



# NSABB Public Consultation on Personnel Reliability



**April 2009**



## Public Consultation: *Purpose*

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- **Explore potential impact on the scientific community**
  - **Investigators**
  - **Research institutions and organizations**
  
- **Topics**
  - **Concept of personnel reliability and its implementation**
  - **Personnel reliability measures**
  - **Optimal characteristics and methods for assessing reliability**
  - **Potential benefits and consequences of personnel reliability programs**



# Public Consultation

■ April 3, 2009

□ Presentations, videocast, podcasts at [www.biosecurityboard.gov](http://www.biosecurityboard.gov)

■ ~200 attendees

□ Public

□ Private

□ Non-profit

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NSABB - Past Meetings

April 2009 Meeting - April 3

**Agenda and Webcasts**

- [Agenda](#) [Webcast](#)
- Minutes will be posted once they are available.

**Presentation Materials**

**Background and Introduction to the Personnel Reliability Issue**

- [Understanding and Improving Laboratory Security, Personnel Reliability, and Safety](#) [Diane DiEuliis, Ph.D.](#)  
Office of Science and Technology Policy

**Panel 1 - Extant Models of Personnel Reliability Programs**

- [The Army Biological Personnel Reliability Program \(BPRP\)](#) [John Humpton](#)  
Combating WMD and Proliferation Policy Division G-3/5/7, Headquarters, Department of the Army
- [LLNL Select Agent Human Reliability Program](#) [Eric Gard, Ph.D.](#)  
Global Security Directorate, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- [Bioterrorism Risk Assessment Group](#) [John Stovers](#)

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# Public Consultation:

## ***Background Presentations***

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- **Extant Personnel Reliability Programs (PRPs)**
  - **Army**
  - **DOE**
  
- **Select Agent Program: Security Risk Assessment**
  - **CDC and DOJ/CJIS**
  
- **PRP in Academia (planned)**
  - **UTMB, Galveston National Lab**
  
- **NSABB WG on PR: *Proposed Optimal Personnel Characteristics***



# Public Consultation: *Organizing Framework*

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- **Optimal Personnel Characteristics**
  - No history of scientific or professional misconduct
  - Emotionally stable and capable of sound judgment
  - Positive attitude toward safety and security measures, and standard operating procedures
  - Free of vulnerability to coercion
  - **Free of felony convictions**
  - **No domestic or international terrorist ties**





## Public Consultation: *Panelist expertise*

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- **Select agent and other biomedical research**
- **Personnel reliability programs**
- **Biosafety**
- **Research administration**
- **Responsible conduct of research**
- **Psychiatry and psychometric research**



## Themes and Issues:

### *Operational aspects of PRPs*

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- **Role of the Responsible Official (RO)**
  - Qualifications, training, and responsibilities
  
- **Costs of PRPs vary greatly**
  - type of institution
  - existing infrastructure



## Themes and Issues:

### *Utility, applicability & effectiveness of PR measures*

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- Adequacy of current measures
- Need for additional measures
- Correlation between optimal characteristics and security
- Data supporting effectiveness





## Themes and Issues:

### *Utility, applicability, & effectiveness of PR measures (cont.)*

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- **Personal history**
  - Is the past prologue to the future?
  - Unreliability  $\neq$  will engage in bioterrorism
  - Past behavior may provide a false sense of security
- **Job performance measures may be more effective**



## Themes and Issues:

### ***General lack of support for the two person rule***

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- **Biosafety and biosecurity applications**
- **Resource-intensive**
- **Difficult to implement with limited number of staff**



## Themes and Issues:

### ***Reporting to USG when access is restricted***

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- **Need guidance on reporting the restriction of access**
  - **What to report, to whom, and when?**
  - **Disclose reasoning and procedures leading to the decision?**
  
- **Potential negative effects**
  - **Individual's career and reputation**
  - **Privacy and liability issues**
  - **Culture of trust**



## Themes and Issues:

***Engaged leadership at the local level is critical***

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- **Reliability is best managed locally at the institutional level**
- **Investigators must be engaged**
- **Strong working relationships should be fostered**
- **Training is critical**



## Themes and Issues:

### ***A balanced approach is needed***

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- PRP could be a disincentive to remain in or enter select agent research
  - “Culture shock”
  - Recruiting difficulties
- New requirements may stifle innovation
- Must monitor PRP impacts, effectiveness, and unintended consequences
- Proceed with caution





## Themes and Issues:

### ***Layers of accountability***

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- **Local or institutional level:**
  - **Committed institutional and laboratory leadership**
  - **Peer reporting**
  - **Training**
  
- **Federal level:**
  - **Effective regulatory programs**
    - **performance-based standards**
    - **flexibility and discretion in application**
    - **local enforcement**



## Themes and Issues:

### ***Other issues of concern***

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- **Psychological assessments administered by a trained professional**
- **Privacy**
- **ADA issues**
- **Impact of restricting an individual's access**
- **Compounding compliance burden**