

Summary of NIEHS WETP 2007 Fall Conference: The Future of Hazardous Materials Cleanup & Training Chapel Hill, NC

Friday, October 19, 2007

8:30 a.m.

Welcome

Dr. Samuel Wilson, *Acting Director, NIEHS*

- Is a big fan of WETP, sees an increase in the support curve
- Supports epidemiology research, which starts with human disease
- Supports exposure disease research, as it relates to human disease
- Supports community outreach and hazard assessment research
- Communications is an important aspect of the program
- Risk management needs to be a two way street. WETP's real world experience raises the questions we need researchers to answer. Helps identify the information gaps.

8:45 a.m.

Homeland Security and emergency Response and Preparedness

Jim Remington, *NIEHS, Moderator*

- Panelists discussed efforts that have been made to better integrate with the responder community and their perspectives on the future of hazardous materials and emergency response training

Gordon Massingham, *Detrick Lawrence/Emergency Film Group*

- Talked about trends in hazmat/WMD training
- After 9/11, the company saw a large increase in training with PPT, DVDs, and CD-Roms
- After 9/11 found an increase in national DHS funding, decrease in local funding
- In the future, instructor led classrooms, computer-based and web-based training are likely to increase
- For future training subjects – hazmat during floods, hazmat security, pandemic response, suicide bombings, hazmat investigation
- Ideas for the future – must develop working relationship between agencies (increase communication), train the general public in self rescue, develop and train hazmat/WMD rescue teams, provide a better understanding of suspicious activity

Donald "Chip" Booth, *IUOE National Hazmat Program*

- Discussed building alliances between construction trades and emergency responders to save lives during disasters
- Training exercises with the State of New Jersey

Ron Snyder, *Kirkwood Community College*

- Discussed the future of emergency response and preparedness training

- We can not predict what the future will be
- Future challenge is to get communities involved, they should have a plan, and they should practice the plan
- Use needs and risk assessment to assess needs

Questions:

- Need to recognize that events, like Dirty Bombs, don't occur that often, and we need to focus on other more likely events
- Training needs – medium, where is the money coming from – top issues
- Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) training looks good on paper, but in real situations it just doesn't cut it
- Survey was done after 9/11 and Katrina (Summer 2006)

10:30 a.m.

Concurrent Breakout Sessions

Breakout 1 - OSHA RFI

- What is the broad role of OSHA?
 - During response we don't want OSHA-free zones
- Danger of opening up standards
 - HAZWOPER
- Response to NRF
- Process issues as responders
- Concern about OSHA—questions all over the place
 - Incorporate PPE, bloodborne, respiratory protection
- How much time spent on commenting?
 - Important to get on record
- Comments precursor to legal action
- Emergency responders (some State and Local) who don't have OSHA coverage need to comment

NIEHS and OSHA – MOU training function

- NIEHS comment
- AFL-CIO comment
- Skilled support personnel—who pays for medical treatment
- Diagnosing respiratory disease
- Healthcare workers—get them to comment
- Consideration of those not covered.
- Baseline monitoring of employees

People who contributed to comments:

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|---------------------|----------------|
| • Bruce Mahan | • Craig Slatin |
| • Linda Delp | • Barb McCabe |
| • Gordon Massingham | • Kim O'Dell |
| • Kenny Oldfield | • Chris Trahan |

- Ron Snyder
- Carol Rice
- Mark Catlin
- Pat Aldridge
- Univ. of Michigan/UAW
- Gray Gustafson
- Chip Booth

The experience of the group allows for broad comments. And come back to the group once there is a rulemaking. This opens the docket.

- Include our evidence so our workshop reports and other literature. Rand reports, etc.
- Chip - Accreditation document
- One document with many signatories or various documents with the same overall themes.
- Strength in numbers and diversity.
- Need to see where IAFF and NFPA are on this
- We can influence a broader group on this.

How does HAZWOPER Q fit with NFPA documents?

NFPA regularly updates their standards.

- California could comment on need for Heat stress standard.
- Work hours issues

Other issues that could/should be raised

- Critical incident stress management.

Make our comprehensive list known.

- Opportunity to clarify skilled support personnel issues
- Integrate first receivers into standard
- Need to train skilled support personnel ahead of time
- The wide variety of responders (including church/community groups)
- Training to disaster potential
- HAZWOPER should be a driver for green technology/chemistry
- Vulnerability zones – number of people who could be harmed, potential populations at risk, dispersion zone
- Waste site technology and prevention technology

Important items to consider:

- Upload documents to docket even if you don't have time to submit comments.
- Developing and enrich our arguments and develop cohesion.
- OSHA-NIEHS MOU
- Identify core areas that we want comments on. Get that around to folks.
- Health issues pre and post incident for SSP
- Need the baseline measures in order to determine deterioration
- Section in response on workforce – who else needs to be included. Other health care workers than hospital workers – community health centers
- Look at the OSHA compliance for who is not covered but should be

Breakout 2 - Expanding Our Ability to Provide Minority Worker Training

- Discussion focused on what needs to be done in order to maintain and grow the MWT program.
- Look at job market trends. What else can we do, what is beneficial to the community?
- Research sources:
 - State unemployment offices – they know what the trends have been for workforce needs.
 - Community re-development corporations/agencies.
 - Create an online survey for employers to see what their needs are and to assess the curricula, trends, where new work is
 - Bureau of Labor Statistics, will give you broad look at job market. Look at other academic resources: journals, books, databases.
- Look toward Green Jobs.
- Combine our statistics from MWTP and BMWTP. This will prove we need more funding. We'll be able to say: This is where we've served in the country, these are the people we've reached, this is the percent of jobs we've gotten people into.
- Have to prove that there's still a problem. The Gulf Coast can be a poster child for this program. This shows we need to maintain and grow.
- Show employer needs. Ask the employer to fill out an info form: in what areas will the work be done? How many people do you need?
- Where are employers/contractors getting their funds? Is it federal money (appropriation, RFP, some type of proposal)? If so, need to find out what's in the RFP. Does the proposal request say workers should be local hires? You can tailor programs to fit these contracts, but you have to partner with major contractors *before* the contract has been awarded. Must have the relationships up front.
- Creating Relationships:
 - Get the contractors/employers to sit on your advisory boards.
 - Have your employees sit on the boards of other community boards.
 - Get to know your city council and district reps.
 - Work with local probation board/judicial branch.
- How many people contacted you who want a job? Those statistics can be used to write requests. Example: 10,000 people came to us and wanted jobs. We were only able to provide training for 3,000 of them. These stats need to be shared with WETP in order to get the federal funds for the awardee programs. Be sure to share data with our awardees!
- Need a legislative champion. Which legislators could push forward an appropriation for this? Black and Latino caucuses would push this. With the green industry coming up who can we involve? Equip them with the info and knowledge so they can be effective fighters for you.
- As trainers, we need to understand what skill sets are needed.
 - We should look at building demolition. Now they're salvaging stuff when demolishing a building and using recycled materials when building buildings. There is a demolition alliance/group that is out there that we can partner/work with.

- Durham Community College now has green construction courses. Look at courses to see what they're teaching. We have an idea, but need to know if there is a consensus (academia and business) as to what this "green" is.
- What is the need from the trainee side? Lots of 18 year olds went to jail in the 1970s. They're getting out of jail now and are under 50 years old. They need reentry training and they're still young enough to work. There's lots of "green" money out there (Dept. of Labor) that can create pathways out of poverty for adults.
- Many workers in this category need life skills training
 - Must first overcome the day-to-day stuff (like showing up for work daily, showing up on time) before you can teach the training.
 - Anger management, problem solving needs to be included in the training.
 - CBO (Community based organizations) – work with them. Housing issues, childcare, etc. CBOs can help with this.
 - Many trainees don't even have driver's licenses (or expired, revoked, etc). How can you help them get their license and how much of this burden do you want to take on?
- NIEHS WETP is a national program. When you're out there meeting with contractors, think of it on a national level. Help each other out! Press releases about the awardee programs rarely mention that it's an NIEHS program. Need to tie your program/success to NIEHS so that we can tout the national success of the program!
- Be sure to use the materials available to you on the Clearinghouse website. Don't forget to use the Brownfields/MWT program brochure.
- Build on our experiences: Employment opportunities came out of Katrina that no one saw coming (soil remediation, landscaping, mold, installing special hurricane resistant windows, etc)
- Look at tiered programs. Not everyone needs 8 weeks of training; some may only need 4 weeks. Adapt your programs so you can do both. Create different tracks with your courses.

Breakout 3 - SBIR/ATT – Using New Technologies in Our Training

Technology vs. older and younger workers.

Though it is generally true that older workers are less comfortable with ATT than younger workers, this is not as clear-cut as many think. The National Geographic handheld program for birders is an example of a successful product that sells mainly to those over 50. One needs to look at the student's motivation for learning and other adult education principles that builds a comfort level for those with less ATT experience. This issue might also apply to language and cultural challenges.

Commercialization continues to be possibly the greatest challenge for small e-learning businesses. NIEHS should consider doing more to assist in this area including expanded use of our web site and possibly convening special sessions on this.

- We should incorporate the term m-learning into our RFA and usage.
- Serious games, including the group 'Games for Health' (?) are potential directions and allies for NIEHS.

It is not overreaching for NIEHS and its awardees to push for a gold standard of ATT for worker safety and health training. It needs to be done in cooperation with other efforts. It needs to recognize that one size does not fit all, however, this is a good and important direction to expend energy on.

- There are lessons to be learned from the huge DOD SBIR program and NIEHS should explore this.
- There should be a plenary session at the next meeting on ATT and SBIR awardees.

12:00 p.m.

Wrap Up