

The Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee met by teleconference on 17 March 2004 at 1:00pm ET. The purpose of the meeting was to review additional data on influenza B viruses that has become available since the meeting of 19 February 2004, and to decide whether to confirm the committee's original recommendation to change the influenza B virus component to a B/Shanghai/361/2002-like virus for vaccines to be used for 2004-2005. After a review of the data indicating the continuing predominance of influenza B viruses similar to B/Shanghai/361/2002, the committee voted unanimously that its original recommendation should stand. The committee also indicated that the actual virus used should conform to one that is antigenically consistent with B/Shanghai/361/2002 and that is best suited to large scale manufacturing. To summarize, the committee holds to its original recommendation that influenza vaccines used in the US during the 2004-2005 season should include an A/New Caledonia/20/99 (H1N1)-like virus (A/New Caledonia/20/99 is the actual strain being used), an A/Fujian/411/2002 (H3N2)-like virus (A/Wyoming/03/2003 is the actual strain being used) and a B/Shanghai/361/2002-like virus (with manufacturers examining three antigenically acceptable candidate strains including B/Shanghai/361/2002, B/Jilin/20/2003, and B/Jiangsu/10/2003.). The meeting was adjourned at 2:05pm.