

The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

HEALTH AND MEDICINE DIVISION
Board on Health Sciences Policy

**Enhancing BioWatch Capabilities Through Technology
and Collaboration: A Workshop**

AGENDA

July 27-28, 2016

**Keck Center of The National Academies – Room 100
500 Fifth Street NW
Washington, DC 20001**

Workshop Objectives:

- Review the findings and recommendations of the October 2015 GAO review of BioWatch system enhancements;
- Provide a broad overview of current efforts underway at DHS to enhance the technology and practices of BioWatch as a federally managed, locally operated system to detect the intentional release of select aerosolized biological agents;
- Review DHS's assessment of gaps in current BioWatch detection, early warning, and decision support capabilities and discuss any gaps DHS has not considered;
- Review available technological and non-technological (non-materiel) capabilities for biosurveillance and reporting including autonomous systems, as well as the assessment and testing of such systems;
- Review DHS's current collaboration activities across all levels of government and explore opportunities for additional collaboration and coordination between BioWatch and relevant federal, state, and local public health partners to support effective and efficient capability development; and
- Explore opportunities to further advance national preparedness by examining federal, state, and local planning and response activities in the event of a biological incident.

Day 1 – July 27, 2016

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

8:30 A.M. LISA GORDON HAGERTY, *Chair*
President
LEG Incorporated

KATHRYN BRINSFIELD
Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs
Office of Health Affairs
Department of Homeland Security

SESSION I: SETTING THE STAGE: BIOWATCH PLANS AND CAPABILITIES

Session Objectives:

- Provide a broad overview of current efforts underway at DHS to enhance the technology and practices of BioWatch as a federally managed, locally operated system to detect the intentional release(s) of select aerosolized biological agents;
- Establish a working definition of successful BioWatch incident to facilitate workshop discussions.

8:45 A.M. **Overview: BioWatch Strategic Priorities**

MIKE WALTER
BioWatch Program Manager
Office of Health Affairs
Department of Homeland Security

9:15 A.M. **Q/A**

SESSION II: RECOMMENDATIONS FROM GAO REPORT 16-99 AND DHS RESPONSE AND PROGRESS TO DATE

Session Objectives:

- Review the findings and recommendations of the October 2015 GAO review of BioWatch system enhancements;
- Review DHS's response to the GAO recommendations and assessment of gaps in current BioWatch detection, early warning, and decision support capabilities and discuss any possible gaps DHS has not considered; and
- Review available technological and non-technological (non-materiel) capabilities for biosurveillance and reporting including autonomous systems, as well as the assessment and testing of such systems, with a focus on the BioWatch Program.

9:30 A.M **Review of the GAO Report Recommendations**

TIMOTHY PERSONS
Chief Scientist, GAO

10:30 A.M. **Q/A**

11:00 A.M. **BREAK**

11:15 A.M. **Review of DHS Response to GAO Recommendations and Assessment of Gaps in Current BioWatch Capabilities**

MIKE WALTER
BioWatch Program Manager
Office of Health Affairs
Department of Homeland Security

12:00 P.M **Q/A**

12:45 P.M. **LUNCH**

1:45 P.M **Facilitated Discussion: Alignment of S&T Focus Areas and Biosurveillance**
Facilitator: John Vitko, *Former Director, DHS S&T Chem Bio Directorate,*
Currently Rector, St. Luke Orthodox Church

Discussants:

- John Fischer, DHS S&T
- Matt Davenport, DHS S&T
- Michelle Hohensee, DHS Jurisdictional Coordinator Lead
- Roger Pollok, Interim Assistant Director, Environmental Safety Division, San Antonio (TX) Metropolitan Health District
- Wendy Smith, Epidemiology Program Manager, Georgia Department of Public Health
- Julia Gunn, Director, Communicable Disease Division, Boston Public Health Commission
- Mark Buttner, Associate Director, Nevada State Public Health Laboratory, UNLV Branch, and School of Community Health Sciences, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

2:45 P.M. **BREAK**

SESSION III: NEXT STEPS FOR BUILDING CAPACITY AND ENHANCING COLLABORATION
--

Session Objective:

- Recap discussion from Day 1 and prepare for discussions on Day 2 with a focus on collaboration.

3:00 P.M. KATHRYN BRINSFIELD
Assistant Secretary for Health Affairs
Office of Health Affairs
Department of Homeland Security

3:15 P.M. LISA GORDON HAGERTY, *Chair*
President
LEG Incorporated

WELCOME

8:30 A.M. LISA GORDON HAGERTY, *Chair*
President
LEG Incorporated

SESSION IV: BIOWATCH COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

Session Objectives:

- Review DHS's current collaboration activities across all levels of government and explore opportunities for additional collaboration and coordination between BioWatch and relevant federal, state, and local public health partners to support effective and efficient capability development;
- Discuss opportunities to strengthen the biodefense layer by identifying capabilities and partnerships that should be developed to respond in the event of a biological terrorism incident; and
- Review ways that BioWatch activities can contribute to requirements placed on state/local public health departments for preparedness planning.

8:45 A.M. **Overview of BioWatch Collaborative Planning**

EMILY GABRIEL
BioWatch Public Health and Preparedness Director

9:15 A.M. **Q/A**

9:45 A.M. **Panel II: Current Local, State, and Federal Collaborations**

Facilitator: Terry Mullins, *Chief, Bureau of EMS and Trauma System, Arizona Department of Health*

Panelists:

- Jody Wireman, *Director, Force Health Protection Division, US Northern Command*
- Al Romanosky, *Medical Director/State Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene*
- Sandy Wedgeworth, *Coordinator, Public Health Emergency Management, City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services*
- Kathy Forzley, *Health Officer, Oakland County (MI) Health Division*
- Roger Pollok, *Interim Assistant Director, Environmental Safety Division, San Antonio (TX) Metropolitan Health District*
- Wendy Smith, *Epidemiology Program Manager, Georgia Department of Public Health*
- Julia Gunn, *Director, Communicable Disease Division, Boston Public Health Commission*
- Mark Buttner, *Associate Director, Nevada State Public Health Laboratory, UNLV Branch, and School of Community Health Sciences, University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

10:45 A.M. **BREAK**

11:00 A.M. Q/A

12:00 P.M. LUNCH

SESSION V: OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS

Session Objective:

- Explore opportunities to expand BioWatch collaboration efforts, strengthen collaborations with existing partners, and develop new collaborations to meet interagency objectives.

1:00 P.M. **Panel III: State and Local Collaboration: Future Opportunities**
Facilitator: Terry Mullins, *Chief, Bureau of EMS and Trauma System, Arizona Department of Health*

Panelists:

- Al Romanosky, *Medical Director/State Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene*
- Sandy Wedgeworth, *Coordinator, Public Health Emergency Management, City of Long Beach (CA) Department of Health and Human Services*
- Kathy Forzley, *Health Officer, Oakland County (MI) Health Division*
- Roger Pollok, *Interim Assistant Director, Environmental Safety Division, San Antonio (TX) Metropolitan Health District*
- Wendy Smith, *Epidemiology Program Manager, Georgia Department of Public Health*
- Julia Gunn, *Director, Communicable Disease Division, Boston Public Health Commission*
- Mark Buttner, *Associate Director, Nevada State Public Health Laboratory, UNLV Branch, and School of Community Health Sciences, University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

2:00 P.M. Q/A

2:15 P.M. BREAK

2:30 P.M. **Facilitated Discussion: Federal, State and Local Collaboration Opportunities**
Facilitator: Lisa Gordon-Hagerty, *President, LEG, Inc.*

Discussants:

All panelists and members of the Standing Committee on Health Threats and Workforce Resilience

3:30 P.M. **Wrap Up And Closing Comments**

LISA GORDON HAGERTY, *Chair*
President
LEG Incorporated