

# NSABB Working Group on Personnel Reliability



**NSABB Meeting**  
**April 29, 2009**





# NSABB Charge: Personnel Reliability

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- **Recommend to the USG strategies for enhancing personnel reliability (PR) among individuals with access to biological select agents and toxins**
- **Balance the needs for both biosecurity and continued progress in the life sciences**



# The “Insider Threat”

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- **Generally refers to the misuse of pathogens by individuals who have access to them as part of their job**
- **May involve theft, misuse, or diversion of a select agent by an individual who is approved to access them**



# Working Group Established

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## Voting Members

- Dennis Kasper (Chair)
- Arturo Casadevall
- Murray Cohen
- Barry Erlick
- Susan Ehrlich
- Claire Fraser-Liggett
- Mike Imperiale
- Paul Keim
- Stan Lemon
- David Relman
- Andrew Sorensen
- Anne Vidaver

## Agency Representatives

- FBI
- OGC
- State Dept.
- Dept. of Defense
- OSTP
- NIH
- DHS
- EPA
- USDA
- ODNI
- DHHS
- CDC
- Dept. of Energy
- Intelligence Community



# Working Group Approach

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- **The WG considered:**
  - ❑ The current Select Agent Programs
  - ❑ Extant frameworks for ensuring PR
  - ❑ Potential mechanisms for assessing “reliability”
- **The WG particularly considered:**
  - ❑ Costs and other burdens on institutions
  - ❑ Impact on the scientific enterprise, especially research on select agents
  - ❑ Effectiveness of any proposed PR measures



# Timeline

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- **October 2008**
  - NSABB charged with personnel reliability issue
- **October – November**
  - Briefings on extant PR programs and measures
  - Deliberations and development of findings
- **December**
  - In-person WG meeting
  - Public meeting of full NSABB
    - Present preliminary WG findings and recommendations to date
    - Discuss PR with the full NSABB



# Progress Discussed at December NSABB Meeting

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- **WG briefings at that point:**
  - **CDC Select Agent Program**
  - **Dept. of Defense (Army Biological Personnel Reliability Program)**
  - **Dept. of Energy (Select Agent Human Reliability Program)**
  - **NIH Intramural Research Program**
  - **CDC Intramural Research Program**
  - **Battelle Biomedical Research Center**
  - **Intelligence Community (Security clearances)**
- **Discussion of PR with:**
  - **Selected participants at USG-WHO International Roundtable on Dual Use Research**




# Progress Discussed at December NSABB Meeting

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## Initial Report Outline

- **Introduction**
  - Issue
  - Approach
- **Vision**
- **Guiding Principles**
- **Aims and applicability of PR program**
- **Key features**
- **Specific elements**
- **Roles and responsibilities**
- **Evaluation of PR program effectiveness and impact on scientific enterprise**





# Moving Forward after the December NSABB Meeting

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- **Additional WG briefings:**
  - **Galveston National Lab (BSL-4 facility) at UTMB, proposed PRP**
  - **Classified briefing from the intelligence community**
  - **Experts in psychological/mental health assessments**



# Timeline *continued*

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- **Mid December – January 2009**
  - Continued development of findings and recommendations
- **February 4**
  - In-person WG meeting
    - Classified briefing
    - Briefings from experts in psychological assessments
- **February – March**
  - Continued development of findings and recommendations, including optimal characteristics
- **April 3**
  - Public Consultation