0.43	0.075	0.15
	Organic solvent	< LOD	+ 0.29, - 0.0	+ 0.6, 0
	Inorganic residues	< LOD	+ 0.29, - 0.0	+ 0.6, 0
CENAM	Major impurity (Me estradiol ?)	5.06	0.84	1.68
	Combined minor organics	2.24	0.81	1.62
	Estrone	1.37	0.049	0.098
	Water	0.57	0.007	0.014
GLHKSAR	4-Methyl estradiol	5.98	0.12	0.24
	Combined minor organics	1.78	0.32	0.64
	Water	1.42	0.12	0.24
	Estrone	1.2	0.027	0.054
	β-Equilenol	0.29	0.007	0.014
	17α-Estradiol	0.11	0.013	0.026
	6-Dehydroestradiol	0.10	0.007	0.014
	Inorganic impurities	0.04	0.008	0.016
INMETRO	Water	10.30	0.42	0.95 (k = 2.07)
	Major impurity (Me estradiol ?)	4.30	0.062	0.13 (k = 2.09)
	Combined minor organics	1.30	0.19	0.39 (k = 2.07)
	Estrone	1.06	0.039	0.08 (k = 2.07)
	17α-Estradiol	0.077	0.0004	0.0008 (k = 2.26)
LGC	4-Methyl estradiol	3.9	0.14	0.35 (k = 2.45)
	Combined minor organics	2.0	0.918	2.25 (k = 2.45)
	Water	1.3	0.81	1.63
	6-Hydroxyestradiol	1.2	0.039	0.10 (k = 2.45)
	Estrone	0.8	0.026	0.07 (k = 2.45)
	Methanol	0.2	0.1	0.2
	9,11-Didehydroestradiol	0.1	0.006	0.02 (k = 2.45)
	17α-Estradiol	0.1	0.023	0.06 (k = 2.45)
	Combined inorganics	0.03	0.008	0.016
NIM	Water	1.2	0.2	0.4
	Estrone	1.12	0.10	0.20
NMIA	Water	10.7	1.8	3.6
	Major impurity (Me estradiol)	4.9	0.08	0.19 (k = 2.32)
	Estrone	1.7	0.12	0.28 (k = 2.32)
	Unknown impurity	0.4	0.01	0.033 (k = 2.26)
NMISA	Combined organic impurities	11.62	0.21	0.42
	Water	6.75	0.48	0.96
NRC-INMS	Water	6.0	0.3	N/R
	4-Methyl estradiol	5.12	0.20	0.56 (k = 2.8)
	Estrone	1.22	0.04	N/R
	17α-Estradiol	0.10	0.01	N/R

(a) Contribution to BIPM result subsequently shown to arise from artefacts, not true impurities
(b) Contribution to BIPM result from true minor impurities in CCQM-K55.a

Table 3 : Impurity content for CCQM-K55.a reported by participant (ctd over page)

Participant	Impurities in CCQM-K55.a	Mass Fraction (mg/g)		
		w	*u(w)*	$U_{95\%}$
NIST	Water	6.7	N/A	- 0.6, + 2.4
	4-Methyl estradiol	4.9	0.2	0.4
	Estrone	1.10	0.02	0.05
	17β-Dihyroequilenin	0.30	0.02	0.03
	1-Methylestradiol	0.30	0.02	0.04
	9-Dehydroestradiol	0.16	0.01	0.03
	?-Hydroxyestradiol	0.16	0.06	0.11
	Si as SiO_2	0.14	0.04	0.08
	17α-Estradiol	0.13	0.03	0.05
	Ethanol	0.09	0.02	0.03
NMIJ	Water	7.07	0.53	1.06
	4-Methyl estradiol	5.41	0.32	0.64
	Estrone	1.16	0.024	0.05
	1-Methylestradiol	0.32	0.014	0.03
	17β-Dihydroequilenin	0.28	0.006	0.02
	17α-Estradiol	0.12	0.012	0.03
	6-Dehydroestradiol	0.08	0.002	0.01
	Estradiol 3-methyl ether	0.04	0.01	0.02

Table 3 (ctd) : Impurity content for CCQM-K55.a reported by participant

Component	Participant	Mass Fraction in CCQM-K55.a (mg/g)		
		w	*u(w)*	$U_{95\%}$
4-Methylestradiol	LGC	3.9	0.14	0.35 (*k* = 2.45)
	INMETRO	4.3 [a]	0.062	0.13 (*k* = 2.09)
	BIPM	4.81	0.016	0.032
	BAM	4.9 [a]	0.2	0.4
	NMIA	4.9 [a]	0.08	0.19 (*k* = 2.32)
	NIST	4.9	0.2	0.4
	CENAM	5.06 [a]	0.84	1.68
	NRC-INMS	5.12	0.20	0.56 (*k* = 2.8)
	NMIJ	5.41	0.32	0.64
	GLHKSAR	5.98	0.12	0.24
Estrone	LGC	0.8	0.026	0.07 (*k* = 2.45)
	INMETRO	1.06	0.039	0.08 (*k* = 2.07)
	NIST	1.10	0.02	0.05
	NIM	1.11	0.1	0.2
	NMIJ	1.16	0.024	0.05
	GLHKSAR	1.2	0.027	0.054
	BIPM	1.21	0.17	0.34
	BAM	1.22	0.02	0.04
	NRC-INMS	1.22	0.04	N/R
	CENAM	1.37	0.049	0.098
	NMIA	1.7	0.12	0.28 (*k* = 2.32)
17α-Estradiol	INMETRO	0.08	0.0004	0.0008
	NRC-INMS	0.10	0.01	N/R
	LGC	0.10	0.023	0.06 (*k* = 2.45)
	GLHKSAR	0.11	0.013	0.026
	NMIJ	0.12	0.012	0.03
	NIST	0.13	0.03	0.05
9,11-Didehydroestradiol	LGC	0.1	0.006	0.02 (*k* = 2.45)
	NIST	0.16	0.01	0.03
17β-Dihydroequilenin	NMIJ	0.28	0.006	0.02
	NIST	0.30	0.02	0.03
1-Methylestradiol	NIST	0.30	0.02	0.04
	NMIJ	0.32	0.014	0.03

Table 4: Estimates for specific impurities in CCQM-K55.a by participant

a. Identified as "methylated estradiol" only

4-Methyl estradiol was the principal related structure impurity identified in the sample. It was resolved and quantified and its identity was partially or fully reported by all participants in CCQM-K55.a. Estrone was also identified and quantified in the sample by all participants. As can be seen from Table 4, overall there was excellent agreement between participants for the quantification of the major individual related structure components. The overall estimates for total amounts of related structure impurities reported by the laboratories were also in good agreement, as is discussed later in the context of the assignment of a consensus value for this class of impurities for use in calculating a KCRV.

The other significant minor component in the comparison sample was water. The source for the study material was a commercial sample of estradiol hemihydrate that had been extensively (but not exhaustively) dried by the supplier. The level of uncertainty due to inhomogeneity in water content between units ($u_{bb(Water)}$) was estimated by BIPM at 0.28 mg/g. The original results reported for water content are given in Table 5 and include a summary of the information provided by participants on the method(s) they used to obtain their result.

Participant	**Method summary**	**Mass Fraction water (mg/g)**		
		w	*u(w)*	$U_{95\%}$
CENAM	Coulometric KF titration; direct addition as soln. in EtOH	0.57	0.007	0.014
BAM	Coulometric KF titration with oven transfer at 105 °C ; 2 x 90 mg	0.79	0.03	0.06
NIM	Coulometric KF titration with oven transfer at 150 °C, 7 x 20^{+} mg	1.2	0.2	0.4
LGC	Coulometric KF titration with oven transfer at 150 °C ; 2 x 75 mg	1.3	0.81	1.6
GLHKSAR	Coulometric KF titration with oven transfer at 130 °C and GC-TCD	1.42	0.12	0.24
NRC-INMS	Coulometric KF titration; 2 x 20 mg by addition as soln. in DMF	6.0	0.3	N/R
NIST	Estimated by qNMR, checked by Volumetric KF titration	6.7	N/A	-0.6, +2.4
NMISA	Coulometric KF titration; 6 x 20 mg by direct addition	6.75	0.48	0.96
NMIJ	Coulometric KF titration with oven transfer at 185 °C ; 4 x 10 mg	7.07	0.53	1.06
BIPM	Coulometric KF titration; 5 x 30 mg by direct addition ; consistent with %C,H analysis	7.48	0.44	0.88
INMETRO	Coulometric KF titration; 10 x 10 mg by direct addition	10.3	0.42	0.95 (k = 2.07)
NMIA	Coulometric KF titration; 6 x 10-15 mg by direct addition ; consistent with %C,H analysis	10.7	1.8	3.6

Table 5: Results for water content of CCQM-K55.a (N/A = not applicable N/R = not reported)

The range in values reported for water content by the participants was greater than could be explained on the basis of between bottle inhomogeneity. It constitutes the major source of variation in the purity values reported by participants for 17β-estradiol.

Water content was determined by most participants using a variation of Karl Fischer (KF) titration. Direct addition of the comparison sample as a solid, addition as a solution in anhydrous solvent or heated sample oven transfer to release water (as water vapour) from the solid sample for transfer by dry gas were all used to introduce the water content of the material into the titration cell. Other methods used to independently measure water content or check the consistency of an estimate obtained by KF titration included GC-TCD, thermogravimetric analysis (TGA), qNMR and elemental microanalysis.

Participants who used Karl Fischer techniques with heated oven transfer at temperatures below 170 °C all reported low values (< 1.5 mg/g) for the total water content. By contrast when direct addition or heated transfer with oven temperatures greater than 170 °C was used, only values in excess of 6 mg/g were reported. The temperature dependence of the KF result on oven temperature was reported by several participants and it was demonstrated that water release was not complete until the melting point of estradiol (176 °C) had been exceeded. This is illustrated in a representative thermogravimetric analysis (TGA) over 80 °C to 200 °C shown in Annex B below. A related study by TGA-MS undertaken by LGC subsequent to the discussion of the initial results confirmed this result and is also reproduced in Annex B. MS analysis of the volatile material confirmed that only water (m/z = 18) was released, with no evidence for the oxidative formation of CO_2 (m/z = 44) under these conditions.

The thermogravimetric data indicates two distinct stages of water release from the sample – an initial release (of adsorbed water?) complete by 120 °C and subsequent release of the residual water (of crystallization) when the solid structure of the material is broken down at temperatures above the melting point.

The relatively high values originally reported by NMIA and INMETRO (> 10 mg/g) may have arisen from water adsorption by the sample either from exposure to relatively elevated temperatures during transport or due to prolonged storage after initial opening of the sample vial. When these laboratories repeated the analysis using samples sent at a time of cooler local ambient temperatures and following the recommendation to perform all water quantifications within three weeks of opening the vial they obtained markedly lower values for water content that were in good agreement with the proposed KCRV estimate.

The results obtained by the non-KF methods for independently estimating or checking the water content result were consistent with values for water in CCQM-K55.a in the range between 6 mg/g and 8 mg/g with one exception. The initial GC-TCD result reported by GLHKSAR as supporting evidence gave a value for water content of 2.5 mg/g. However a subsequent repeat analysis by GC-TCD on a new sample provided for follow-on studies gave a water content of 8.2 mg/g, in reasonable agreement with the KF result of 7.1 mg/g obtained using a higher transfer oven temperature.

In addition to the related structure impurities and water, the levels of volatile organic solvents and non-volatile residues were also investigated or at least controlled for by most participants and generally found to be either present at very low levels or below the limit of detection of methods such as TGA and elemental analysis.

Key Comparison Reference Values (KCRVs) for Estradiol and for Impurity Classes in CCQM-K55.a

The initial discussion of the results lead to the conclusion that assignment of a KCRV for the CCQM-K55.a based solely on the reported results for overall estradiol content was not justified, given the evidence for bias in the results for water content and in some cases for combined organic impurities due to artefact formation during LC-UV analysis. After initial discussion at the April 2009 CCQM OAWG meeting follow-on studies to investigate and resolve these issues were undertaken by a number of participants. Subsequent discussion of this data continued at the OAWG meetings in November 2009 and April 2010. The study coordinator was finally asked to follow the precedent of the approach used in the CCQM-P20.f comparison and to propose an overall KCRV for the estradiol content of CCQM-K55.a based on the combination of individual KCRVs for the mass fraction of each of the orthogonal classes of impurity in the CCQM-K55.a comparison sample.

This required the assignment of separate KCRVs for:

- total structurally related impurities;
- water;
- volatile organic solvent;
- non-volatiles/inorganics.

It was noted that the establishment of KCRVs for each impurity category was not included in the original comparison proposal and although information on the mass fraction assignments of individual impurities was requested participants were not asked to provide an estimate for total related structure impurities.

However it was recognized during discussion of results that it is possible for a mass balance approach to give an overall value in apparent agreement with the KCRV for the main component that arises solely due to mutually cancelling errors in the assignment of the individual types of impurity. That is to say that, where a mass balance procedure is used to assign purity, agreement with the main component KCRV does not provide in isolation sufficient information on the fitness of the methods used to make the assignment. Given that the mass balance approach was the dominant one used by NMIs to value assign estradiol in CCQM-K55.a, it was decided that the performance of this approach by an NMI could only be properly assessed if KCRVs were established for each major impurity class.

Each key comparison participant was requested to review their original data and to provide to the study coordinator, where they considered it justified, an estimate of the mass fraction of each class of impurity. Participants could only use their original data but were allowed to undertake further studies, in particular to identify contributions due to artefact impurities, which could be removed from consideration when estimating the total structurally related compounds. They could also review and assess the validity of their original method for water content estimation.

A form for submission of impurity estimates for calculation of KCRVs for each impurity class was circulated to participants in September 2009 by the comparison coordinator.

Assignment of KCRVs for Individual Impurity Classes in CCQM-K55.a

1. KCRV for Total Related Structure impurities

The data submitted by participants for estimates for this category of impurity is shown in Table 6. INMETRO, NIM and NMISA did not provide a value and BIPM provided a revised value from their original data corrected for identifiable artifact peaks.

Participant	Value for KCRV calculation (mg/g)	
	w	***u(w)***
NRC-INMS	7.1	0.3
LGC	8.1	1.8
GLHKSAR	8.24	0.12
CENAM	8.67	1.8
NMIJ	8.93	0.65
BIPM	8.96*	0.43
NMIA	9.1	0.41
BAM	9.1	2.0
NIST	9.6	- 0.3, + 1.0
INMETRO	Not reported	
NMISA	Not reported	
NIM	Not reported	

$w_{Rel\ Subst.}$ = Mean = 8.65 mg/g ;
$u_{wRel\ Subst.}$ = Standard error of mean = 0.16 mg/g

Table 6: Estimates for total related impurity in CCQM-K55.a used for calculation of KCRV
*** original data after removal of contributions due to identified artefact impurities**

The mean of the submitted results was selected as the estimate of the KCRV for related structure impurity content ($w_{Rel\ Subst.}$). The associated standard uncertainty of the KCRV ($u_{wRel\ Subst.}$) is the standard deviation of the mean of the data set. The individual results with their associated standard uncertainties (k = 1) plotted against the KCRV are shown in Figure 4.

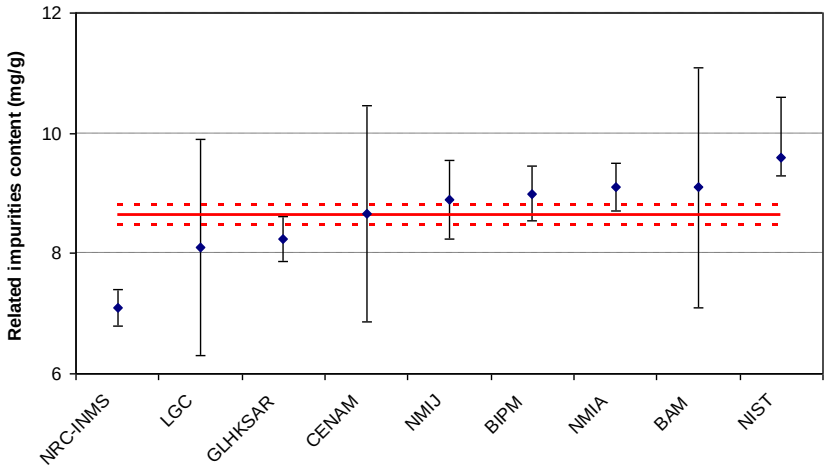


Figure 4 **Estimates of related structure impurities used to calculate the KCRV plotted with their reported standard uncertainties (± u_c , k = 1). The KCRV for related substance impurity ($w_{Rel.\ Subst.}$) content (solid red line) is 8.65 mg/g. The standard uncertainty of the KCRV is 0.16 mg/g. Dashed red lines show the KCRV ± u_c (k = 1).**

2. KCRV for water content

After review and follow-on studies, seven participants reported their original comparison data estimates for the water content of CCQM-K55.a, as given in Table 5, for use in assigning a KCRV for water content. Five participants (BAM, LGC, GLHKSAR, INMETRO and NMIA) decided after consideration that their original method did not provide an accurate value and withdrew their results.

BAM, LGC and GLHKSAR reported that their original method provided values for water in CCQM-K55.a that were too low. By contrast, INMETRO and NMIA concluded that their initially reported values for water in CCQM-K55.a were too high. For information purposes only, each laboratory reported revised values for the water content of CCQM-K55.a. For each of these participants their original results, some information on their revised method and the values obtained using this method are tabulated in Table 7. These revised values, while in good agreement with the final KCRV for water, could not be and were not used to assign the KCRV. They are provided below for information only.

Participant	Original water content (mg/g - ref Table 5)	Revised Method	Revised water content (mg/g – for info. only)
BAM	0.79 ± 0.06	Coulometric KF titration with oven transfer at 200 °C ; 2 x 100 mg	6.6 ± 0.5
GLHKSAR	1.42± 0.12	Coulometric KF titration with oven transfer at 180 °C ; 2 aliquots	7.07 ± 0.12
GLHKSAR	1.42± 0.12	GC-TCD ; 2 x aliquots	8.17
LGC	1.3 ± 1.6	Coulometric KF titration with oven transfer at 185 °C ; 3 x aliquots	6.35 ± 1.3
NMIA	10.7 ± 1.8	Direct addition, 4 x aliquots	7.57 ± 1.3
INMETRO	10.3 ± 0.95	Direct addition, 3 x 20 mg	7.7 ± 1.3

Table 7: Participants reporting revised values for water in CCQM-K55.a after follow-up studies

The results submitted by participants from their original data for use in calculation of the water KCRV is listed in Table 8. After review of the submissions and the methods used to obtain the data and after further discussion at subsequent OAWG meetings, the study coordinator proposed to exclude values below 1.5 mg/g from the calculation of the KCRV on the grounds that there was significant evidence (see discussion on the determination of water content) that the methods used to obtain those values did not completely release water from the sample.

Participant	Value for KCRV calculation (mg/g)	
	w	***u(w)***
*CENAM**	*0.57*	*0.007*
*NIM**	*1.2*	*0.2*
NRC-INMS	6.0	0.3
NIST	6.7	- 0.3, + 1.2
NMISA	6.75	0.48
NMIJ	7.07	0.53
BIPM	7.48	0.44

Table 8: Estimates for water content in CCQM-K55.a used for calculation of KCRV

** Results not used for calculation of the KCRV for water*

The median of the five results for water in the range 6-7.5 mg/g was selected as the KCRV for water content (w_{H2O}). The associated standard uncertainty of the KCRV (u_{wH2O}) was assigned as the robust standard deviation of the median (MADe/√n) of the data set

$$w_{H2O} = \textbf{Median} = \textbf{6.75 mg/g ;}$$

$$u_{wH2O} = \frac{MADe}{\sqrt{n}} = \textbf{0.21 mg/g}$$

The individual results for water content plotted against the KCRV are shown in Figure 5.

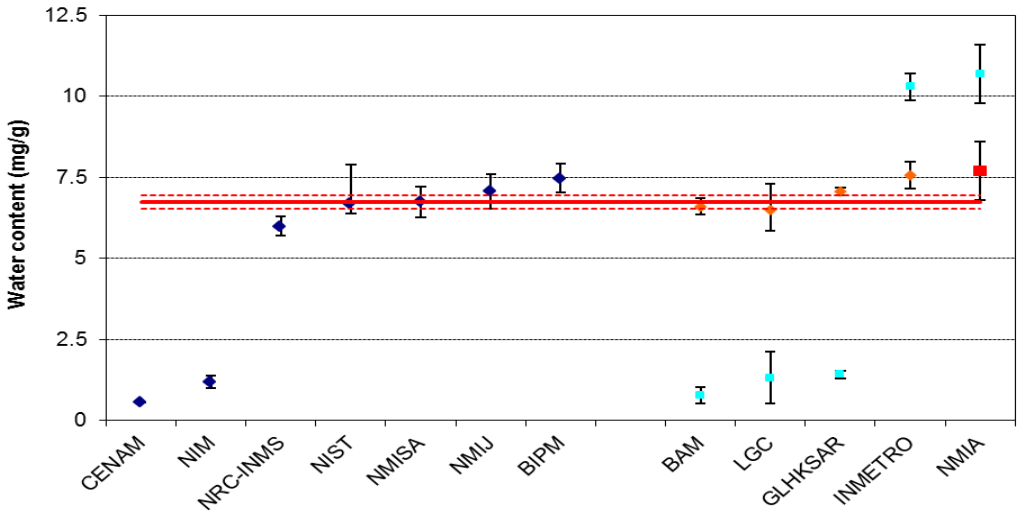


Figure 5 Mass fraction of water in CCQM-K55.a plotted with reported standard uncertainties (*k* = 1). The KCRV for water content of CCQM-K55.a (solid red line) is 6.75 mg/g. The calculated combined standard uncertainty of the KCRV (dashed lines, *k* = 1) is 0.21 mg/g. Dark blue: data submitted by participants for use for KCRV calculations. Light blue: original results withdrawn by participants from KCRV calculation. Orange: Information values for water content of CCQM-K55.a obtained by follow-up studies.

3. KCRV for volatile organic compound content

Seven participants provided estimates for the volatile organics content of CCQM-K55.a, as given in Table 8, for use in assigning a KCRV for this class of impurity. Methods used to investigate volatile solvent content included NMR, headspace or direct injection GC-MS and TGA. The participants that did detect solvent reported low levels (0.2, 0.09 and 0.055 mg/g respectively).

Participant	Value for KCRV calculation (mg/g)	
	w	***u(w)***
BAM	< LOD	-
BIPM	0.0	+ 0.29
NMIA	0.0	+ 1.2
GLHKSAR	< 0.01	
NMIJ	0.055	0.007
NIST	0.09	0.02
LGC	0.2	0.1

Table 8: Estimates for VOC content in CCQM-K55.a for calculation of KCRV

For calculation purposes the KCRV estimate for this class of impurity was assigned as a rectangular distribution in the range 0.0 - 0.2 mg/g. This gave the KCRV as the mid-point of the range and the associated uncertainty the standard approximation of the half-range divided by the square root of three.

$w_{NonVol.}$ = 0.1 mg/g

$u_{w\,Non\,Vol.}$ = 0.06 mg/g

4. KCRV for non-volatile content

Six participants provided estimates for the non-volatile content of CCQM-K55.a, as given in Table 9, for use in assigning a KCRV for this class of impurity.

Participant	Value for KCRV calculation (mg/g)	
	w	***u(w)***
NIST	0.42	0.06
NMIA	0.0	+ 1.2
LGC	0.03	0.008
GLHKSAR	0.04	0.008
NMIJ	0.0	+ 0.46
BIPM	0.0	+ 0.29

Table 9: Estimates for non-volatile content in CCQM-K55.a for calculation of KCRV

Participants investigated a variety of methods (TGA, ash residue, elemental microanalysis) for obtaining a global estimate of non-volatile content of the study sample but none detected significant levels (< 0.05 % on a relative mass fraction basis) of this general class of impurity. Participants using more sensitive methodologies (XRF spectrometry, ICP-OES) were able to detect and provide quantitative estimates for the presence of some inorganic components.

Given the lack of evidence from other techniques for the presence of total non volatile components at a combined level in excess of 0.4 mg/g, the mass fraction estimate for contributions due to this class of impurity was assigned as a rectangular distribution in the range (0.0-0.4) mg/g. This gave the following KCRV as the mid-point of the range and the associated uncertainty the standard approximation of the half-range divided by the square root of three.

$w_{NonVol.}$ = 0.2 mg/g

$u_{w\,Non\,Vol.}$ = 0.12 mg/g

Homogeneity

In addition to KCRVs for the mass fraction of each impurity class, in order to calculate an overall KCRV for estradiol uncertainty, contributions due to inhomogeneity of the impurity content of the material need to be included. As described earlier (see above under “Homogeneity Studies”, p. 5) the uncertainty contribution due to the inhomogeneity of water content was estimated at 0.28 mg/g and the separate contribution due to inhomogeneity of the total related impurities content was estimated at 0.07 mg/g. Uncertainty due to inhomogeneity of the other impurity classes made no significant contribution and is not included.

Assignment of KCRV for Estradiol in CCQM-K55.a

The measurement equation (Eqn. 1) to assign the KCRV of estradiol in CCQM-K55.a (in mg/g) is:

$$w_{Estradiol} = 1000 - [w_{Rel.Subst} + w_{Water} + w_{Org.Solv.} + w_{NonVol.} + H_{water} + H_{relsubst}]) \quad \textit{(Eqn. 1)}$$

$w_{Estradiol}$ = KCRV for mass fraction of estradiol in CCQM-K55.a

$w_{Rel.Subst.}$ = KCRV for mass fraction of estradiol-related impurities in CCQM-K55.a

w_{Water} = KCRV for mass fraction of water in CCQM-K55.a

$w_{Org.Solv.}$ = KCRV for mass fraction of volatile organic solvents in CCQM-K55.a

w_{NonVol} = KCRV for mass fraction of non-volatiles/inorganics in CCQM-K55.a

H_{Water} = Correction for between unit inhomogeneity of water in the CCQM-K55.a material. Assigned value of 0 with associated uncertainty ($u_{H\ water}$)

$H_{Rel.Subst.}$ = Correction for between unit inhomogeneity of estradiol-related impurities in the CCQM-K55.a material. Assigned value of 0 with associated uncertainty ($u_{H\ Rel\ Subst.}$)

Note: Units for reporting mass fraction (w) are mg/g throughout.
The standard uncertainty associated with the mass fraction was calculated from equation (2):

$$u_{w_{Estradiol}} = \sqrt{(u_{w_{\mathrm{Rel\ Subst}}})^2 + (u_{w_{Water}})^2 + (u_{w_{OrgSolv.}})^2 + (u_{w_{NonVol.}})^2 + (u_{H_{Water}})^2 + (u_{H_{\mathrm{Re\ lSubst}}})^2} \quad \textit{(Eqn. 2)}$$

The KCRVs for the impurity classes used for calculation of a mass balance KCRV for estradiol in the CCQM-K55.a comparison are summarised in Table 10.

Input factor *w*	**KCRV (mg/g)**	***n***	***u(w)* (mg/g)**
Related structure organics	8.65	9	0.16
Water	6.75	5	0.21
Volatile organics	0.1	7	0.06
Non-volatiles/inorganics	0.2	6	0.12
Homogeneity - water	0	large	0.28
Homogeneity - related structure impurities	0	large	0.07

Table 10: KCRV values for impurities used for calculation of estradiol KCRV and associated combined standard uncertainty in CCQM-K55.a

When substituted into the equations (1) and (2) described previously, the overall KCRV for the estadiol content becomes:

$$w_{Estradiol} = 1000 - [w_{Rel.Subst} + w_{Water} + w_{Org.Solv.} + w_{NonVol.} + H_{water} + H_{relsubst}] \text{ mg/g}$$

$$= 1000 - [8.65 + 6.75 + 0.1 + 0.2]) \text{ mg/g}$$

$$= 984.3 \text{ mg/g}$$

$$u_{w_{Estradiol}} = \sqrt{(u_{w_{Rel\ Subst}})^2 + (u_{w_{Water}})^2 + (u_{w_{OrgSolv.}})^2 + (u_{w_{NonVol.}})^2 + (u_{H_{Water}})^2 + (u_{H_{\mathrm{Re\ lSubst}}})^2}$$

$$= \sqrt{(0.16)^2 + (0.212)^2 + (0.06)^2 + (0.12)^2 + (0.28)^2 + (0.07)^2} \text{ mg/g}$$

$$= 0.41 \text{ mg/g}$$

This is a conservative estimate for the standard uncertainty that is likely to be double counting to some extent the contribution due to the inhomogeneity of the water and related impurity content. Figure 6 shows the participant results with their reported standard uncertainties plotted against the proposed KCRV (solid red line) and its associated standard uncertainty (k = 1). Figure 7 shows the same results with their expanded uncertainty and the KCRV with the corresponding expanded uncertainty for an approximately 95% coverage range (dashed red lines).

Degree of equivalence plots of participant results for CCQM-K55.a with the Estradiol KCRV

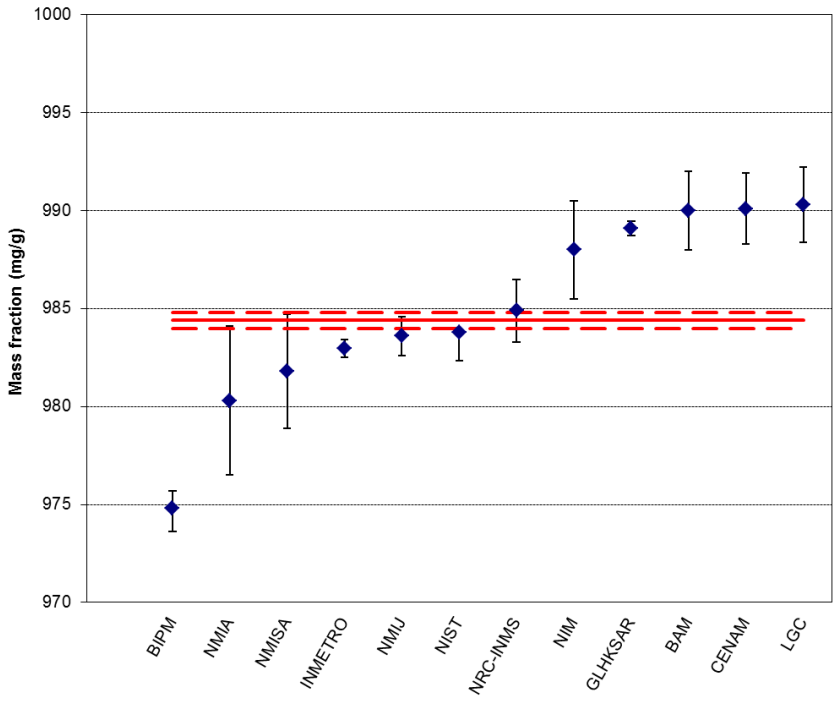


Figure 6: Mass fraction estimates by participants for estradiol in CCQM-K55.a with their reported combined standard uncertainty (u). Key Comparison Reference Value for CCQM-K55.a (solid red line) is 984.3 mg/g . The calculated combined standard uncertainty of the KCRV is 0.41 mg/g. Dashed red lines show KCRV ± u_c (k = 1)

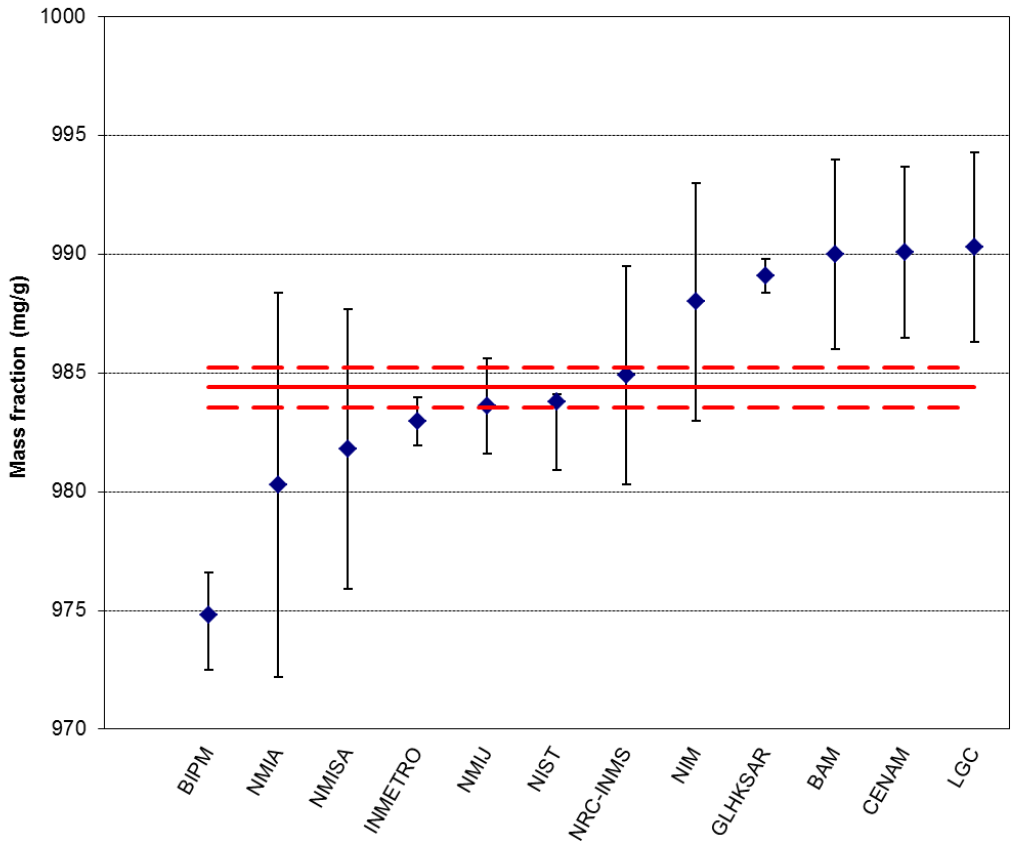


Figure 7: Mass fraction estimates by participants for estradiol in CCQM-K55.a with reported expanded uncertainty corresponding ($U_{95\%}$). Key Comparison Reference Value for CCQM-K55.a (solid red line) = 984.3 mg/g . The expanded uncertainty for 95% coverage range of the KCRV (dashed red lines) is 0.82 mg/g.

The degree of equivalence of a participant's result with the KCRV (D_i) is given by:

$D_i = w_i - w_{Estradiol}$

The expanded uncertainty U_i at the approximately 95% coverage level associated with the D_i was calculated as:

$$U_{95\%}(D_i) = 2 * \sqrt{u(w_i)^2 + u(w_{Estradiol})^2}$$

Table 11 records the degree of equivalence (D_i) of each key comparison participant's result with the proposed KCRV. These results are also shown graphically in Figure 8.

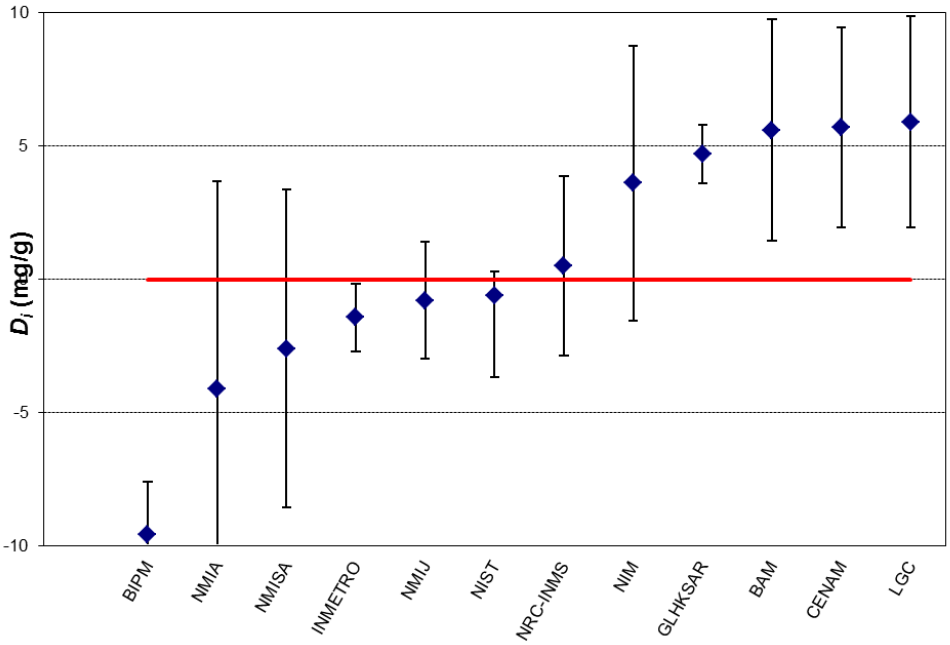


Figure 8: **Degree of equivalence with the estradiol KCRV for each participant. Points are plotted with the associated expanded uncertainty in the degree of equivalence corresponding to an approximately 95% coverage range.**

Participant	D_i (mg/g)	U_D (mg/g)
BIPM	-9.5	+ 2.00, -2.50
NMIA	-4.0	7.65
NMISA	-2.5	5.86
INMETRO	-1.3	1.27
NMIJ	-0.7	2.18
NIST	-0.5	+ 0.97, -3.04
NRC-INMS	0.6	3.31
NIM	3.7	5.07
GLHK	4.8	1.12
BAM	5.7	4.09
CENAM	5.8	3.70
LGC	6.0	3.90

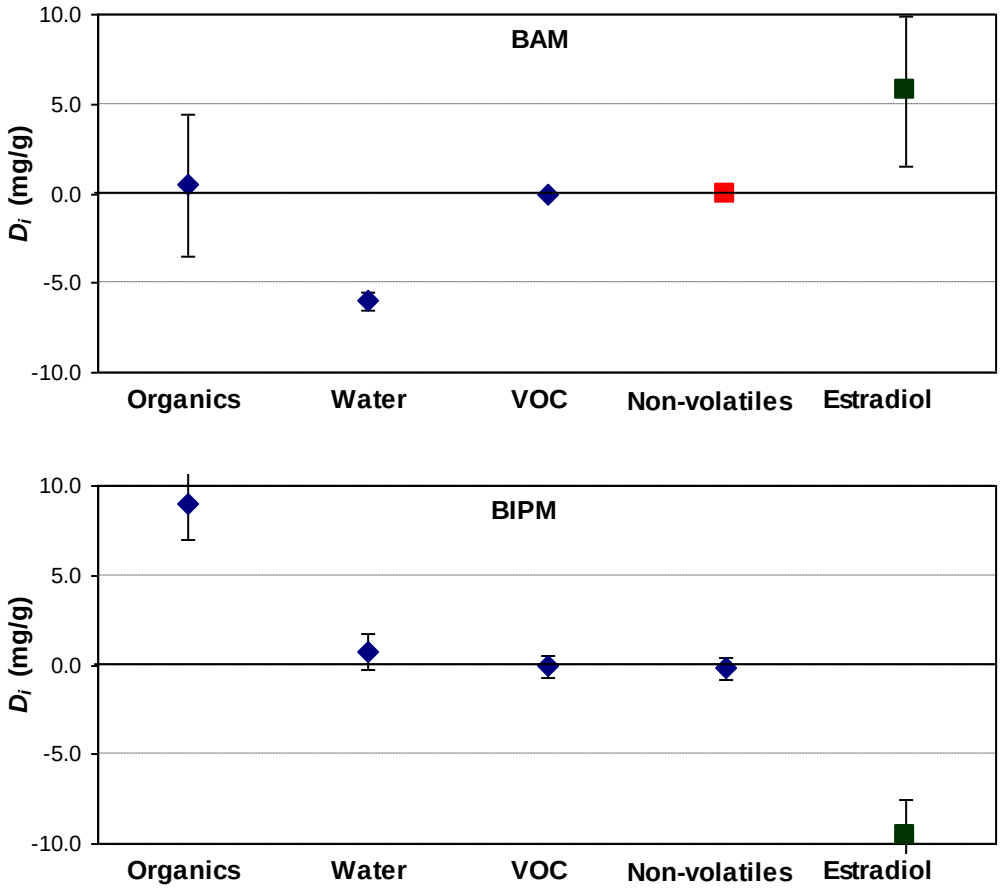
Table 11: **Degrees of equivalence D_i and expanded uncertainties U_D at approximately 95% coverage range in mg/g for estradiol in CCQM-K55.a**

Degree of equivalence plots for impurity KCRVs in CCQM-K55.a

The motivation for assigning KCRVs for the contributing impurity classes in CCQM-K55.a was to assess the fitness of mass balance methods, to confirm that an overall value for the main component in agreement with the KCRV for estradiol did not occur through cancellation of errors in contributing impurity assignments and to allow identification of problem areas when overall agreement with the KCRV for estradiol was not achieved.

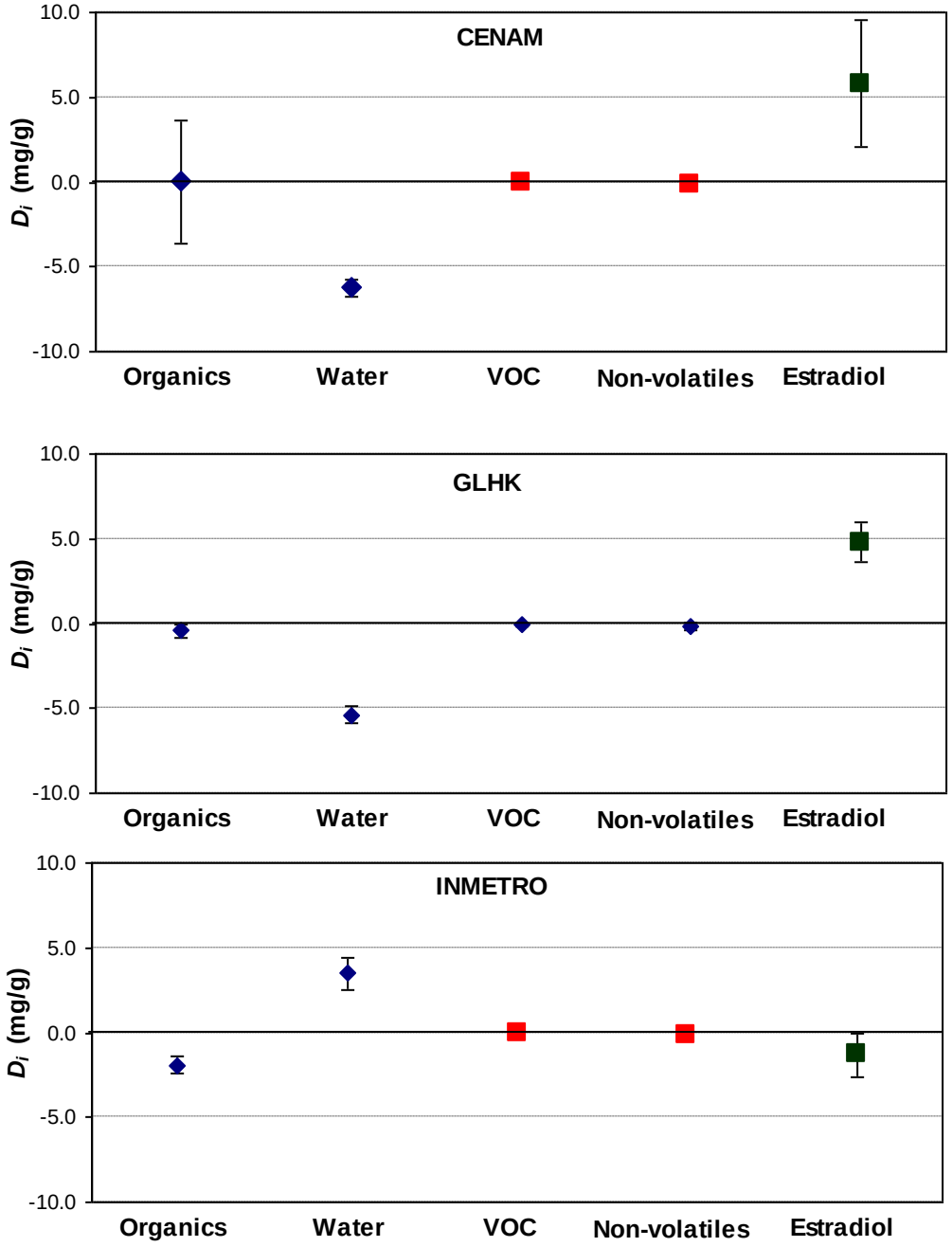
The combined DoE plots by participant for each impurity class quantified are shown below. To aid in assessment and comparison, the DoE of the result for the main component (cf Figure 8) is also plotted (green data point). Where a participant provided no information on a particular class of impurities (in this case VOCs and/or non-volatile content) the data point is shown as a red square, and a nominal D_i is plotted on the implicit assumption that the impurity makes no contribution to the overall purity assignment .

Mass Balance KCRV DoEs by Participant:



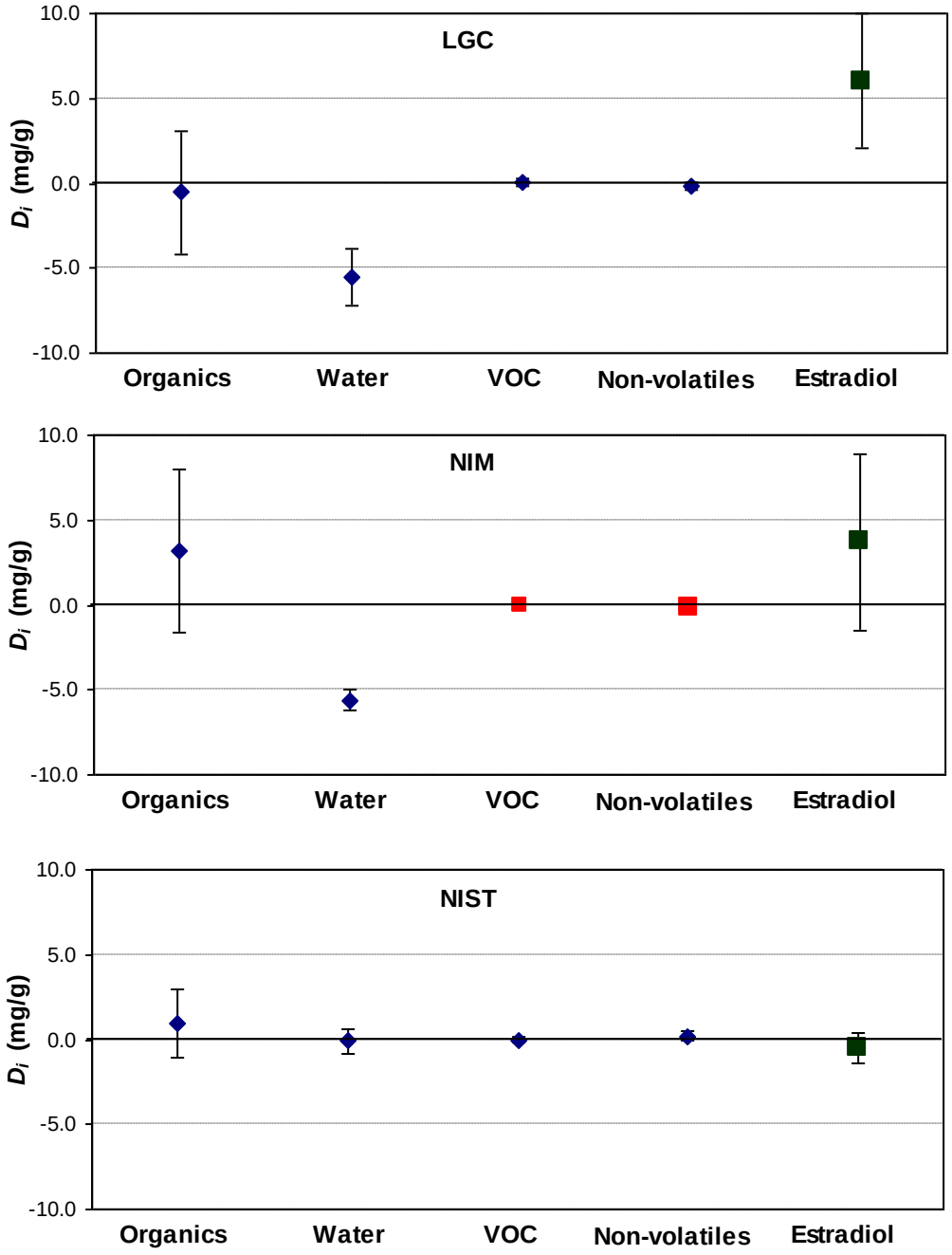
Key: ♦ = DoE for reported impurity; ■ = Nominal "DoE" when no value reported; ■ = DoE for estradiol in CCQM-K55.a

Mass Balance KCRV DoEs by Participant (Ctd):



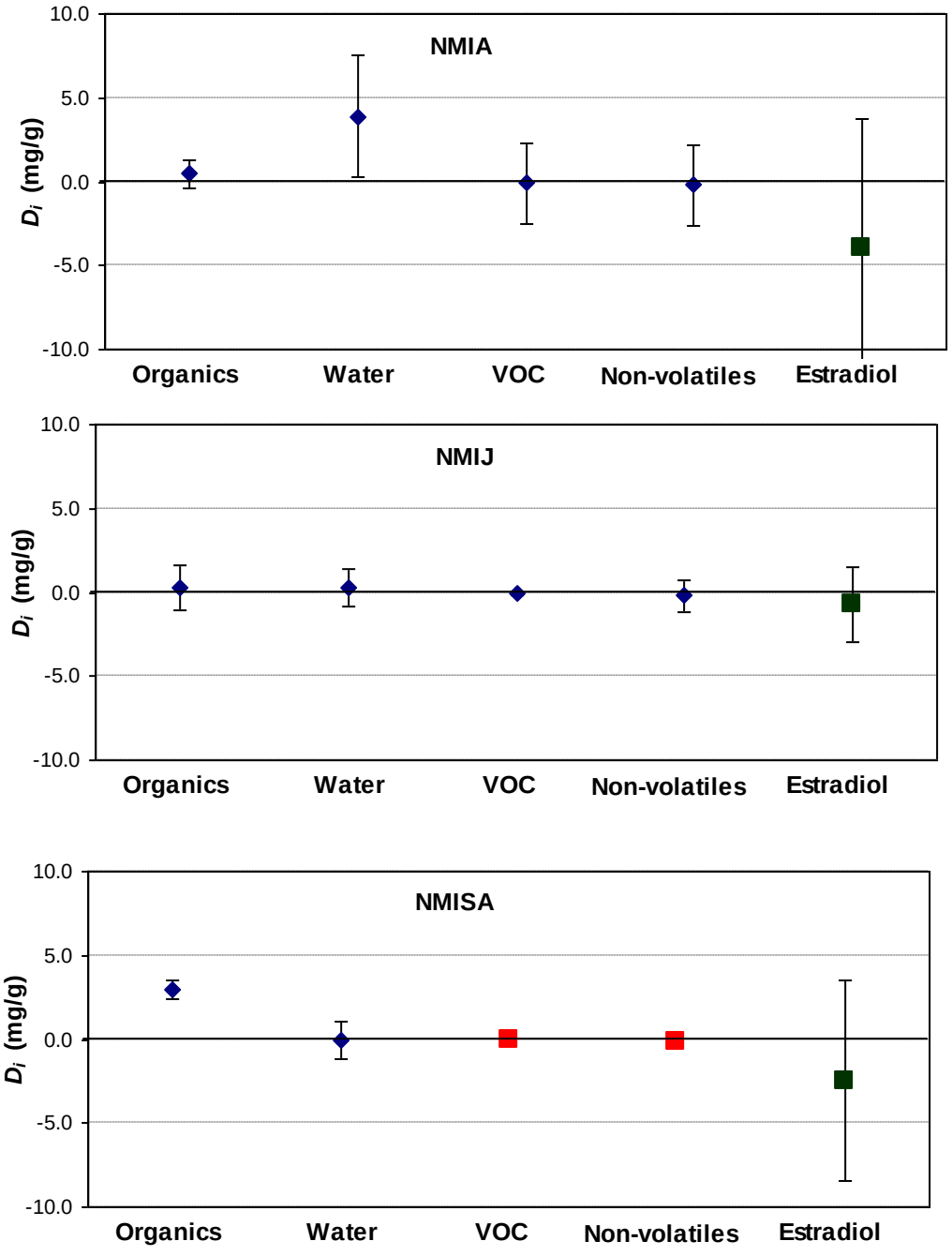
Key: ♦ = DoE for reported impurity; ■ = Nominal "DoE" when no value reported; ■ = DoE for estradiol in CCQM-K55.a

Mass Balance KCRV DoEs by Participant (ctd):



Key: ♦ = DoE for reported impurity; ■ = Nominal "DoE" when no value reported; ■ = DoE for estradiol in CCQM-K55.a

Mass Balance KCRV DoEs by Participant (ctd):



Key: ♦ = DoE for reported impurity; ■ = Nominal "DoE" when no value reported; ■ = DoE for estradiol in CCQM-K55.a

CONCLUSIONS AND HOW FAR THE LIGHT SHINES

Estradiol was selected to be representative of low polarity, moderately complex organic compound capable of analysis by GC or LC methods. It was anticipated to provide an analytical measurement challenge representative for the value-assignment of compounds of broadly similar structural characteristics.

The majority of participants used a mass balance approach for value assignment. The NIST were the first laboratory to use qNMR to quantify the impurities present in the sample, rather than the main component itself as is normal practice when using of qNMR methods, within the context of a mass balance approach.

Given the predominance of the mass balance approach, it was decided to assign the KCRV for estradiol by combination of KCRVs for each orthogonal impurity class, following the general approach that had already been used to assign a reference value for CCQM-P20.f. This allows participants to demonstrate the efficacy (or otherwise) of their implementation of the mass balance approach. In particular it allows participants to demonstrate that their assigned value for the main component agrees with the KCRV through use of internally consistent contributing methods rather than that the agreement was achieved by mutual cancellation of biased contributing results.

The KCRV and associated uncertainty for the material indicate that a relative expanded uncertainty for the purity assignment of 0.1 % is a reasonable estimate of the best achievable result for a material of this complexity atthis level of purity. The relative expanded uncertainties reported by laboratories having results consistent with the KCRV ranged from 0.1 % to 0.8 %.

Inspection of the results that were biased from the KCRV showed that the major analytical challenge posed by the material, which is not normally encountered with low polarity organic compounds, was the measurement of its water content. The results having a positive bias relative to the KCRV result can be explained as resulting from underestimation of the water content of the material. This is shown clearly by inspection of the individual participant degree of equivalence plots of the assigned values by impurity class and by estradiol content. Convincing evidence was provided that the material retained a significant amount of water that was only released once the crystalline structure of the sample was broken down. This could only be achieved thermally if the material was heated above its melting point.

There was good agreement in most cases between participants in the identification and the quantification of the related structure impurity content of the sample. The exception was the BIPM who, although they detected and quantified the “real” impurities in agreement with the results obtained by other participants, overestimated the total related structure impurity content through a failure to identify a contribution from artefacts formed *in situ* under their LC analysis conditions.

The results of the comparison reinforce one of the main conclusions from the CCQM-P20 study - the importance of using complementary, independent techniques capable of confirming estimates for all orthogonal classes of impurities if it is desired to demonstrate a general capability to assign purity through a mass balance approach with a small expanded uncertainty ($U_{95\%} < 0.2$ % relative) and suitable degree of trueness. Reliance on one measurement technique to quantify a particular class or group of impurities without control by an independent method is accompanied

by the risk of introducing a significant bias, as was demonstrated by the results for water content determinations in this comparison.

The comparison also demonstrated the utility of high-field ^{1}H NMR for both quantitative and qualitative analysis of high purity compounds. It is noted that all the participants who used qNMR as a major or contributing technique and included it as part of, combined it or confirmed it with a conventional "mass balance" data estimate obtained results agreeing with the KCRV.

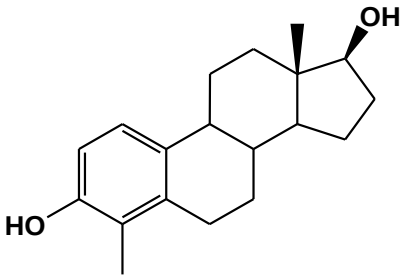
"How Far The Light Shines" Statement for CCQM-K55.a

The comparison was intended to demonstrate a laboratory's performance in determining the mass fraction of the main component in a high purity organic material. The measurement results were intended to be indicative of the performance of a laboratory's measurement capability for the purity assignment of organic compounds of medium structural complexity [molecular weight range (300-500) Da] and low polarity (pK_{OW} < -2) for which related structure impurities can be quantified by capillary gas phase chromatography (GC) or by high performance liquid chromatography (LC).

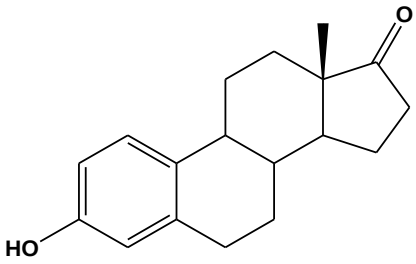
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The assistance of colleagues from the Organic Analytical Chemistry Division of the National Metrology Institute of Japan in the preparation of the CCQM-K55.a comparison material is gratefully acknowledged.

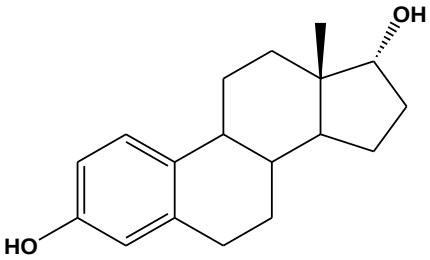
Annex A – Structure of compounds reported as impurities in CCQM-K55.a



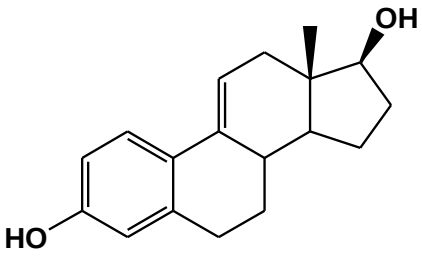
4-Methylestradiol **(2)**



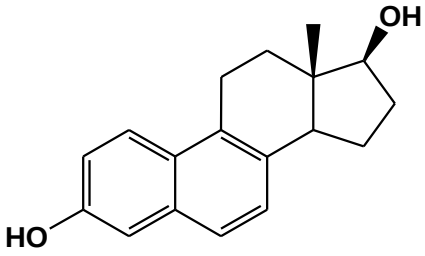
Estrone **(3)**



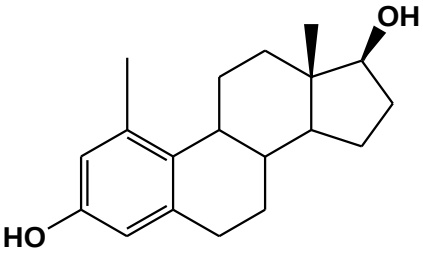
17α-Estradiol **(4)**



9,11-Dehydroestradiol **(5)**

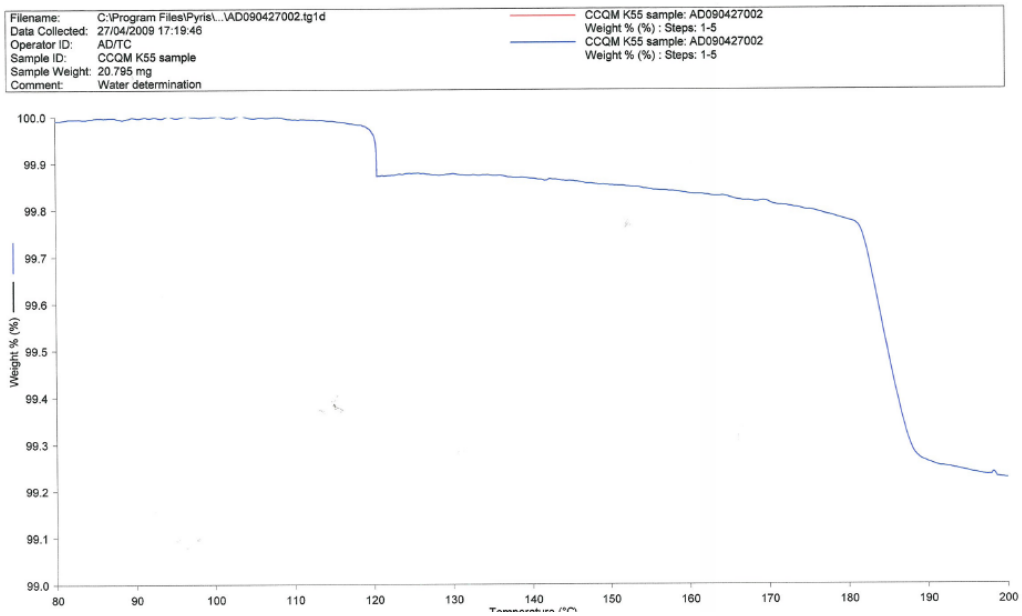


17β-Dihydroequilenin **(6)**

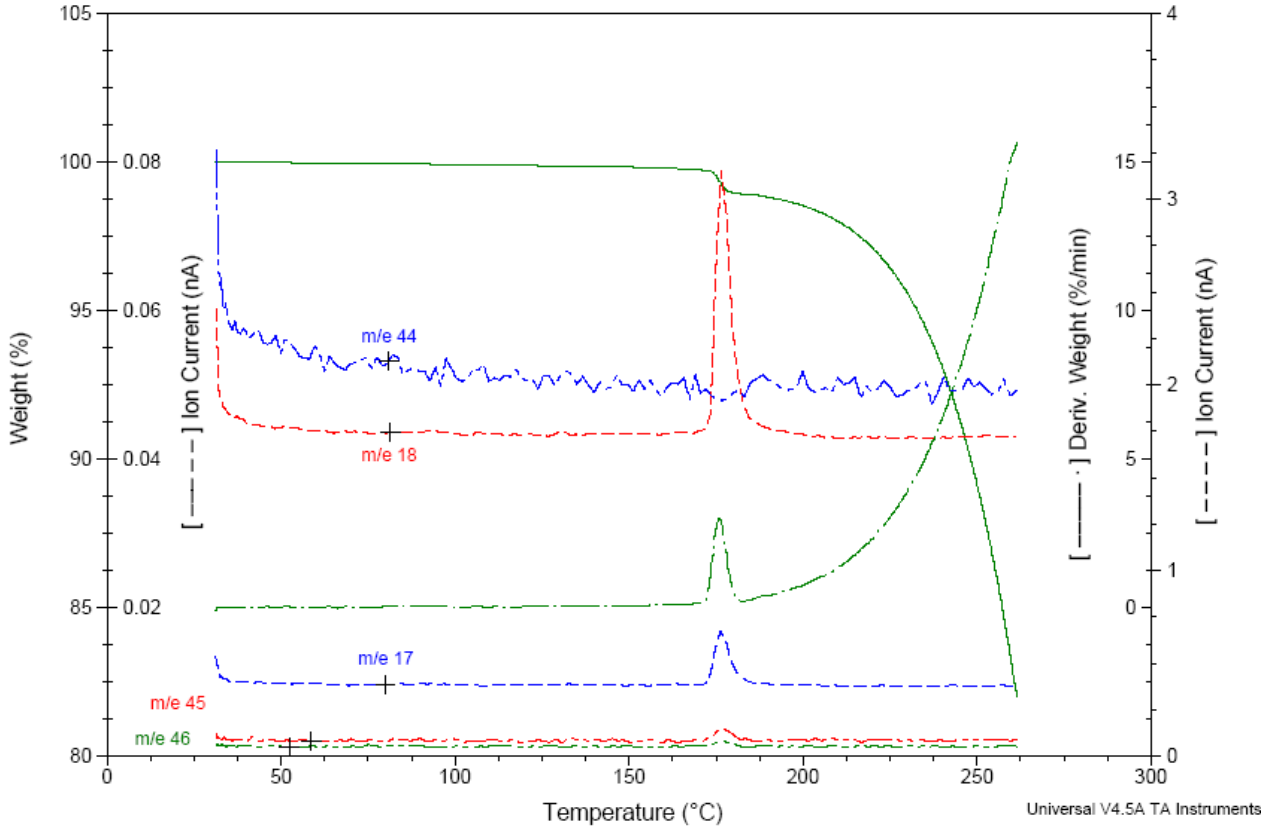


1-Methylestradiol **(7)**

Annex B – Thermogravimetric behaviour of CCQM-K55.a



TGA data for CCQM-K55.a in range 80 °- 200 °C showing an initial mass loss (ca 1.5 mg/g, 0.15 % relative) at 120 °C and subsequent mass loss (ca 6 mg/g) above 170 °C



TGA-MS of CCQM-K55.a in range 30 °C – 250 °C showing mass loss (solid green line), mass change derivative (alternating green lines) at 170 °C and ion current (dashed lines) for selected *m/z* from liberated volatile material

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[1] Westwood, S., Josephs, R. D., Daireaux, A., Wielgosz, R., Davies, S., Kang, M., Ting, H., Phillip, R., Malz, F., Shimizu, Y., Frias, E., Pérez, M., Apps, P., Fernandes-Whaley, M., De Vos, B., Wiangnon, K., Ruangrittinon, N., Wood, S., Duewer, D., Schantz, M., Bedner, M., Hancock, D., Esker, J.: An international comparison of mass fraction purity assignment of theophylline: CCQM Pilot Study CCQM-P20.e (Theophylline), *Metrologia*, **46** (2009) 1A, 08019

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[4] B.E. Segmuller, B.L. Armstrong, R. Dunphy and A.R.Oyler; Identification of autoxidation and photodegradation products of ethynylestradiol; *J. Pharm. Biomed. Anal.*, **23 (**2000) , 927