



CTAG

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

Certification and Training Assessment Group (CTAG) Board of Directors Meeting May 3-4, 2005

Meeting Summary

The CTAG Board of Directors met in Chicago, IL on May 3-4, 2005. The following Board members participated in the meeting: Kevin Keaney, Carol Ramsay, Gina Davis, Jeananne Gettle, Jack Peterson, Kathy Dictor, Andrew Thostenson, Dean Herzfeld, Kerry Richards, and Al Muench.

Two newly elected members, Tim Drake and Henry Ghiotto attended the meeting. Michelle DeVaux, the incoming CTAG Secretary, was also in attendance

Richard Pont and Monte Johnson were not present.

Several visitors attended the meeting: Dick Herrett, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA); Christine Cairns, EPA Region 4; John Ward, EPA OPP; and Holly McDonald, Dale Myer, Don Baumgartner, and Margaret Jones, EPA Region 5.

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

1. Operational Issues

Secretarial Duties: Al Muench is leaving the CTAG Board as secretary due to a reduction in available funding. He was recognized by the board for his outstanding service and dedication to CTAG. Michelle DeVaux of EPA OPP FEAD CWPB will take over as Secretary to the CTAG Board.

Document Review & Approval: The board discussed several changes to the Progress Report, Meeting Summary and Meeting Minutes. Minor changes were suggested, and all documents were approved unanimously. The final documents will be posted on the CTAG website. Any information related to accomplishments or activities prior to 2004 will be deleted, as this is intended to be an annual report. The final document will be posted on the CTAG website.

Pesticide Safety Cooperative Agreement: As of the meeting, no award had been made on the cooperative agreement to replace the expired agreement with the Council of Agricultural Science and Technology.

2. Status of EPA Programs

GAO Report: Kevin Keaney gave an update on the pesticide worker safety program. He discussed the GAO report that lead to the initiation of the Worker Protection (WP) Assessment

and the formation of CTAG. Findings from the WP Assessment and CTAG's "21st Century Report" were combined into a Report on the National Assessment of the Pesticide Worker Safety Program, dealing with outcomes from workshops and workgroups. This report does not contain findings from the Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assistance (OECA) Program Element Review (PER).

Performance Measures: Jeaneanne Gettle discussed the status of performance measures development by EPA. She will be leading the effort at the Regional level, along with Christine Cairns, and Sherry Sterling has joined OPP's staff to manage the effort at the HQ level. The process described at the last meeting is still being used: a steering committee at the national level, mid-level coordinating committees, and a series of workgroups to address performance measures for specific issues, including worker safety (C&T and WP). Each workgroup will be co-chaired by a regional and HQ representative. The process will move fairly quickly to put EPA in a defensible position in terms of performance measures, which will aid in avoiding further budget cuts.

PSEP Review and Final Report: Kevin Keaney reported that the final report on the Strategic Assessment of the Pesticide Safety Education Program is finished, and will be surfaced at the May 11-12 meeting of the PPDC by Bill Diamond, Director of FEAD. Following the official release, the report will be widely distributed.

GHS: The implementation of GHS is not as imminent as was assumed previously. EPA will notify CTAG as soon as the process is in motion, and anticipates that there will be at least 1-2 years of lead time to prepare, as regulatory change is necessary for implementation.

Endangered Species: EPA's Endangered Species Program underwent reorganization and will no longer be part of FEAD. As a result, the container and containment staff (Nancy Fitz, Jude Andreason, and Velma Covington) will join CWPB.

Printing and Distribution of the Exam Administration Manual: Until an award is made on the cooperative agreement replacing the expired one with CAST, no work can be done to print the exam administration manual. EPA anticipates that the manual will be available in electronic format at the 2005 Workshop in Madison, and eventually distributed to the states in hard copy.

3. Pesticide Safety Program (PSP) Website for Consumer Education

Carol Ramsay gave a description and update on the PSP website for consumer education. It lists all URLs for SLA, CES, and regional C&T Programs and their contact information for people responsible for training and certification, as well as descriptions of, links to, or ordering information for materials. States have password-protected access and can enter and change their own information. The website also includes a resource database for applicator or consumer education, and has a very good search engine. The early intent of this database was for program managers to update materials and check for new resources quarterly. Although it is a condition of EPA's grant guidance and IAG with USDA for recipients (SLA and CES) to post resources, currently, this website is an underutilized resource.

EPA is promoting the implementation of efficiency measures, one of which would be a regional approach to material development. The PSP website is a tool to aid in this effort. The posting of materials needs to be more aggressively encouraged, especially by USDA to PSEP.

Although it is a condition of the IAG, it has not been passed on to the states by USDA. CTAG will send a letter to USDA recommending that it takes on the responsibility for encouraging CES to post to the PSP website and will more formally communicate with AAPSE on this and other similar issues. The letter will highlight resources developed as program outputs that demonstrate program worth and have the potential to leverage resources and eliminate redundancy in the program.

4. Subject Matter and Technology Experts/Specialists

The board discussed the issue of establishing or enhancing a database of subject matter experts (SME). One option to improve the existing AAPSE database would be to post information on good speakers after meetings. Another would be to add questions on expertise to the AAPSE membership renewal form, potentially allowing for entry of information into an electronic database. Regular announcements should be made to remind people to enter information into and to utilize the database. After the discussion, Carol Ramsay recommended that CTAG wait for a year to see if the PSP website is better used, and then revisit the issue of an SME database. The board will work to raise this issue with AAPSE for discussion at the board meeting in August, as part of a larger issue: the need to promote collaboration and to implement program efficiencies.

5. Positive ID for Exams

The board discussed the issue of requiring positive ID for exams, and noted the lack of hard data to support a paper. To support the argument to require positive ID for exams, facts, anecdotal data, and examples of abuses and regulatory language are needed. Positive ID is part of a larger issue of verification. It is difficult to require those purchasing RUPs to show ID when ID is not required for exams and credentials. Some states do not have proctored or monitored private exams. Implementing a positive ID requirement across the entire certification program would be a major overhaul.

The board decided to gather more information on the status of positive ID requirements, and incidents where positive ID would have been beneficial. Each liaison will discuss the issue with and get feedback from their association, to be provided to Andrew Thostenson. Information will also be solicited on listserves, and all input received will be compiled. This is a pre-release data collection process to develop the paper.

6. Positive Identification for Restricted Use Purchase

This issue paper has gone through the vetting process used by CTAG to finalize issue papers, and was put into the new style template by Al Muench. After minor corrections, the issue paper will be posted on the CTAG website and stakeholders will be notified. The website will indicate that contents of the document are the same, but the format has been updated. Both the date that the document was originally approved by the board and the date that it was reformatted and posted will be noted on the website.

7. Guidance Document on Recertification Training

Al Muench led this discussion, giving a history of the issue development. Exam administration and recertification were split into separate issues due to the wide variations in states' standard

operating procedures, and the board decided to develop a suggested model document, in the same vein as the exam administration manual, instead of a formal issue paper to provide information on how to move forward to implement ideas into state programs. AI pulled together issues for consideration for whoever takes over the development process.

To move forward, the board decided this is a fairly high priority issue and to form a small working group of 3-4 people to examine organizations that already have elaborate recertification processes with standard operating procedures. Three options were discussed:

- a. Follow the same development process that was used for the exam administration manual
- b. Initiate a fact-finding mission on the status of programs and options for improvement, and develop a fact sheet
- c. EPA could conduct its own research into this issue

The board decided that due to the complexity of this issue, fact-finding will occur first. The scope of this workgroup will be to substantiate competency, to determine what states are doing (re-testing or continuing education). The workgroup will have a conference call, meet at the 2005 Workshop in Madison if necessary, and will report back to the board in September.

The actual development of a document on recertification training is on hold until the workgroup comes back to the board with findings and facts.

8. Funding Issues

Dick Herrett of NASDA discussed the availability of funding from large/private organizations. In order to solicit funding, CTAG discussed developing a one to two page document demonstrating an understanding of the project and the organization's mission and illustrating how C&T projects (PSEP, exam development) fit into the frame of the organization's goals. Having a generic document with this information that can be tweaked to meet different needs would aid in responding to RFPs in a short timeframe.

Dick Herrett will develop a resource document with information about potential funding sources, their missions, and potential links to the C&T program.

Non-traditional SLA

Jack Peterson sent out a survey to the states and received 31 responses from SLAs and CES on whether states are taking registration fees and devoting them to training and other pesticide related projects. He will send the results to Andrew Thostenson and develop a fact sheet and presentation for the 2005 Workshop in Madison.

Non-traditional CES

Andrew Thostenson developed a list of existing sources for funding and will solicit additional input on listserves. The final document will be nationally applicable, possibly including a table containing a range of the current situation nationwide (range of charges for speaking at industry training, etc.). During discussion, creative sources of funding were raised, such as charging private companies to review and approve their training curriculum.

After the Madison Workshop, fact sheets for both SLA and CES will be approved by the board and posted to the website.

9. Fumigation Update

The EPA solicitation for a contract to develop a manual and exam blueprint for fumigations to all mediums except soil published April 27. EPA anticipates that the development process will move quickly once the contract is awarded.

Fumigation Management Plans – Andrew Thostenson has made several FMPs available on the NDSU & PSP websites. In the fall, before the storage season begins, CTAG will send a reminder to AAPSE about the electronic availability of the FMPs.

10. C&T Plan Templates

In the cooperative agreement guidance to the states, EPA has required that all states enter their plans and annual reporting information into the C&T plan template in FY05. Regions have been working with states to make entries. Richard Pont is working with regions to prepare them to assist states with entering their plans in the template and to review entries. After October 1, 2005, enough information should be available in the template to pull information for issue paper development, e.g. reciprocity.

11. Ramifications of Label Requirements for Training

CTAG discussed the new PR notice for label language for mosquito adulticides. The language does not have clear regulatory language holding certified applicators responsible. Some states are considering the language as binding though, and do hold the certified applicators responsible. Not all states require training and certification of applicators to apply non-RUPs, (many adulticides are non-RUP), though some do require an authorization and permit process to allow the use of adulticides. The enforceability of this PR statement will depend primarily on state laws and interpretations.

Based on the discussion, the CTAG board decided to drop consideration of this issue.

12. Accountability Plans

Accountability Plan Issue Discussion: The board discussed a proposal developed by Kathy Dictor, Dean Herzfeld and Carol Ramsay to become involved in accountability planning. Program clients and managers are demanding accountability for resources. Accountability is gaining a higher profile at the national level as well, with EPA undergoing the Program Assessment and Rating Tool (PART) and being required to establish strong accountability measures. Based on the proposal, the group (Kathy, Dean, Carol) will develop the issue further to raise in Madison, build support and get feedback and then present the refined proposal for an educational forum on accountability planning for C&T partners.

The board acknowledged the measures development process already underway by EPA, as well as the need for broader program accountability at the state level. The end goal for all program stakeholders is to build applicator competency. CTAG would not become involved in measures development, but rather in educating partners on how to use measures operationally and how to work them into existing programs for accountability. Strategic planning will be necessary to achieve the end result of accountability and demonstrate success in activities.

Demonstrating success will aid to build program sustainability and manager support. The ultimate outcome of the entire accountability process would show that the use of public funds resulted in demonstrated public good.

The discussion of the accountability plan and educating all SLAs and CES about it segued into a discussion about the potential to develop a proposal for a PREP course on this topic.

Potential PREP Courses: John Ward, of OPP, gave the board information on PREP courses. The board discussed a variety of options for devoting a PREP course to accountability planning, but only 13-14 states could be represented, with one SLA and one CES attending from each. At least 3 PREPs would have to be used for this purpose, which is unlikely. Discussion then turned to alternatives for educating C&T partners about the need for and process of developing an accountability plan.

Jeananne Gettle agreed with the need for accountability planning to be addressed in a PREP-like fashion, but noted that it must be a bigger effort. EPA Regions, HQ and states should all come together to ensure that measures being discussed as part of the accountability plan tie into the measures developed under EPA's plan. The topic requires smaller, more hands-on groups which could be handled through regional workshops. The cost of trainers or facilitators might prohibit EPA from sponsoring 4-5 workshops across the country. Another consideration is holding 1-2 train-the-trainer sessions, where regions send 1-2 states, and the states return to train the other states in the region.

Board members highlighted this type of program as an investment in the future, preparing staff to assist as state programs change to become more results-driven. Potential regulatory change and the implementation of measures will require program restructuring, which would be an opportune time to incorporate accountability plans.

The board decided to move forward with a needs assessment, which will be conducted in Madison. After the needs assessment, the proposal for workshops would be expanded with details such as cost, number of sessions needed, potential timeframe, etc.

Andrew Thostenson made the motion to proceed with the proposal for accountability planning, with the removal of developing a proposal solely for a PREP course. Kerry Richards seconded the motion, and the board voted unanimously to approve it.

13. CTAG Charter Language

The board discussed the revised version of the charter language sent out prior to the meeting. Discussion on the role of CTAG in working with partners and cooperators led to another revision, highlighting the importance the collaboration with partners to achieve the goals. Once it is approved, the charter will be posted on the website.

14. Certification Reciprocity

The board initiated discussion on the reciprocity issue. Pesticide applicators are becoming more mobile, making applications throughout the country either as employees of large corporations, or as individuals. There is diversity in state requirements for certification, making it difficult to issue reciprocity without researching the requirements in the reciprocal state.

States have to consider if standards and exam processes are similar, if identity is verified, and if there is a difference in terms of licensing or certification. The C&T plan template is designed to assist states by collecting the certification, exam, and ID verification requirements for all states in one place, but the template will not significantly reduce the burden of verifying the identity and certification status of the applicator.

Through discussion, many examples of making the reciprocity process less burdensome were raised. The state plan template, cost-recovery, clearly marked reciprocity certifications and checklists are all tools to help states issue or verify reciprocity. It also became clear that the questions on the template (and report function) should be better articulated to allow people in the public access view to determine whether or not categories are similar enough to grant reciprocity.

The board decided that its role is to facilitate reciprocity between states by taking action in 3 areas:

1. Change the state plan template to better articulate information.
2. Adjust the template report function to provide a reciprocity report.
3. Create a fact sheet/toolbox of strategies for state to use to ease the burden of granting reciprocity.

The desired output for the fact sheet is a Best Management Practices for Reciprocity (BMP) document, in the same style as the Exam Administration Manual. In order to move forward, a formal CTAG workgroup will be established. The document will contain sample agreements (formal and informal), an opening statement, and ideas for issuing reciprocity. No action can be taken until the fall when the state plan template is fully implemented. Andrew Thostenson and Jack Peterson will co-chair the workgroup, and membership will include representatives from other regions and industry with varying viewpoints on reciprocity. The goal is to release a product in 2006.

15. Status of 21st century report

After some discussion over the purpose and status of the 21st Century Report, the board decided to revisit it again after working on the performance measures issue and hearing the full regulatory proposal. The report will be preserved as a marketing tool, to demonstrate where CTAG has made progress and where action is still necessary.

The board decided to update the 21st Century Report with current accomplishments.

16. Poster of CTAG for Madison C&T Meeting

The board discussed presenting a poster at the NAPACSEW in Madison on the efforts and successes of CTAG, including the state plan template and exam administration manual. After further discussion, the board decided to register for a full table display, in order to have a computer to demonstrate the state plan template, a comment box, and possibly some giveaways.

17. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in San Diego, CA on December 13-14, 2005.