

**LABS ADMIN - DHMH**  
**LABORATORY TERRORISM PREPAREDNESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES**  
**March 11, 2004**

**CORRECTED AND APPROVED**

ATTENDANCE:

Present: Mr. Lane Ahlburn (via teleconference); Dr. Ross Brechner; Mr. Michael Deabay; Dr. Jack DeBoy; Sgt. Mitchell Dinterman; Mr. Joseph Haney; Dr. Julie Kiehlbauch; Mr. Don Lewis; Ms. Helen McQuay; Dr. Robert Myers; Ms. Michele Piorek; Ms. Polly Ristaino; Dr. Jeff Roche; Mr. Michael Sharon; Mr. Jim Svrjcek; Ms. Gail Wowk

Absent: Mr. Ed Bonner; Dr. Prince Kassim; Mr. Art Thacher (advance notice given) Dr. Kenneth Wilde (advance notice given)

Guests: Ms. Barbara Callahan; Dr. James Davidson (sitting in for Dr. Phyllis Cassano)

MINUTES:

1. Review and Corrections – None
2. Acceptance – Unanimous
3. Introductions – Dr. Davidson sat in for Dr. Phyllis Cassano. Dr. Cassano could not attend due to a previous commitment. She will be replacing Dr. Fidelis Hegngi on the committee and as the State Veterinarian at the Maryland Department of Agricultural.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Lab Exercise
  - a. Challenge Set – Of the 51 participating labs that received lyophilized samples of pure *Y. enterocolitica*, 48/51 (94%) correctly identified the sample. Of the 42 participating labs that received lyophilized samples of *Shigella sonnei* 38/42 (90%) correctly identified the sample. Each participating lab received a thank you note and their individualized results by mail. As more exercises are completed and results tabulated, a solid baseline can be established.

A good start has been made. The labs have expressed interest in more exercises like this; with possibly one planned each year. The Committee suggested that the ends of the year, during the summer, or at the same time as CAP's Proficiency Testing are the times to avoid. To avoid scheduling conflicts, Ms. McQuay will e-mail Dr. Brechner with the current CAP rosters and internet link.

- b. Bench Training Planning Discussion and Update – Dr. Kiehlbauch updated the Committee on the progress made in planning the one-on-one bench training. An invitation letter was mailed out on March 2, 2004 with a March 17 registration deadline. This letter was sent to all the Level "A" Lab directors. Though the target audience is laboratians, who regularly work at the bench, interested directors would not be discouraged in attended this exercises.

The objective of this training would be how to correctly identify certain bacterial select agents (probably plague, *Bacillus anthracis*, and *Francisella tularensis*), and learn how the State Lab fits into the testing process. Depending on the response to these initial sessions, more dates will be scheduled in the fall.

Currently, there are only a half dozens responses. Dr. Brechner suggested that his office would help by being available to call each director to solicit interest. Labs who have not attended in the past could then be encouraged to participate.

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- c. Triage Room Exercise – Dr. DeBoy indicated that the Triage Room should be “up and running” within 60 days. During the first week the room is operational, a letter of introduction will be sent out to first responders around the state. Training sessions would be scheduled to familiarize these individuals on the new procedures on submitting samples. Additional training will also be needed for DHMH individuals working in and with the Triage Room.
2. IT Update – Joe Haney updated the Committee on LIMS. He stated that he is currently working on the sole source justifications. He set a time frame of four to six months. Nationwide, 20 state labs and 10 regional labs will be partnering on a LIMS by September 2005. The CDC is providing the money for the project via grants.
3. Laboratory Terrorism Preparedness Newsletter Topics – A draft was included in the handouts. The current issue was still at the printer and would be mailed out in the coming week. Dr. Brechner asked the Committee to e-mail him topics of interest for future issues. Mr. Shannon asked if the article, “Recent Alerts Test MLRN” could be featured in each issue. Summarizing “real life” scenarios and their conclusions would be a great teaching tool that first responders could use during future situations. Another suggestion was an article entitled “What is a Credible Threat?”

Dr. DeBoy suggested that the website address should be added to the newsletter. Each issue should be posted on the site. This would cut down on the cost of postage and make each more readily available to its target audiences. Dr. Brechner will contact Frances Stierstorfer, Dr. DeBoy’s Special Assistant, regarding the website. She has been quite helpful in assisting Dr. Brechner with the newsletter.

Mr. Lewis suggested that the newsletter should be printed in black and white in order to make photocopying easier. There were quite a few individuals at MDA who found the newsletter interesting and helpful.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Emergency Response Plan – Dr. Brechner asked the Committee to review the outline (provided in the handouts) on their own and e-mail their comments to him before the next meeting.
2. Next Meeting – Dr. DeBoy asked the Committee to contact Dr. Brechner with possible agenda items for the next meeting.

**NEXT MEETING:**

N.B. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 6, 2004 at 10am – 12noon in Room L-37 (201 W. Preston Street, Lab Tower).

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Until Next Meeting

RB/mp