

**NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND CHEMICAL EXPOSURES
CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES**

**Meeting No. 1 Summary
Teleconference
October 2, 2009**

Meeting Objectives:

- Welcome and introduce members of the Work Group
- Reach a shared understanding of the vision and goals for the *National Conversation* and the Work Group's role
- Review and suggest any refinements to the Work Group charge
- Decide on next steps and assignments

Upcoming Meeting/Call	When & Where	Suggested Agenda Items
1 st In Person Meeting	November 13, 2009 Baltimore, MD 9:30 – 4:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refinement of Charge• Discussion of the need for subgroups• Consider having a DHS rep give an overview at the Nov meeting

I. Action Items

Work Group Charge	Who	Completed by
Develop a repository of background information and the roles and responsibilities of the relevant agencies (ATSDR mission, Natl Response Framework, etc.) to share with the Work Group	Montrece Ransom	On-going

Scheduling Regular Call Times	Who	Completed by
Send 'always unavailable' times to Dana	WG members	Fri, Nov. 6 (completed)
Propose regular call times to Work Group	Dana Goodson	Wed, Nov. 11 (completed) ¹

Compiling Background Resources	Who	Completed by
Send any resources or reports that might inform or impact the Work Group's work to Montrece	WG members	Fri, Nov. 6

¹ Possible call times were discussed at the November 13 meeting, and it was determined that there was no time when all group members are regularly available. Therefore, Dana will follow up to poll members' availability for specific dates.

November Meeting	Who	Completed by
Circulate information to the Work Group on November meeting logistics	Dana G.	<i>Completed</i>

II. Agreements Reached

The Work Group made the following decisions:

- Develop a way of sharing information and background materials to consider in shaping the Work Group's report framework. Identify materials to help structure the Work Group's discussion and the work, including
 - Information on Infomatrix
 - OSHA Best Practices for Hospital First Receivers
 - Congressional Staff Report on ATSDR.
 - Community stories
 - National Response Framework
- Invite a Department of Homeland Security rep to give an overview at the Nov meeting
- Sharing information about governmental agencies' current efforts and programs at the November meeting

III. Meeting Summary

1. Overview of Vision and Goals for *National Conversation* and the Work Group's Role

Dr. Andrea Kidd-Taylor, Work Group Chair, opened the call by outlining the National Conversation vision, goals, and processes. She also explained the roles of the Leadership Council (LC) and Work Groups (WG): each WG will develop its charge and a report containing recommendations. The LC will review and approve the WG reports and incorporate them into an, Action Agenda. WG reports will be attached to the Action Agenda.

WGs will have been established for the following topics: Chemical Emergencies, Monitoring, Scientific Understanding, Policies and Practices, Serving Communities, Education and Communication. The National Conversation will also include meetings with sectors, communities, tribes, and other stakeholders; a Community Conversation Toolkit, for community leaders to convene conversations throughout the country. National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH)/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) staff will manage information for this project. Web-based dialogues will supplement the WG and LC discussions. WGs will help develop questions for the Web-based dialogues.

2. Discussion of Work Group Charge

The majority of the conference call discussion was devoted to the WG charge:

Chemical Emergencies: *preventing, preparing for, and responding to acute chemical incidents;*

Chemical exposure emergencies can be devastating in human, environmental, and economic terms. Safeguarding public health requires analyzing system vulnerabilities, reducing risks where appropriate, and developing effective emergency preparedness and response plans. While many government agencies have roles in emergency preparedness and response efforts

related to chemical events, coordination among concerned parties has not been optimized. Further, there remain shortcomings, gaps, and redundancies in the chemical emergency preparedness system. This group will consider and make recommendations on issues such as chemical infrastructure security, monitoring of events, and the preparedness of local health care providers to care for victims in the event of a disaster.

Participants suggested ways to address the charge and modifications to the language of the charge.

The WG considered three themes highlighted during the Chemical Emergencies Breakout Session at the June 26th kick-off meeting: 1) system and coordination issues, 2) training, and 3) community involvement. Using these themes and the June 26 Breakout Group Report as a starting point, the group focused on four questions during the discussion:

- Are any major themes missing from the draft charge?
- Does the charge focus on the right themes?
- Which themes or elements would you prioritize for the WG to begin addressing?
- What resources, initiatives, or reports impact this area or inform our work?

WG members offered their thoughts on the charge, and several suggested considering the sequential phases of prevention, preparedness, response, recovery (with mitigation going through all of them) as the framework.

They also proposed options for structuring the WG's work:

- Reviewing governmental approaches, including ATSDR's charge
- Comparing the relative costs of preventing and responding
- Acknowledging the importance of community outreach, involving industry, and local planning
- Identifying materials to help structure the WG's discussion and work, including information on Infomatrix, OSHA Best Practices for Hospital First Receivers, Congressional Staff Report on ATSDR, and community stories

Questions and Discussion:

Breaking up into subgroups

The WG briefly discussed the idea of breaking into subgroups. For example, the bullets from the June 26 Breakout Group Report could be prioritized and possible solutions grouped by theme. This will be considered as the WG moves forward.

Format/structure of the final report

At least one member noted we should begin thinking about the structure of the final report early in the discussions. Members agreed to discuss the written product and assign tasks at the first in-person meeting. More information on the process and timeline will be shared then as well.

3. Wrap-Up and Next Steps for Work Group

Dana reviewed the next steps for the WG and Andrea adjourned the call at 11:30 am Eastern.

IV. Participation

Members Present:

Bill Benerman Denver Department of Environmental Health
Nathan Birnbaum, USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
John Bresland, U.S. Chemical Safety Board
Susan Cibulsky, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Kathleen Curtis, Clean New York
Jacque Darbonne, Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services
James Eaton, Maine Health and Environmental Testing Lab
Fleming Fallon, Bowling Green State University
Nancy Hughes, American Nurses Association
Jim James, American Medical Association
Erik Janus, CropLife America
Todd Jordan, Occupational Safety and Health Administration
Betsy Kagey, Georgia Division of Public Health
Andrea Kidd Taylor, Morgan State University, *chair*
James Madsen, U.S. Army Medical Corps
Jacqueline McBride, Love, Peace and Prosperity International, Inc
Maureen Orr, Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Paul Orum, NGO Chemical Safety Consultant
Susan Palchick, Hennepin County
Clark Phinney, Maine Oxy
Darius Sivin, International Union, UAW
Derek Swick, American Petroleum Institute
Constance Thomas, South Fulton and Fayette Community Task Force
Wanda Welles, New York State Department of Health

Facilitation & Staff Team:

Benjamin Gerhardstein, NCEH/ATSDR
Dana Goodson, RESOLVE *facilitator*
Montrece Ransom, NCEH/ATSDR