1,3-Diindolylureas and 1,3-Diindolylthioureas: Anion Complexation Studies in Solution and the Solid State

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1,3-Diindolylureas and 1,3-diindolylthioureas: anion complexation studies in solution and the solid state.

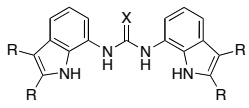
Claudia Caltagirone,[a] Jennifer R. Hiscock,[a] Michael B. Hursthouse,[a] Mark E. Light[a] and Philip A. Gale*,[a]

Abstract: 1,3-Diindolylureas and thioureas have been synthesised and their anion complexation properties in solution studied. Whilst diindolylthioureas showed only moderate affinities and selectivities, diindolylureas show remarkably high affinity for dihydrogen phosphate in solution for an acyclic neutral receptor in water/[D6]DMSO mixtures. These easy-to-make compounds adopt relatively planar conformations in the solid-state and are able to donate four hydrogen bonds and yet not fill the coordination sphere of carbonate or phosphate allowing two or three receptors respectively to bind to each anion in the solid-state.

Keywords: anion binding, urea, indole, crystallography, phosphate

Introduction

Anion complexation, and in particular anion recognition with neutral hydrogen bond donor receptors, has attracted much interest in recent years with a variety of receptors containing amide, urea and pyrrole shown to have high affinities and selectivities for anionic guests.[1] Contrastingly, it is only since 2004 that indole and related heterocycles such as carbazole, biindole and indolocarbazole have been employed as components of neutral anion receptor systems.[2] Indole, like pyrrole, contains a single hydrogen bond donor group, but is slightly more acidic,[3] and is employed in biological systems to bind anions such as chloride[4] and sulfate.[5] Our interest in structurally simple anion receptors, sensors and transporters[6] lead us to include indole in isophthalamide and pyridine-2,6-dicarboxamide based receptors as fluoride selective anionophores[7] and in more flexible receptors containing 2-amidoindoles.[8] In collaboration with Albrecht and Triyanti,[9] we demonstrated recently that 2,7-disubstituted indoles with amide substituents in the 2-position and urea substituents in the 7-position bound oxo-anions strongly. However, whilst ^{1}H NMR titration studies showed that the indole and urea groups were participating in hydrogen bonding interactions with the bound oxo-anionic guest, the amide group was only interacting weakly with the bound anion, data supported by crystallographic analysis of a number of complexes. We therefore modified the design by removing the amide group and adding an extra indole group, and report here the anion complexation studies with the resultant 1,3-diindolylureas and 1,3-diindolylthioureas **1**-**4**.[10]



1 R = Me, X = O
2 R = H, X = O
3 R = Me, X = S
4 R = H, X = S

Results and Discussion

Diindolylureas **1** and **2** were synthesised by reaction of 2,3-dimethyl-7-aminoindole[7] or 7-aminoindole with triphosgene in a mixture of dichloromethane and saturated aqueous sodium bicarbonate affording ureas **1** and **2** in 78% and 50% respective yields (Scheme 1). Diindolylthioureas **3** and **4** were prepared by reaction of 2,3-dimethyl-7-aminoindole or 7-aminoindole respectively with thiophosgene to afford the isothiocyanate followed by reaction with a further equivalent of aminoindole to afford thioureas **3** and **4** in 29 and 83% respective yields.

[a] Dr C. Caltagirone, J.R. Hiscock, Prof. M.B. Hursthouse, Dr M.E. Light and Prof. P.A. Gale
School of Chemistry,
University of Southampton,
Southampton, SO17 1BJ, UK.
Fax: +44 23 8059 6805
E-mail: philip.gale@soton.ac.uk

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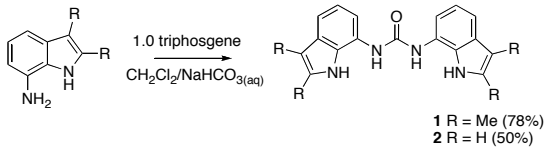
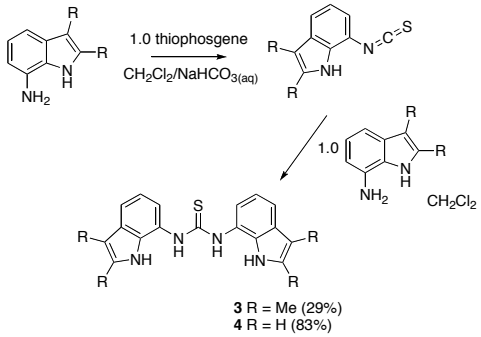


Scheme 1. Synthesis of compounds **1** and **2**



Scheme 2. Synthesis of compounds **3** and **4.**

Anion complexation studies were conducted with compounds **1** and **2** by ^{1}H NMR titration techniques in [D6]DMSO/water mixtures following the NH proton resonances. Stability constants were determined using the EQNMR computer program[11]. Selected Job plot analyses showed 1:1 stoichiometry in all cases (see supplementary information).[12] In [D6]DMSO/0.5% water compound **1** was found to bind oxo-anions strongly ($K_a > 10^4$ M^{-1}) whilst chloride was bound with a stability constant of 128 M^{-1} (Table 1) and hydrogen sulfate bound weakly (50 M^{-1}). Compound **1** proved therefore to have a significantly higher affinity for oxo-anions that *N,N'*-diphenylurea.[10] Moving to a more polar solvent mixture, [D6]DMSO/10% water, selectivity for dihydrogen phosphate was observed with $K_a(H_2PO_4^-)/K_a(AcO^-) = 8.5$ (Table 1). Attempts to measure stability constants in 25% water failed due to precipitation of the oxo-anion complexes. Compound **2** proved to have similar affinities for anions as compound **1** in 0.5 and 10 % water solutions, however the complexes of this compound with dihydrogen phosphate and acetate proved to be more soluble than those of compound **1** allowing stability constants to be determined in [D6]DMSO/25%. Under these conditions selectivity for dihydrogen phosphate is retained with $K_a(H_2PO_4^-)/K_a(AcO^-) = 8$ (Table 2).

Table 1. Stability constants of compound **1** measured in [D6]DMSO/0.5% water and [D6]DMSO/10% water at 298K by ^{1}H NMR titration techniques.

Anion[a]	[D6]DMSO/0.5% water	[D6]DMSO/10% water
Cl^-	128	16
$CH_3CO_2^-$	$> 10^4$	567
$C_6H_5CO_2^-$	$> 10^4$	736
$H_2PO_4^-$	$> 10^4$	4790

[a] Anions added as tetrabutylammonium salts. Errors in K_a are estimated to be < 15%.

Table 2. Stability constants of compound **2** measured in [D6]DMSO/0.5% water and [D6]DMSO/10% water at 298K by ^{1}H NMR titration techniques.

Anion[a]	[D6]DMSO/0.5% water	[D6]DMSO/10% water	[D6]DMSO/25% water
Cl^-	128	17	-
$CH_3CO_2^-$	$> 10^4$	774	20
$C_6H_5CO_2^-$	$> 10^4$	521	precipitate
$H_2PO_4^-$	$> 10^4$	5170	160

[a] Anions added as tetrabutylammonium salts.

Crystals of the tetrabutylammonium benzoate complex of compound **1** were grown by slow evaporation of a DMSO solution of the receptor. The structure was elucidated by single crystal X-ray diffraction and is shown in Figure 1. The benzoate anion is bound by four hydrogen bonds from the diindolylurea, two to each oxygen in the range N···O 2.846(8)-2.907(8) Å and bond angles N1-H1···O3 161°; N2-H2···O3 169°; N3-H3···O2 176°; N4-H4···O2 159°.

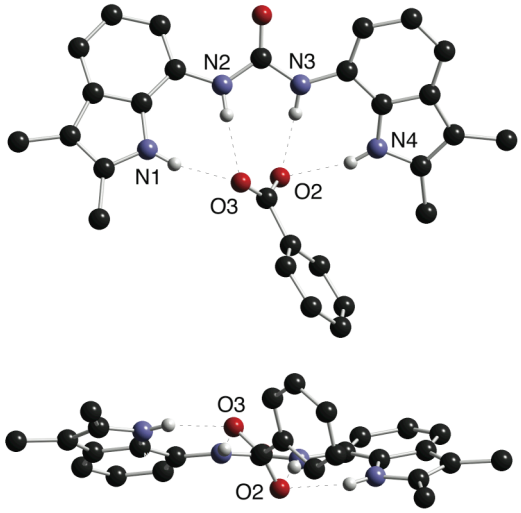


Figure 1 Top and side views of the X-ray crystal structure of the tetrabutylammonium benzoate complex of compound **1**. Non-acidic hydrogen atoms and counter cation omitted for clarity.

Anion complexation studies were also conducted with tetraethylammonium bicarbonate. These studies are not directly comparable with the data presented in Tables 1 and 2 as the counter cation is different,[13] however the anion bound with similar affinity as tetrabutylammonium carboxylates with compound **1** ($K_a > 10^4$ M^{-1} ([D6]DMSO/0.5% water); 545 M^{-1} ([D6]DMSO/10% water)) and compound **2** (K_a 9580 M^{-1} ([D6]DMSO/0.5% water); 699 M^{-1} ([D6]DMSO/10% water) ; 42 M^{-1} ([D6]DMSO/25% water)). Job plot analysis in 10% water with compound **2** indicated 1:1 complex stoichiometry in solution. Attempts to obtain crystals of the bicarbonate complex of compound **1** were made by slow evaporation of a DMSO solution of the receptor in the presence of excess tetraethylammonium bicarbonate. Crystals were obtained

and the structure elucidated by X-ray crystallography. It was found that the anion was bound as carbonate[14] by eight hydrogen bonds to two equivalents of compound **1** in the solid state with two tetraethylammonium counter cations for each anion complex (Figures 2 and 3). O3 and O5 are each bound to three NH groups with O4 bound to two NH groups. Presumably deprotonation occurs during crystallisation of the complex. The N···O distances were found to be in the range 2.739(2)-2.9382(16)Å and N-H···O angles in the range 151.3 – 175.1˚. The torsion angles for the urea-indole bonds are in the range 157.89˚ to 177.38˚.

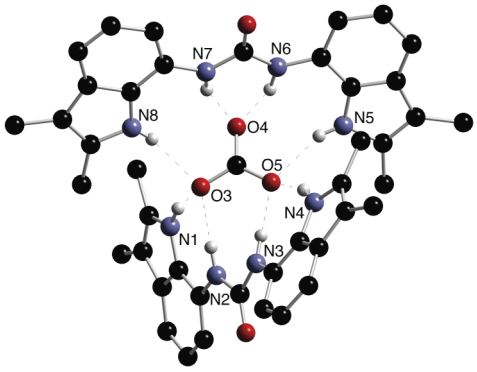


Figure 2 X-ray crystal structure of the tetraethylammonium carbonate complex of compound **1**. Non-acidic hydrogen atoms and counter cations omitted for clarity.

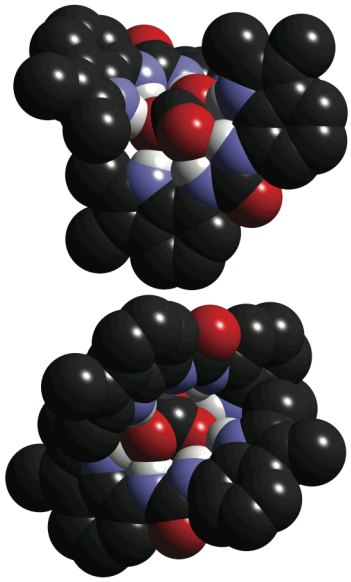


Figure 3 Two spacefilling views of the X-ray crystal structure of the tetraethylammonium carbonate complex of compound **1**. Non-acidic hydrogen atoms and counter cations omitted for clarity.

Compound **2** was crystallised in the presence of excess tetrabutylammonium dihydrogen phosphate in [D6]DMSO/25% water. As with the carbonate structure discussed above, the anion crystallised in its fully deprotonated form (PO_4^{3-}) bound in this case to three equivalents of compound **2** by twelve hydrogen bonds (Figures 4 and 5). Each receptor is bound to three oxygen atoms in the phosphate guest with N1···O2 2.762(3)Å, N2···O3 2.756(3)Å, N3···O3 2.850(4) and N4···O3' 2.722(3)Å. Thus each oxygen atom accepts three hydrogen bonds. The torsion angles for the urea-indole bonds are 173.82 and 149.16˚. To the best of our knowledge this is the only crystallographically characterised example of a fully deprotonated phosphate anion bound to a urea containing receptor. Recently Custelcean and co-workers have reported an example of sulfate SO_4^{2-} bound to two tren-based tris-urea receptors *via* twelve hydrogen bonds – which may be regarded as the optimal coordination number for sulfate.[15] The structure reported here similarly represents the optimal coordination number for phosphate. Interestingly, in the phosphate binding protein, bound phosphate accepts eleven hydrogen bonds from the protein and donates one to it (the anion is bound in the monoprotonated form) making a total of twelve hydrogen bonds.[16] A similar 11 + 1 hydrogen bond array was observed in the HPO_4^{2-} complex of a protonated Schiff base macrocycle containing amide and pyrrole hydrogen bond donor groups by Katayev, Sessler and co-workers.[17]

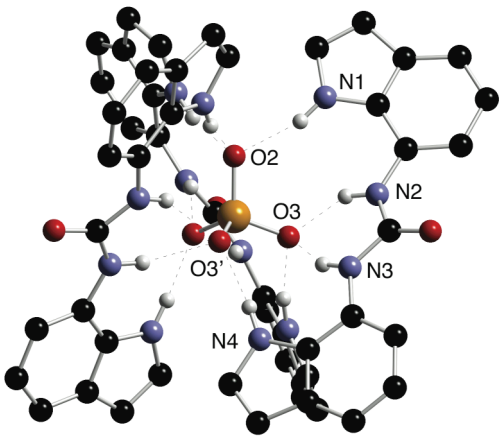


Figure 4 The tetrabutylammonium phosphate complex of compound **2**. Non-acidic hydrogen atoms, solvent and counter cations omitted for clarity.

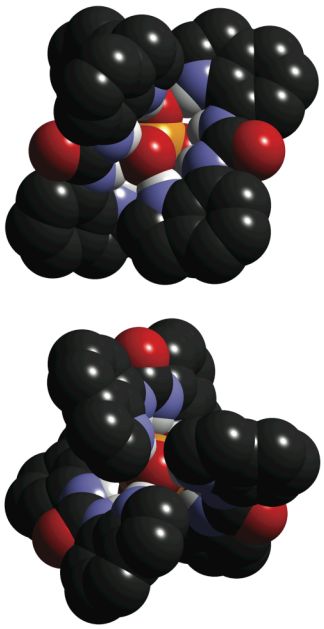


Figure 5 Spacefilling side and top views of the tetrabutylammonium phosphate complex of compound **2**. Non-acidic hydrogen atoms, solvent and counter cations omitted for clarity.

Solution binding studies were also conducted with thioureas **3** and **4**. In [D6]DMSO/0.5% water, a considerably lower affinity for oxo-anions was observed together with a loss of selectivity for dihydrogen phosphate (Table 3). We have previously observed lower affinities for anions in a bis-thiourea as compared to an analogous bis-urea.[18] This was attributed to the larger sulfur atom in the thiourea preventing the receptor adopting a planar conformation. Soós and co-workers have used modelling studies to evaluate the relative energies of a variety of thiourea conformations.[19] One possibility here is that conformational interconversion of the thiourea group in solution reduces the affinity of these receptors for anionic guests.

Table 3. Stability constants of compounds **3** and **4** measured in [D6]DMSO/0.5% water at 298K by ^{1}H NMR titration techniques.

Anion[a]	Compound **3**	Compound **4**
Cl^-	128	74
$CH_3CO_2^-$	2830	1620
$C_6H_5CO_2^-$	514	477
$H_2PO_4^-$	3830	1630

[a] Anions added as tetrabutylammonium salts. Errors in K_a are estimated to be < 15%. Indole CH proton resonance was followed during titration due to broadening of the NH proton resonances.

Crystals of the tetrabutylammonium chloride complex of receptor **4** were obtained by slow evaporation of an acetonitrile solution of the receptor in the presence of excess tetrabutylammonium chloride. The structure (shown in Figure 6) shows a single chloride anion bound to the four NH groups in the receptor with N…Cl distances in the range 3.187(2)-3.377(3)Å and N-H···Cl angles in the range 159° -171°. The structure reveals that the indole groups are twisted out of the plane with torsion angles for the thiourea –indole bond of 122.41 and 142.06°.

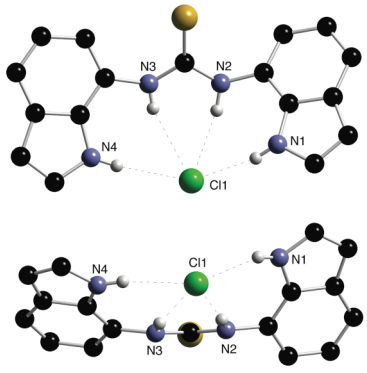


Figure 6 Side and bottom views of the X-ray crystal structure of the tetrabutylammonium chloride complex of compound **4**. Non-acidic hydrogen atoms, and counter cation omitted for clarity.

Solution studies with tetraethylammonium bicarbonate were also attempted with compounds **3** and **4**. It was found that in [D6]DMSO/0.5% water compound **3** binds this anion with a stability constant of 477 M^{-1}. Broadening of the ^{1}H NMR spectrum of compound **4** under these conditions prevented the stability constant from being determined. However, crystals of the tetraethylammonium bicarbonate complex of compound **4** were obtained by slow evaporation of a wet acetonitrile solution of the receptor in the presence of excess anion salt. In this case, in contradistinction to the carbonate complex of receptor **1**, the mixture crystallised as the bicarbonate complex. The HCO_3^- anion is hydrogen bonded between layers of the thiourea complex forming chains along the *a*-direction with N1···O2 2.887(4)Å, N2···O2 2.797(4)Å, N3···O1 2.838(4)Å and N4···O3 2.835(4)Å and NH···O angles in the range 152-169° (Figures 7 and 8). The structure again reveals that the indole groups are twisted out of the plane with torsion angles for the thiourea –indole bond of 123.57 and 139.08°. The bicarbonate hydrogen atom was not located, as the exact position of the bicarbonate is not fixed but disordered along the direction of the bicarbonate chain (Figure 8). This can be interpreted as disorder in the position of bicarbonate anion dimers which are observed frequently in the solid state.[20] This is evidenced in the direction of thermal ellipsoid elongation being along the crystallographic *a* axis (Figure 9), and the presence of sheets of diffuse scattering in 0kl.

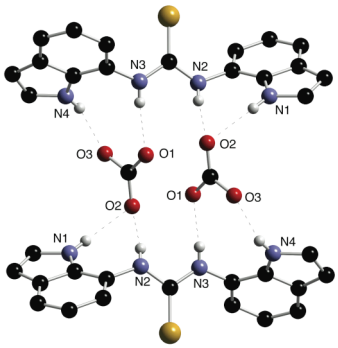


Figure 7 The X-ray crystal structure of the tetraethylammonium bicarbonate complex of compound **4**. Non-acidic hydrogen atoms, and counter cation omitted for clarity.

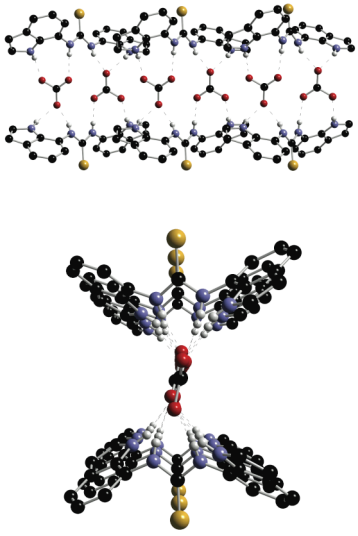


Figure 8 Side and end perspective views of the X-ray crystal structure of the tetraethylammonium bicarbonate complex of compound **4** showing a chain of bicarbonates in the solid state. Non-acidic hydrogen atoms, and counter cation omitted for clarity

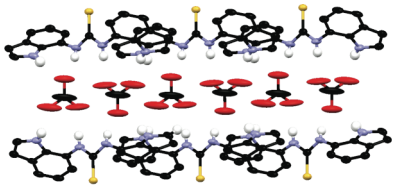


Figure 9 Thermal ellipsoid plot of the bicarbonate complex of compound **4**. Elongation of the thermal ellipsoids along the crystallographic *a* axis is indicative of disorder of the positions of bicarbonate dimers along the chain. Thermal ellipsoids are shown at the 50% probability level.

Conclusion

We have previously shown how controlling conformational changes across a series of receptors can have a dramatic effect on affinity, selectivity and transport ability.[14a, 21] In the series of compounds reported here, diindolylthioureas show only moderate affinities and selectivities, whilst diindolylureas have a remarkably high affinity for dihydrogen phosphate in solution for an acyclic neutral anion receptor in water/[D6]DMSO mixtures. These easy-to-make compounds adopt relatively planar conformations in the solid-state and are able to donate four hydrogen bonds and yet not fill the coordination sphere of carbonate or phosphate allowing two or three receptors respectively to bind to each anion in the solid-state. Consequently these oxo-anions are stabilised by eight or twelve hydrogen bonds respectively which presumably accounts for the deprotonation of these species upon crystallisation. The motif is easy to functionalise and we are currently preparing a variety of acyclic and cyclic anion receptors containing 1,3-diindolylureas. We are currently investigating the concentration ranges in which the complexes remain soluble and those in which we obtain precipitation. We are also investigating the application of this system in organocatalysis. The results of these studies will be reported in due course.

Experimental Section

General remarks: All reactions were performed in oven-dried glassware under a slight positive pressure of nitrogen. 2,3-dimethyl-7-aminoindole was synthesised by literature procedure.[7] ^{1}H-NMR (300 MHz) and ^{13}C NMR (75 MHz) spectra were determined on a Bruker AV300 spectrometer. Chemical shifts for ^{1}H NMR are reported in parts per million (ppm), calibrated to the residual solvent peak set, with coupling constants reported in Hertz (Hz). The following abbreviations are used for spin multiplicity: s = singlet, d = doublet, t = triplet. Chemical shifts for ^{13}C NMR are reported in ppm, relative to the central line of a septet at δ = 39.52 ppm for deuterio-dimethylsulfoxide. Infrared (IR) spectra were recorded on a Mattson Satellite (ATR). FTIR are reported in wavenumbers (cm^{-1}). Elemental analysis were performed by Medac Ltd. All solvents and starting materials were purchased from commercial sources where available.

^{1}H NMR spectroscopic titrations: A Bruker AV300 NMR spectrometer was used to measure the ^{1}H NMR shifts of the NH protons of the receptors. NMR titrations were performed by adding aliquots of the putative anionic guest (as the TBA , TEA salt in the case of bicarbonate) salt (0.15 M) in a solution of the receptor (0.01M) in DMSO-d_6 to a solution of the receptor (0.01M). The titration data was plotted Δppm *vs.* concentration of guest and fitted to a binding model using the EQNMR computer program.[11]

Crystallisations: Crystallisations were performed by dissolving *ca.* 0.05 mmol of receptor in 2 mL of solvent followed by addition of approximately 0.25 mmol of the anion salt and allowing the solution to slowly evaporate. Crystals of the phosphate complex of receptor **2** were obtained from the solution used for the NMR titration in [D6]DMSO/25% water in the presence of 5.8 equivalents of tetrabutylammonium dihydrogen phosphate.

1,3-Bis (2,3-dimethyl-1*H*-indol-7-yl)urea (1) 2,3-dimethyl-7-aminoindole (0.253 g, 1.58 mmol) was dissolved in a mixture of dichloromethane (30 mL) and a saturated aqueous solution of $NaHCO_3$ (30 mL). Triphosgene (0.47 g, 1.58 mmol) was added in portions and the reaction mixture was left stirring under nitrogen atmosphere at room temperature overnight. The organic layer was washed with water, dried over $MgSO_4$, filtered and concentrated *in vacuo*. The product was obtained by recrystallization from hot methanol and was isolated as a white solid: yield 78% 0.21g; m.p. 259°C; ^{1}H NMR (300 MHz, [D_6]DMSO): δ = 2.15 (s, 6H), 2.33 (s, 6H), 6.88 (t, J = 7.53 Hz, 2H), 7.03 (d, J = 7.53 Hz, 2H), 7.12 (d, J = 7.53 Hz, 2H), 8.44 (s, NH urea, 2H), 10.31 (s, NH indole, 2H); ^{13}C {H^1}NMR (75 MHz, [D_6]DMSO): δ = 8.5 (CH_3), 11.3 (CH_3), 105.6 (C), 113.1 (CH), 113.1 (CH), 118.2 (CH), 123.06 (C), 128.12 (C), 130.5 (C), 131.1 (C), 153.6 (CO); IR (film): ν = 3392 (indole NH stretching), 3247 (urea NH stretching), 1617 (urea CO stretching); LRMS (ES$^-$):m/z: 345 [M-H]$^-$; HRMS (ES$^+$): m/z: $C_{21}H_{23}N_4O$ 347.1866 found 347.1870 (error -0.90 ppm).

1,3-Di(1*H*-indol-7-yl)urea (2) 7-aminoindole (0.234 g, 1.58 mmol) was dissolved in a mixture of dichloromethane (20 mL) and a saturated aqueous solution of $NaHCO_3$ (20 mL). Triphosgene (0.47 g, 1.58 mmol) was added in portions and the reaction mixture was left stirring under nitrogen atmosphere at room temperature overnight. The organic layer was washed with water, dried over $MgSO_4$, filtered and concentrated *in vacuo*. The pure product was obtained by recrystallization from methanol. The product was isolated as a pale grey solid: yield 50% 0.15g; m.p. 252°C; ^{1}H NMR (300 MHz, [D_6]DMSO): δ = 6.44 (t, J = 2.64 Hz, 2H), 6.94 (t, J = 7.92, 2H), 7.08 (d, J = 7.14 Hz, 2H), 7.31 (d, J = 7.92, 2H), 7.34 (t, J = 2.64 Hz, 2H), 8.63 (s, NH urea, 2H), 10.77 (s, NH indole, 2H); ^{13}C NMR (75 MHz, [D_6]DMSO): δ = 101.4 (CH), 113.7 (CH), 115.9 (CH), 119.0 (CH), 124.1 (C), 125.1 (CH), 129.0 (C), 129.4 (C), 153.6 (CO); IR (film): ν = 3383 (indole NH stretching), 3255 (urea NH stretching), 1620 (urea CO stretching); LRMS (ES$^-$):m/z: 289 [M-H]$^-$; HRMS (ES$^+$) $C_{17}H_{15}N_4O$ 291.1240 found 291.1236 (error 1.52 ppm).

1,3-Bis (2,3-dimethyl-1*H*-indol-7-yl)thiourea (3) 2, 3-dimethyl-7-aminoindole (0.20 g, 1.25 mmol) was dissolved in a mixture of dichloromethane (20 mL) and a saturated aqueous solution of $NaHCO_3$ (20 mL). Thiophosgene (0.09 mL, 1.25 mmol) was dissolved in dichloromethane (5 mL) and added dropwise. The reaction mixture was left stirring under argon atmosphere at room temperature overnight. The organic layer was washed with water, dried over $MgSO_4$, and the organic phase taken to dryness to produce the isothiocyanate as a creamy solid which was used immediately. A solution of the isothiocyanate (0.16 g, 0.77 mmol) in dichloromethane (20 mL) was then added dropwise to a solution of 2,3-dimethyl-7-aminoindole (0.12 g, 0.77 mmol) in dichloromethane (20 mL). The solution was heated at reflux overnight, then taken to dryness and purified by flash chromatography (dichloromethane:methanol 49:1 v/v). The desired product was isolated as a white solid. Yield 29%; m.p. 205°C with decomposition; ^{1}H NMR (300 MHz, [D_6]DMSO): δ = 2.15 (s,CH_3 ,6H), 2.34 (s,CH_3 ,6H), 6.93-6.86 (m, J = 7.92, 4H), 7.25 (dd, J_1 = 2.25 Hz, J_2 = 6.39 Hz 2H), 9.26 (s, NH urea, 2H), 10.61 (s, NH indole, 2H); ^{13}C NMR (75 MHz, [D_6]DMSO): δ = 8.5 (CH_3), 11.3 (CH_3), 105.6 (C), 115.8 (CH), 118.0 (CH), 118.5 (CH), 122.5 (C), 130.6 (C), 131.1 (C), 131.6 (C), 180.3 (CS); IR (film): ν = 3396 (indole NH stretching), 3290 (urea NH stretching), 1152 (thiourea CS stretching); LRMS (ES$^-$):m/z: 361 [M-H]$^-$; HRMS (ES$^+$) $C_{21}H_{23}N_4S$ 363.1638 found 363.1633 (error 1.32 ppm).

1,3-Di(1*H*-indol-7-yl)thiourea (4) 7-aminoindole (0.32 g, 2.39 mmol) was dissolved in a mixture of dichlormethane (20 mL) and a saturated aqueous solution of $NaHCO_3$ (20 mL). Thiophosgene (0.18 mL, 2.39 mmol) was dissolved in dichloromethane (5 mL) and added dropwise. The reaction mixture was left stirring under argon atmosphere at room temperature overnight. The organic layer was washed with water, dried over $MgSO_4$, and the organic phase taken to dryness. The oil obtained was dissolved in ether (20 mL) and the isothiocyanate obtained as a brown solid removed by filtration which was used immediately. A solution of the isocyanate (0.33 g, 1.88 mmol) in dichloromethane (20 mL) was added dropwise to a solution of 7-aminoindole (0.25g, 1.88 mmol) in dichloromethane (20 mL). The solution was heated at reflux overnight. A light brown solid was then removed by filtration from the solution and dried under reduced pressure. Yield 83%; m.p. 231°C; ^{1}H NMR (300 MHz, [D_6]DMSO): δ: 6.47 (dd , J_1 = 2.94 Hz, J_2 = 1.83 Hz, 2H), 6.98 (t, J = 7.68 Hz, 2H), 7.06 (d, J = 6.93 Hz, 2H), 7.37 (t, J = 2.94 Hz, 2H), 7.45 (d, J = 7.32 Hz, 2H), 9.51 (s, NH urea, 2H), 11.04 (s, NH indole, 2H); ^{13}C NMR (75 MHz, [D6]DMSO): δ = 101.5 (CH), 118.4 (CH), 118.8 (CH), 119.2 (CH), 123.7 (C), 125.3 (CH), 129.3 (C), 132.0 (C), 180.7 (CS); IR (film): ν = 3365 (indole NH stretching), 3300 (urea NH stretching), 1102 (thiourea CS stretching); LRMS (ES$^+$):m/z: 307 [M+H]$^+$; HRMS (ES$^+$) $C_{17}H_{15}N_4S$ 307.1013 found 307.1012 (error -0.45 ppm).

X-ray structure determinations. Data were collected on a Bruker Nonius KappaCCD with a Mo rotating anode generator (λ=0.71073) employing phi and omega scans; standard procedures were followed. Lorentz and polarisation corrections were applied during data reduction with DENZO[22] and multi-scan absorption corrections were applied using SADABS.[23] Structures were solved and refined using the SHELX suite of programs.[24] Hydrogen atoms were identified in the difference map and then treated using a riding model, except those attached to nitrogen which were freely refined (with the exception 0126, where they were treated as riding on the parent atom).

Crystal data for the benzoate complex of compound **1:** $C_{44}H_{63}N_5O_3$, 0.25 x 0.17 x 0.06 mm, Mr = 709.99, T = 120(2) K, monoclinic, space group $P2_1/c$, a = 8.5824(3), b =

19.9254(9), c = 24.182(1) Å, β = 95.659(3)°, V = 4115.2(3) Å^3, ρ_{calc} = 1.146 g cm^{-3}, μ = 0.072 mm^{-1}, T_{min} = 0.979, T_{max} = 0.996, Z = 4, reflections collected: 31851, independent reflections: 7193 (R_{int} = 0.1307), $2\theta_{max}$ = 25.03°, Parameters = 477, largest difference peak and hole = 0.996 / –0.440 e Å^{-3}, final R indices [$I > 2\sigma I$]: $R1$ = 0.1469, $wR2$ = 0.3562, R indices (all data): $R1$ = 0.2215, $wR2$ = 0.4147. CCDC 694686.

Crystal data for the carbonate complex of compound **1:** $C_{59}H_{84}N_{10}O_5$, 0.4 x 0.25 x 0.04 mm, Mr = 1013.36, T = 120(2) K, triclinic, space group P-1, a = 12.8866(8), b = 15.5411(7), c = 16.4858(10) Å, α = 97.235(3), β = 109.277(2), γ = 108.363(3)°, V = 2858.7(3) Å^3, ρ_{calc} = 1.177 g cm^{-3}, μ = 0.076 mm^{-1}, T_{min} = 0.960, T_{max} = 0.997, Z = 2, reflections collected: 44006, independent reflections: 10101 (R_{int} = 0.1315), $2\theta_{max}$ = 25.02°, Parameters = 737, largest difference peak and hole = 1.491 / –0.690 e Å^{-3}, final R indices [$I > 2\sigma I$]: $R1$ = 0.0948, $wR2$ = 0.2441, R indices (all data): $R1$ = 0.1753, $wR2$ = 0.2962. CCDC 694689. Note: One of the tetraethylammonium molecules is disordered and refined with two conformations using geometric and thermal parameter restraints; however, there are still some extreme ellipsoids and large difference peaks in this area of the structure.

Crystal data for the phosphate complex of compound **2:** $C_{102}H_{159}N_{15}O_{8.5}PS_{1.5}$, 0.20 x 0.20 x 0.20 mm, Mr = 1810.5, T = 120(2) K, hexagonal, space group R-3, a = 24.0023(3), c = 32.4801(6) Å, V = 16205.2(4) Å^3, ρ_{calc} = 1.113 g cm^{-3}, μ = 0.113 mm^{-1}, T_{min} = 0.968, T_{max} = 0.978, Z = 6, reflections collected: 33495, independent reflections: 6352 (R_{int} = 0.1035), $2\theta_{max}$ = 25.03°, Parameters = 417, largest difference peak and hole = 1.380 / –0.683 e Å^{-3}, final R indices [$I > 2\sigma I$]: $R1$ = 0.1057, $wR2$ = 0.2929, R indices (all data): $R1$ = 0.1285, $wR2$ = 0.3120. CCDC 694689. Note: The DMSO was modelled as half occupied and disordered 50/50 over 2 possible orientations. Its geometry and thermal parameters were restrained. The terminal atom of one tetrabutylammonium arm was modelled as disordered over two possible orientations and the occupancies constrained to total one. These two disorders and partial occupancy of the DMSO explain the apparent close contacts in the structure. The crystal was a non-merohedral twin, but attempts to treat the data as such were unsuccessful. The resulting effect on the intensities has caused some parameters to misbehave, and the R-factors to be high.

Crystal data for the chloride complex of compound **4:** $C_{33}H_{50}N_5ClS$, 0.20 x 0.20 x 0.05 mm, Mr = 584.29, T = 120(2) K, monoclinic, space group Cc, a = 14.4760(2), b = 14.0106(3), c = 16.0360(3) Å, β = 93.818(1)°, V = 3245.16(10) Å^3, ρ_{calc} = 1.196 g cm^{-3}, μ = 0.212 mm^{-1}, T_{min} = 0.949, T_{max} = 0.990, Z = 4, reflections collected: 17419, independent reflections: 6742 (R_{int} = 0.043), $2\theta_{max}$ = 27.48°, Parameters = 381, largest difference peak and hole = 0.208 / –0.228 e Å^{-3}, final R indices [$I > 2\sigma I$]: $R1$ = 0.0460, $wR2$ = 0.0887, R indices (all data): $R1$ = 0.0557, $wR2$ = 0.0941. CCDC 694688.

Crystal data for the bicarbonate complex of compound **4:** $C_{26}H_{35}N_5O_3S$, 0.20 x 0.20 x 0.20 mm, Mr = 497.65, T = 120(2) K, monoclinic, space group $P2_1/n$, a = 7.9556(2), b = 16.0231(8), c = 19.7617(8) Å, β = 95.842(3)°, V = 2506.01(17) Å^3, ρ_{calc} = 1.319 g cm^{-3}, μ = 0.167 mm^{-1}, T_{min} = 0.957, T_{max} = 0.967, Z = 4, reflections collected: 25403, independent reflections: 4423 (R_{int} = 0.0679), $2\theta_{max}$ = 25.03°, Parameters = 337, largest difference peak and hole = 0.430 / –0.372 e Å^{-3}, final R indices [$I > 2\sigma I$]: $R1$ = 0.0581, $wR2$ = 0.1377, R indices (all data): $R1$ = 0.0822, $wR2$ = 0.1540. Note: Due to the disorder described above he hydrogen of the bicarbonate was not located and it was not included in the refinement. CCDC 694687.

CCDC-694685 - CCDC-694689 contain the supplementary crystallographic data for this paper. These data can be obtained free of charge from The Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre *via* www.ccdc.cam.ac.uk/data_request/cif.

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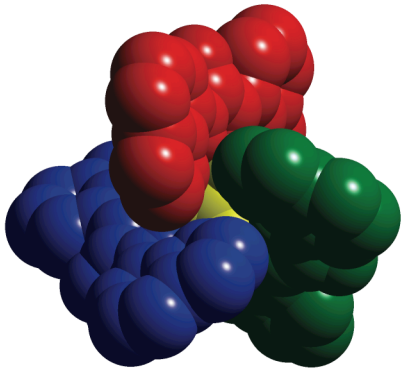
High affinity phosphate receptors

*Claudia Caltagirone, Jennifer R. Hiscock, Michael B. Hursthouse, Mark E. Light and Philip A. Gale**

1,3-Diindolylureas and 1,3-diindolylthioureas: anion complexation studies in solution and the solid state.



Three diindolylureas assemble around PO_4^{3-} in the solid-state saturating its coordination sphere with 12 hydrogen bonds.

[a] Dr C. Caltagirone, J.R. Hiscock, Prof. M.B. Hursthouse, Dr M.E. Light and Prof. P.A. Gale
School of Chemistry,
University of Southampton,
Southampton, SO17 1BJ, UK.
Fax: +44 23 8059 6805
E-mail: philip.gale@soton.ac.uk

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