

## CAEM Minutes June 29, 2006, 11:00am-12:30pm

**Attending:** Elvinger, Hamar, Blanchard, Thompson (for Mann), Noland, M. Davidson, Roehr, Scarfe, Byrum, Wagner, Dennison, Qual, Grohs, Heath, Hoenig, Simunich and guest: B. Bennett,

### 1. PPE Discussion:

- Fit testing at training courses: DHS, USDA and others providing respirator training do not fit test non-federal employees because they require medical evaluation and release prior to fit testing. It was recommended that State and NAHERC be informed of this so they can complete the evaluation and bring a release if they want to be fit tested.
- AVIC's and AEC's have both been encouraged to contact the State vet office and NAHERC personnel in their state when respirator training is being offered. Sebastian provided the list of AEC's contacts to Richard Walker after last meeting.
- Letter: K Roehr discussed the proposed letter sent June 29 before the meeting. B Grohs and a few people had several suggestions that they will forward. M Davidson stated that all types of respirators are being considered and the type and whether goggles are required will depend on level and type of activity and zoonotic potential of agent.
- Discussion on CO<sub>2</sub> for euthanasia and impact on requirement for respiratory protection and safe practices. CO<sub>2</sub> was used during END so guidelines exist for its use.
- Authorities and Recipients of letter: B Grohs stated OSHA makes the final decision on minimum worker standards and that this group should send the recommendation to DHHS and OSHA also outlining the safety concerns voiced at the meeting. K Roehr indicated Larry Granger invited the committee to respond, so he felt the letter should go to him and let him forward to DHHS and OSHA as needed..
- JIT fit testing: In an emergency, the need for medical release will hinder rapid just-in-time fit testing which safety officers and responders have been training to provide.
  - a. USDA and States might consider contracting with experienced people who use PPE daily and train them to collect birds, rather than training bird personnel to use PPE.
- Vet Practice safety and preparedness considerations:
  - a. K Dennison will be meeting with the Rocky Mountain RCE in Fort Collins today to address several topics and he will bring up PPE and broader safety issues for practicing veterinarians and their employees. They would look to AVMA in State Vet Med Assoc to disseminate materials on type of risks, appropriate safety procedures, respiratory programs, etc.
  - b. Local places to get fit tested include public health offices, hospitals, FEMA, etc and could be included the material developed for practitioners.
  - c. D Scarfe suggested a series of educational articles for JAVMA. F Elvinger indicated this would be good material for vet schools in biodefense classes. Several members stated support for comm. Involvement in this effort.
  - d. D Scarfe suggested it become a required module for both tiers in the National Veterinary Accreditation Program.
- Exercise Lesson Learned: J Hamar stated during NJ Bioterrorism TOP-OFF exercise involving plague, the State vet office proposed recommending private vets wear N95 masks when dealing with suspect infected animals. However, the MD's insisted that medical surgical masks were adequate and would not allow any recommend otherwise.

### 2. Objective and Action Item Updates:

- a. Earmarked DHS emergency preparedness funds for State ag. K Roehr still discussing with Colorado Ag dept

b. Disinfectants –

1. B. Byrum reported Dale Meyer in Region 5 USEPA discussed with Jeff Kempter what is being done in hospital labs as part of antimicrobial product testing programs. One of the goals of the USDA-EPA (DHS) joint committee is to inventory what is available and in progress.
2. B Grohs stated North Carolina field trip reviewed a lot of the approved disinfectants for AI. Major concerns is about protocol not being efficacious since farms did not want to clean before disinfecting and many of the disinfectants were inadequate in the face of organic materials.
3. Further testing is being done at several sites including University of Delaware looking at soaps and detergents effectiveness for AI
4. Regular meetings ongoing between USDA and EPA regarding USAHA letter from this committee and other issues that had come up previously within the agencies. The joint group developed a table with priorities, who's collecting data, time frame to complete, etc. B Grohs will provide list to committee.
5. Bill Bennett suggested looking at lactic acid rather than acetic acid to add to the approved list for FMD also.

c. All Hazards – B Ehart email stated they have been meeting. C Lovern and K Dennison have put in the majority of the effort in writing and revising the documents. They have 5 calls scheduled between now and Sept 5. They plan to provide materials for full committee to review at Sept 28 conference call and finalize documents at Oct meeting.

- Discussed the 5-page list of recommendations if it is to become a committee resolution or recommendation, should be prioritized and reduced to major headings that are actionable.
- Any resolution or recommendation should be circulated to the full committee prior to the October meeting for comment so a final version could be approved in October.

d. Credentialing – S Heath stated there is a holdup with the DHS contract with Titan. However, there is a DHS sponsored credentialing workshop July 6<sup>th</sup> and 3-4 people from their workgroup will attend. The workshop is for TCL groups where credentialing was raised as important issue.

e. Lessons Learned and Comprehensive Exercise report recommendations to USDA from CNA Corporation. USDA is reviewing these reports and developing a list of priorities. They have already decided to include some recommendations in AI training and Ag Sector exercises for AI. **Action Item:** committee to review the recommendations, prioritize from our perspective, suggest possible actions and send comments to USDA.

3. **Other topic updates:**

- **Next Steps in the AVMA Summit:** Cindy Lovern submitted a written response sent with agenda. *The final National Animal Disaster Summit report has been submitted to JAVMA editors to start the publication process, because of deadlines, I am not exactly sure when that report will be published, but I would say not until Fall would be my best guess. There is a recommendation going to the AVMA Executive Board at their July meeting in HI requesting a new staff position be added to the AVMA to help expand our disaster initiatives. The Exec Board will vote on that during their July meeting.*
- Other disaster program updates:
  - a. *Legislation is currently pending to move the National Disaster Medical System back to the Dept of Health and Human Services instead of having it reside under FEMA as part of the Dept of Homeland Security – we are waiting to see what happens with that to determine how best to update our Memorandum of Understanding regarding the VMATs. We are operating status quo at the moment until decisions are made at the federal level.*
  - b. *AVMA is currently communicating with the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Law (NCCUSL) regarding the addition of veterinary services to their Uniform Emergency Volunteer Healthcare Services Act. The AVMA is gathering input from key*

stakeholders to try to determine if the addition of veterinary services in the model law would help the profession during times of disaster or if it would actually intrude upon the local and state veterinary infrastructure during times of disaster. We are currently working on this issue and our final comment(s) are due June 30<sup>th</sup>.

- **New TCL groups:** no one on call indicated that they had signed-up (except S Heath).
- Update on S. Heath new liaison assignment: DHS wants to work more closely with Ag on infrastructure protection issues and emergency preparedness and requested liaisons with 3 groups: 1 federal (Sebastian), 1 state, and 1 industry to this affect.

#### 4. **Topics for USHA Resolutions Recommendations:**

- a. All Hazards subcommittee will have one or more that may involve different audiences and agencies within or outside USDA.
- b. Possible white paper on funding for legislative efforts but would not be addressed to agencies so it is uncertain how this would move forward.

#### 5. **October CAEM Meeting Agenda**

- a. Cut-off presentations at 2:30pm to allow 2½ hours for committee discussion, review, and voting on resolutions and business meeting with brief updates on activities.
- b. Topics proposed for October Meeting:
  - ~1 hour for the EMD-VS update on state of emergency preparedness – associate deputy administrator for EMD as probable speaker (may change soon).
    - a. Include Lessons Learned report Implementation Progress Report
  - ~1 hour update on DHS and USDA-HS activities especially related infrastructure protection, grants & training. S Heath as new USDAH liaison to DHS and DHS person.
  - K Roehr will follow-up with the Purdue person on their distance training and degree program as a potential topic- not yet decided.
  - Rural Development and/or Farm Service Agency speakers to discuss the process by which funds become available during incident recovery. This will help the committee better able to interface with and make recommendations to improve the process to ensure continuity of agricultural business.
  - Cristobal Sepeda on regionalization and compartmentalization and risk as it applies within the US. He gave an excellent similar talk from the International Trade and epidemiology perspective. Topics to include how to avoid introduction, zero risk versus acceptable risk, and tools for emergency management application.
  - K Dennison -brief report from SART (State) group who will meet the day before our meeting in October at Minneapolis.
  - Group was generally not interested in talks on how to interface with Congress.

#### 6. **Next Meeting conference call July 27, 11 EDT**