

NSABB Working Group on Personnel Reliability



NSABB Meeting
April 29, 2009





NSABB Charge: Personnel Reliability

- **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”

- **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

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

- **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

- **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


- **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

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

- **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*

- **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