

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health**

Summary Minutes

**Eighteenth Meeting of the
Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health
October 28-29, 2003**

**Meeting Held at the Adams Mark
St. Louis, Missouri**

Executive Summary

The Eighteenth Meeting of the Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health (ABRWH or the Board) was held at the Adams Mark St. Louis Hotel in St. Louis, Missouri on October 28-29, 2003. All members but one were in attendance. Others in attendance included staff of various Federal agencies, as well as members of the public. The Summary Minutes of Meeting Seventeen were approved with no changes.

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Tuesday, October 28, 2003

Claimant Communication

Ms. Chris Ellison of the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety/Office of Compensation, Analysis and Support (NIOSH/OCAS) presented an overview of the claimant communications, outlining the four primary methods. They consisted of phone calls, e-mails, the web site, and written communications. She announced two new pieces to be included in the written communications, which are a flow chart and an activity report.

Following her presentation, **Ms. Ellison** entertained questions from the Board.

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OCAS Program Status Report

Mr. David Sundin of NIOSH/OCAS announced the number of claims to date as '14,500-some.' He reminded the Board that there is not only an electronic file, but a paper file of documents on each claim. He gave a breakdown of percentages of claims involving Atomic Weapons Employers (AWEs) and Department of Energy (DOE) site employees and survivors. A profile was presented of the types of cancers represented in the claimant population, warning against over-interpretation of the list.

Mr. Sundin noted a marked improvement in the responsiveness of the DOE points of contact for requests for information. The total percentage of the outstanding requests more than 60 days or older is now down to eight percent.

Mr. Sundin announced initiation of another recruitment effort for physicians for the Physicians Panel under Subtitle D.

Four completed site profile documents are now out on the web site. They are Bethlehem Steel, Savannah River Site, Blockson Chemical and the Mallinckrodt Technical Basis Document. The residual contamination final report is drafted and in final review.

Mr. Sundin answered questions from the Board following his presentation.

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DOL Program Status Report

Mr. Jeff Kotsch presented the Department Of Labor's (DOL) program status report. He gave an update on the number of claims, with a breakout of claim types. Approximately 53 percent of the total cases have received final decisions, resulting in compensation payments to 9,143 claims in the amount of roughly \$673,991,000 in compensation. Medical benefits in the amount of \$19,765,000 have been paid as of October 23rd.

Mr. Kotsch updated the Board on the improvement in the ability of the DOL to get claims through the process. He discussed a continuing outreach program. The number of cases being received at present was noted. Long-term projections of future claims were discussed.

Questions were taken from the Board following the presentation. Those which were outside Mr. Kotsch's area of expertise he agreed to refer to Mr. Pete Turcic for clarification.

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DOE Program Status Report

Mr. Tom Rollow of the Office of Environment Safety and Health presented a status report from the DOE. Mr. Rollow is director of the office of worker advocacy.

Mr. Rollow presented an overview of the differences between the Subtitle B portion of the program managed by DOL and the Subtitle D portion managed by DOE.

Mr. Rollow described accomplishments of and continuing challenges to his office.

Following his presentation, Mr. Rollow entertained questions from the Board.

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Public Comment Period

Public comment was solicited on both days of the meeting. An extra opportunity was offered on the first day. Public input in the first session included the following:

- # Issues regarding concern for missing records.
- # Need for clarification to claimants between Subtitle B and Subtitle D claims.
- # Continuing outreach efforts.

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Dose Reconstruction Workgroup Report

Mr. Mark Griffon led the Board in a discussion of three task orders which were to be presented for approval by the Board. Changes made to the draft tasks since the previous Board meeting were highlighted.

After discussion, all three tasks were voted on and approved.

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Board Discussion - Claims Review Process

Mr. Larry Elliott announced that the contract for technical support to the Board had been awarded to Sanford Cohen & Associates.

A suggestion was made by Mr. Elliott that the Board take some time to discuss the issue of a dose reconstruction subcommittee and the differences between a subcommittee as an ongoing working group and a working group, essentially an ad hoc group with a specific, defined task.

After discussion, the matter was tabled until the following day

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The second opportunity for public comment in the day was offered. Input from that session included the following:

- # The schedule for issuance of the Special Exposure Cohort rule.
- # Conflict of interest statements for those parties working on the site profiles.
- # Observations from review of the Mallinckrodt Technical Basis Document.
- # Interest in worker input to the site profiles.
- # Vignettes of incidents from the personal experience of a number of former Mallinckrodt workers and/or their children.
- # Perceptions of being passed from one agency to another.
- # Integrated Modules for Bioassay Analysis (IMBA) model availability.

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

Review and Approval of Draft Minutes

A motion to approve the Executive Summary and Minutes of the seventeenth meeting was seconded and unanimously passed.

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Administrative/Housekeeping

Mr. Larry Elliott addressed the issue of Board members receiving correspondence and/or phone calls from claimants and interested parties. He offered assistance from NIOSH in Board response.

Ms. Cori Homer reviewed several routine administrative and housekeeping items.

Mr. Robert Presley asked about member interest in visiting the Nevada Test Site following the December meeting.

Items of interest for the December agenda were solicited

The Board agreed to meet in Augusta, Georgia on February 5th and 6th. Washington, D.C. was agreed to as a back-up location.

The week of April 19th was decided on for the following meeting, to be held in Richland, Washington. No specific dates were decided on.

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Site Profile Updates

Dr. James Neton described the purpose of the document, and the status of other site profiles under development. He then presented a detailed overview of the Technical Basis Document (TBD) for the Mallinckrodt Chemical Works.

Dr. Neton's presentation included a history of the use of the Mallinckrodt site and its evolution over the years the site was in operation. He described the uranium refining process and how it led to the radiological characteristics and conditions. A summary was given of the types of available data and how determinations were made of radioactivity intakes, both internal and external doses.

Dr. Neton's presentation was followed by questions from the Board and discussion of the content of the Mallinckrodt TBD.

A motion that NIOSH develop a program for public and site expert participation in development of site profiles was seconded and passed.

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Working Groups on Options for Evaluating Claimant Interviews

Dr. James Melius provided an update on the working group. No recommendations were available at this time, but are expected to be provided at the December meeting.

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Research Issues

Mr. Russ Henshaw, NIOSH/OCAS, presented considerations for adopting and implementing modifications to cancer risk models and an update on research topics. He described the differences between the NIOSH-Interactive Radio Epidemiological Program (IREP) and National Institutes of Health (NIH)-IREP models.

Mr. Henshaw noted potential effects of risk model modifications, as well as practical considerations for doing so.

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Public Comment Period

Public Comment was solicited on both days of the meeting. Public input on the second day included the following:

- # Desire for input from former employees in site profile development.
- # Conflicting information given to workers during employment.
- # Inclusion of Mallinckrodt workers in the Special Exposure Cohort.
- # Emphasis by employers to employees on the secrecy of the work.
- # Documents reflecting what workers had to say to keep their jobs, rather than the truth.
- # A request for another visit from NIOSH or Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU) specifically to discuss the Mallinckrodt TBD.
- # An offer for use by NIOSH of the information gathered over the years from the site by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.
- # Questions related to the Blockson Chemical Site TBD not addressing radon exposures.

With all further business to come before the Board requiring action in Executive Session, the public portion of the meeting was adjourned.

End of Executive Summary

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Tuesday, October 28, 2003

OPENING REMARKS

Dr. Paul Ziemer, Chairman of the ABRWH, called the meeting to order, welcoming the attendees. He announced Dr. Henry Anderson would be absent from the meeting.

Dr. Ziemer called for everyone to register their attendance in the book provided. He instructed members of the public to sign up if they wished to address the Board during the public comment period. Dr. Ziemer reminded the members of the public that the comment period was not a forum for a question and answer session, but comments on the program or a specific issue were invited.

Noting that perhaps all members of the Board had not had an opportunity to review the minutes, Dr. Ziemer inquired whether the Board's preference might be to defer approval until the following day. The members agreed.

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CLAIMANT COMMUNICATION

Ms. Chris Ellison
NIOSH

In her overview of the claimant communications, Ms. Ellison outlined the four methods. They included phone calls, e-mails, visits to the web site, and written communication. Two new pieces to the written communication were announced. They are a flow chart graphically describing the steps of the claims process, and an activity report. The flow chart will be included in the acknowledgement packet sent to a new claimant. Pending claimants will be sent the flow chart in a separate mailing. The activity reports will be mailed quarterly and will include both a status report on the pending claim, as well as program information.

Discussion Points

- # Dr. Genevieve Roessler asked if a determination had been made as to the effectiveness of the web site. Ms. Ellison reported that web site "hits" are tracked, but the majority of contact from claimants is through e-mail or phone calls.
- # Dr. Roy DeHart inquired into the number of dead letters.