

SCAPA Biosafety Working Group

Charter

Biosafety programs represent an important safety and health component at Department of Energy (DOE) and National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) sites. New focus areas for biological research, bioterrorism threats, and concerns about emerging diseases have resulted in new regulations (on the Federal, state, and local levels), new DOE guidance, and new operational and engineering approaches to biosafety. To assist the DOE and NNSA community in effectively addressing emergency planning, preparedness, and response issues relative to a potential biological event, the DOE Subcommittee on Consequence Assessment and Protective Actions (SCAPA) is establishing a Biosafety Working Group.

The Biosafety Working Group shall provide assistance and recommendations to DOE and NNSA sites and the DOE Office of Emergency Management (NA-41) on technical issues associated with:

- Characterizing potential and actual biological source terms;
- Modeling the environmental fate and transport of biological materials, agents, or toxins;
- Estimating the health impacts to workers and the public from exposure to biological materials, agents, or toxins, as well as impacts to the environment;
- Encouraging the development of appropriate biosafety emergency management tools, plans, and procedures to prevent and mitigate the impacts of an environmental release of biological materials or toxins.

In addition to addressing the above technical issues, the Biosafety Working Group shall:

- Foster communication and mutual support relative to biosafety emergency management programs among all DOE and NNSA sites;
- Monitor activities of, and support technical communication with, other Federal and state agencies, academia, and professional organizations working to establish effective emergency management programs and practices;
- Advocate awareness of effective biosafety consequence assessment and protective action protocols and evaluate the benefits to DOE and NNSA sites relative to their adoption and use;
- Promote innovation, technology transfer, and benchmarking for biological consequence assessment modeling; and
- Improve planning to meet the emergency management needs associated with future DOE and NNSA biological missions and potential bioterrorism threats.

The Biosafety Working Group Chair shall be a contractor employee at a DOE or NNSA site, with direct or management-level responsibilities for biological safety and/or emergency preparedness and response. The Biosafety Working Group Chair shall be

appointed and serve at the discretion of the SCAPA Chair and the DOE Office of Emergency Management's Biosafety Working Group advisor. A Vice-Chair may be appointed to assist the Chair in performing working group administrative and managerial duties.

Biosafety Working Group membership shall consist of biosafety representatives from each DOE and NNSA site, as well as from DOE Headquarters. Representatives may be contractor employees or DOE oversight staff. Biosafety Working Group membership shall be open to:

- DOE/NNSA Biosafety Officers;
- DOE/NNSA Headquarters, site office, or site contractor staff members with responsibilities in biosafety or emergency management programs;
- SCAPA members who are interested in biosafety issues. Representation on the Biosafety Working Group from other SCAPA working groups shall be encouraged to support the Biosafety Working Group in its investigation of cross-disciplinary issues; and
- Members of other biosafety-related organizations that are invited by the Biosafety Working Group, the SCAPA Chair, or the DOE Office of Emergency Management working group advisor.

The Biosafety Working Group shall maintain regular communication among its members. The working group shall conduct a minimum of four conference calls (or other virtual meetings) per year and shall convene a meeting during the week of the annual SCAPA conference.

The Biosafety Working Group shall communicate its activities to SCAPA on a regular basis. The Chair, Vice Chair, or a designated member of the Biosafety Working Group shall report on group activities during each of SCAPA's regularly scheduled conference calls and provide a summary presentation of working group activities and accomplishments at the annual SCAPA conference.