



# CTAG

**Certification & Training Assessment Group** — National Partnerships for Safe & Effective Pesticide Management through Education, Training & Competency Assessment

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## **Certification and Training Assessment Group (CTAG) Board of Directors Meeting August 2009 Meeting Report to AAPCO**

The CTAG Board of Directors met in Charleston, South Carolina on August 10, 2009. The following Board members participated in the meeting: Kevin Keaney, Doug Jones, Dick Herrett, Janet Fults, Sherman Takatori, Roger Flashinski, Candace Bartholomew, David Duncan, Tim Drake, Wayne Buhler, Jeaneanne Gettle. Becky Hines participated by phone and Jim Parochetti participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the meeting. The Board was joined by Carol Ramsay, contractor with the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, Andrew Thostenson, former CTAG Board member, and Kimberly Bingham, EPA Region 4. Richard Pont and Dan Wixted were not present.

### **1. Organizational Updates**

The CTAG Board submitted letters to EPA regarding the decisions to require label-based training on Picloram and soil fumigant labels. The terms of Janet Fults, Doug Jones, Dan Wixted, and Candace Bartholomew will expire on March 31, 2010. The Board will discuss soliciting new members at the November meeting to fill 2 SLA and 2 CES vacancies.

### **2. CTAG 10 Year Accomplishment Report**

David Duncan and Nita Davidson (California DPR) compiled a 10-Year Accomplishment Report (a bound booklet chronicling the history of CTAG issue development and outlining significant products developed to date), which was distributed at the 2009 North American Pesticide Applicator Certification & Safety Education Workshop.

### **3. EPA Updates**

#### State and Tribal Assistance Grants: Funding Formula Update

A CTAG workgroup reviewed and proposed revisions to the funding formulas for state lead agencies (STAG) and cooperative extension service (PSEP). EPA and USDA implemented the revised PSEP formula in 2008. The revised STAG formula will be implemented in FY 2010. Funding has been stable for several years under the old formula. Under the revised formula, most states' funding will stay the same or increase. The revised formulas and more accurate reporting through CPARD put EPA in a better position to defend the funding.

#### Certification Plan and Reporting Database Update

While there has not been a major update to CPARD, EPA is working to update the reporting function and on ensuring that the data reported is accurate. There are still plans to include the capability for users to request custom reports. The Board discussed marketing CPARD as a resource tool for information, and will continue to discuss this possibility at the next meeting.

### Certification and Worker Protection Standard Regulatory Change Update

Under the new administration, environmental justice and children's protection issues have more prominence. The worker protection standard has more elements considered environmental justice, but they will be addressed in the certification regulation where appropriate. In the fall and winter, EPA will be refining the regulatory language, drafting a rule preamble, and refining the cost estimates and economic analysis. The rules then will go through final review at EPA, be submitted to OMB and USDA for review, and be published for comment. EPA anticipates publishing the rules in 2011. It is likely that EPA will hold public meetings to ensure that everyone has equal access during the comment period. EPA anticipates doing outreach as appropriate, will speak when invited, and provide the same information to all audiences. CTAG offered to gather background information for any areas that are not clear for the proposal.

#### **4. Verification of Attendance Paper**

The Board made minor edits to the document, and the revised text has been sent to AAPCO, AAPSE, ASPCRO, and TPPC for comments. The Board will review comments and finalize the document at the next meeting.

#### **5. Recertification Workgroup Reports**

##### Content Criteria for Commercial and Private Applicator Recertification Training

After discussion regarding the preliminary findings of the workgroup, the Board decided that the primary goal of the workgroup should be to focus on the content that should be included in recertification training. The workgroup should focus on ensuring that the criteria offers flexibility to state programs and that it includes some mandatory core training. The workgroup's next steps are to solicit members from outside of CTAG and to further develop an outline of the content criteria to present at the next Board meeting.

##### Online Recertification Training – Course Design or Structure

The ultimate goal is to produce a document similar to the exam administration manual, to give states and 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors tools for incorporating controls into their online training programs. The Board suggested reviewing online training programs for other audiences. Additionally, the Board suggested that the workgroup look into fees charged for courses and what they cover, ways to facilitate faster reapproval of online courses, and to research if and why states have limits on how many recertification credits can be earned online.

##### Blueprint for Achieving Quality Assurance at Recertification Training

The ultimate goal is set of guidelines to provide information on how to conduct oversight and evaluation of recertification training. The Board recommended that the workgroup adequately evaluate all types of seminars and their many components, including attendance verification and content control. At this time, the workgroup is preparing a survey to query SLA recertification program managers.

## **6. Direct Supervision Survey**

32 states have responded to the survey, and the survey has now been sent a second time to those states that have not responded. A document compiling the preliminary survey data was distributed, and the Board recommended to attempt to gather data from states that have not responded, and for existing data to be summarized for further review. The Board will consider this item at the next meeting and work on putting the information gathered so far into a document format.

## **7. National Aerial Exam & Manual, Rights of Way Exam & Syllabus**

EPA and NASDARF have been working to develop national materials for the aerial and rights of way categories. The aerial exam and manual have been developed. The manual has to be laid out for printing, but that might not occur until EPA's cooperative agreement is recompeted. EPA wants to release the exam and manual as a package and anticipates they will be available sometime in the spring of 2010. The rights of way development process resulted in an exam and a course syllabus that states can adapt to their own programs. The goals of using this approach rather than a traditional manual development method are to facilitate reciprocity and to avoid duplication of state exam and manual development efforts. The exam is nearing completion, and EPA also anticipates releasing this product in early 2010. The Board decided that electronic versions of these materials should be made available, as a means of cost effective distribution and to allow state flexibility to amend manuals to include state-specific requirements. Electronic distribution also eliminates the need to estimate national print orders, and to print, distribute, and store manuals until they are requested.

## **8. CTAG Website Update**

The CTAG website has been successfully transferred to the web address [ctaginfo.org](http://ctaginfo.org).

## **9. Fact Sheets on Federal Certification Programs**

The Board decided to consolidate the existing information, which consists of 2 informative but lengthy documents, into a single fact sheet.

## **10. PRIA & PPRS – Measuring Success**

Jim Parochetti gave a brief update on the PSEP report recently posted on the CSREES website to demonstrate the success of the program. He turned the presentation over to Amy Brown, who discussed her interactions with EPA's advisory committee – the Pesticide Program Dialogue Committee – to highlight the value of pesticide safety education and to demonstrate the results achieved by PSEP. Stakeholders are working to update PPRS reporting requirements. Jim offered to share a presentation on his understanding of the current PSEP funding with the CTAG Board. He noted that as of October 1, 2009, CSREES's title will change to the National Institute for Food and Agriculture. CTAG will work on developing a fact sheet on PSEP funding for discussion at the next Board meeting.

## **11. CTAG Next Steps**

Upon completion of the 10-Year Accomplishment Report and review of the Status of the CTAG 21<sup>st</sup> Century Report, the Board had a general discussion about the direction of CTAG activities of the next few years. Many of the recommendations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Report have been carried out. The Board listed the following items for consideration at future meetings:

- Recertification – 3 workgroups formed, ongoing activity
- Tricks and tools for Audience Response System
- Webinars/workshops for specific skill development
- Promote CTAG as a facilitator to get buy in from diverse stakeholder groups
- Environmental justice and children's health issues in C&T
- Support OPP initiatives
  - Facilitate review of training materials for soil fumigant label requirements
- Proactive involvement in relevant issues coming from EPA and SFIREG/POM
- Address label comprehension issues
- Support urban outreach
- Review draft general NPDES permits
- Explore electronics/technology in testing and education
  - Bar-coding for certification and recertification
  - Explore other industry requirements/programs
- Presentation to EPA, USDA, other stakeholders on how C&T works – how a decision from EPA is realized in the field
- Issue paper on how label requirements are linked to / impact C&T programs
- Address need for certification of a new audience for RUP 1<sup>st</sup> generation rodenticides

## **15. Meetings**

The Board has reserved the week of November 16 for the next meeting. Whether the group will meet face to face or via conference call will depend on the resources available in the cooperative agreement between EPA and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture. EPA and NASDA plan to let Board members know by mid-September about the November meeting.

The Board will meet the week of June 7, 2010. The meeting will start no earlier in the week than Tuesday.