



CTAG

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

CTAG Board of Directors Meeting August 3-4, 2004

The CTAG board of directors met in Madison, WI on August 3 and 4, 2004. The following board members participated in the meeting: Kevin Keaney, CTAG Co-Chair; Carol Ramsay, CTAG Co-Chair; Carl Martin, CTAG Vice Chair; Gina Davis, CTAG Past Co-Chair; Kathy Dictor; Jeaneanne Gettle; Dean Herzfeld; Win Hock; Monte Johnson; Lori McKinnon; Jack Peterson; Richard Pont; Andrew Thostenson; and, Al Muench, CTAG Secretary. One member, Bill Tozer, was not present.

More information about each board member is at <http://pep.wsu.edu/ctag/board.html>

1. CTAG Process and Tracking Documents

The board discussed comments received on the draft Process and Tracking documents. The documents will be revised to respond to the issues raised. Once completed and adopted by the board, the final version of each document will be posted on the CTAG web site and an announcement will be made on the various listserves.

2. CTAG Issue Papers - Status and Next Steps

Minimum Age - The board strongly supports a minimum age of 18 for both commercial and private applicators. However, the board decided to take a step-wise approach and first propose a minimum age of 18 for commercial applicators and a minimum age of 16 for private applicators (with provision for handling hardship situations if they occur.) The board also decided to revise and strengthen the issue paper to better articulate the dangers to minors who may be private applicators on small farms and to highlight the benefits to farmers of setting a reasonable minimum age for private applicators.

The draft issue paper will reflect the board's concerns that the issue paper should better justify the proposed minimum ages, point out the vulnerabilities of a program with no workable or realistic minimum age and eliminate opportunities for opponents to attack the current pesticide program and seek to remove important pesticide uses.

Positive Identification - The proposed issue paper on positive identification for exams and recertification training will be split into separate documents. The first will be a draft issue paper on for positive identification for exams. A revised draft issue paper will be circulated for stakeholder review this Fall.

The second document will be a CTAG guidance document which will combine the need for positive identification for recertification training with advice and guidance on recertification training including course content, speaker qualifications, course monitoring and determining effectiveness of training.

3. C&T Plan Template

Each of the EPA regions will test the template by having at least one state in the region use the template for the current fiscal year. EPA grant guidance will require use of the C&T Plan Template by all states in FY 2005.

4. Exam Administration and Security Procedures Manual

The CTAG exam administration and security procedures manual will be revised to add a new appendix which incorporates information on the Americans With Disabilities Act. The manual is expected to be printed and distributed before the end of FY 2004.

5. Fumigation Management Plans (FMPs)

EPA as well as several registrants have expressed concerns about the lack of a new phosphine training manual and the potential liability issues associated with not having a new manual. EPA is preparing a request for proposals to develop a training manual and associated training packages. The board will assist this effort by determining the types of guidance and sample FMPs that CTAG could develop to assist growers, storage facilities and shippers.

6. OMB PART Review

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has begun a Program Analysis and Rating Tool (PART) Review of EPA field programs. The PART Review will analyze the WPS, C&T, Endangered Species and Ground Water field programs. The analysis will be driving toward development and use of specific outcome measures.

The board suggested the need for tracking systems that can yield the ability to measure outcomes and lead to a set of data types that SLAs and CES may want to start capturing. Ideally there will be a loop between C&T and compliance enforcement such that we will be able to identify one or more problems in enforcement that are solved by one or more adjustments in C&T.

The board decided to create a new Performance Measures Subgroup in Workgroup #2 to look at material from the OMB PART Review and results of the October PPDC meeting and frame out issues involved in developing appropriate program evaluation tools to measure and evaluate success in the pesticide program. The subgroup will develop issues for presentation at the December board meeting. In addition, the subgroup has a July 2005 goal to develop tracking systems that can yield the ability to measure outcomes. The subgroup will also identify and suggest data types for SLA/CES to begin capturing.

7. Non-traditional Funding Sources

In Goal 4.4 of Pesticide Safety for the 21st Century, states, tribes and territories are encouraged to explore non-traditional sources for funding their programs to reduce reliance on general revenue funds. States were encouraged to consider “fee-for-service” options and industry and trade-association partnerships to help cover the cost of development of training materials, educational projects and/or advanced technology demonstrations. In furtherance of this goal, the board will draft a fact sheet on non-traditional funding sources for use by SLAs, CES and tribes.

8. Pesticide Safety Workgroup

Improving Trainer Skills - The board discussed this subgroup’s charge and its work to date in light of the unanimous vote by the AAPSE Board of Directors in June, 2004, to reject the proposed concept of competency standards for pesticide safety educators.

More and more states have systems where the SLA approves all training, and many SLAs need help in determining which trainers are competent and which are not.

The board noted that the current federal regulations are virtually silent on recertification requirements and they do not address the quality of training course content or agendas, qualifications for speakers, or monitoring of training courses for either certification or recertification. In short, the regulations do not provide any way to determine whether or not the training is even effective. The board acknowledged the difficulty of establishing a standard for recertification and recertification training and trainers without a solid regulatory basis, but agreed that this is an important issue which warrants CTAG’s attention.

The board expressed appreciation that this subgroup raised some very important issues, stimulated a great deal of positive discussion, and made important strides toward implementing some key goals expressed in Pesticide Safety for the 21st Century. The board will carry on the work begun by the subgroup and will bring to the discussion some new ideas and will begin developing a CTAG guidance document to address some of the issues raised.

National Consistency for Certification/Recertification - The board discussed some of the pertinent issues for this subgroup, including the need for exams across state borders that meet the same exam standards and recertification standards across state lines. A key objective is to be able to facilitate reciprocity among the states. Some states have begun to rescind reciprocity agreements; consequently, we need to have better gauges of competency for applicators that are similar among the states.

A number of issues CTAG is already working on, such as minimum age criteria and positive identification of applicators and candidates for training, feed into improved national consistency.

At the December meeting the board will discuss a draft statement, essentially a challenge, which frames out the issues and targets three or four areas for consideration for future work by CTAG.

9. Global Harmonization

The Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labeling of Chemicals (GHS) will standardize hazard words and symbols and will apply to all chemicals including pesticides. EPA is preparing to publish in the Federal Register a "white paper" on GHS implementation. GHS will force some changes in EPA regulations. At the December meeting, the board will discuss the status of GHS implementation and how to keep our partners and stakeholders apprised of both GHS impacts and the types of changes that GHS implementation will require.

10. PSEP Program Review

The board discussed the Pesticide Safety Education Program (PSEP) program review meetings and the overall review process. A two day meeting was held in July, 2004, with a follow-up meeting to be held on September 16-17, 2004. The process is intended to yield perspectives, not consensus on issues, with no attempt to homogenize the results. A final report is expected in November, 2004. The end results will help EPA to better formulate policy in this area and will provide a wider knowledge base for CTAG to use to develop projects. The resulting perspectives will also be shared with PPDC.

Ultimately, the PSEP review may result in a firm scope of work for PSEP and help define how future funding might flow for such work as training for applicators to use RUPs, endangered species, product registration, water protection and similar training elements.

11. Status of EPA Funding for SLA and C&T

CTAG will become more involved in these issues following the outcome of the PSEP review and will discuss the level of involvement at the December board meeting.

The board decided to establish a small working group to try to bring some clarity and a better information base to this issue before the September 16-17 PSEP Review meeting. The charge for the group is to try to look at the program scope, what it is, what it costs and what are the connections to program support. The group will look at how EPA funds programs (not how the states deliver the programs) for such areas as federal RUPs, state RUPs, endangered species, invasive species, public health, water protection, and waste disposal. Also, the group will attempt to determine how much time and money is spent on USDA programs or initiatives such as IPM, records, exotic and invasive species. The group will also begin to develop a series of arguments for going after other sources of funding at agencies including USDA, FDA and Homeland Security.

12. Upcoming Board Meetings

The board agreed to meet in Las Vegas on December 15 from 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and December 16 8:30 a.m. - noon. The Spring board meeting is tentatively scheduled for March or April 2005. The precise time and location will be decided at the December meeting.

13. Operational Issues

Federal C&T Vacancy on Board - Bill Tozer's position on the board will become vacant at the end of March, 2005. The board will identify some potential candidates who represent federal C&T programs.

CES Vacancy - Win Hock's seat became vacant September 1, 2004, with his resignation for personal reasons. Following a notice and solicitation of candidates through the AAPSE and PSEP listserves, the board elected Kerry H. Richards from Penn State University as the new CES representative on the board with a term ending on March 31, 2008.

ASPCRO Communications - ASPCRO has designated CTAG Vice Chair Carl Martin to be its liaison with the board.