

# DTRA PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRIP REPORT

## BASIC INFORMATION:

**PROJECT NAME:** Biological Weapons Proliferation Prevention-Outside of Russia

**WBS:** 10.1.1.3, 10.1.2.3, 10.1.4.3

**PM NAME:** (b)(6)

**TRIP PARTICIPANTS:** (b)(6)

(b)(6)

**TRIP DATES:** 8 Sept 04 – 17 Sept 04

**LOCATIONS:** Scientific Research Agricultural Institute (SRAI), Kazakh Science Center for Quarantine of Zoonotic Diseases, (KSCQZD), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, US Embassy,

Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources, Ministry of Education and Science, Taldykorgan Anti Plague Station (APS), Taldykorgan Sanitary Epidemiological Service (SES) station, Republican Veterinary Laboratory, National Veterinary Center, Biocombinat, Kazakh National Veterinary Institute (KZNVI), Ministry of Defense Medical Facility, Research Institute of Microbiology and Virology, CDC-Almaty branch, Biomedpreparat (Stepnogorsk) and Technopark,

## TRIP RESULTS:

### OBJECTIVES/AGENDA:

- Assess the need for potential BWPPP engagement at newly identified BRPCs
- Review biosecurity and biosafety projects at previously and newly engaged BRPCs
- Introduce (b)(6) to BRPC directors and ministry representatives
- Discuss the status of the JRIP and IA with various KZ ministry and US embassy representatives
- Conduct project level discussions w/ BRPC directors and BNI representatives

### ACTIONS PERFORMED:

#### TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS:

**KAZAKH SCIENCE CENTER FOR QUARANTINE OF ZONOTIC DISEASES (KSCQZD)-SEPT 8**  
Introduced CDR Chaves to Dr. Atshabar, Director of KSCQZD, and toured the Institute's facilities. A discussion of BWPPP work followed and included the following topics: Environmental Monitoring Station (EMS), warehouse dismantlement/reconstruction, animal vivarium, IA status, biosecurity and biosafety maintenance.

Dr. Atshabar indicated that the KZ Ministry of Health (MOH) has not promulgated a formal decision on the number and location of EMS sites. Dr. Atshabar explained that MOH has changed KSCQZD's recommendation in the past and explained that the Threat Agent Detection and Response (TADR) project will fail if the EMS system is not structured around the 10 traditional Anti-Plague Stations (APS) located throughout KZ. Dr. Atshabar provided CDR Chaves with a list that should be considered for EMS site locations.

[Deputy PM comment – this is an issue of internal fighting within the MOH of KZ and

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must be resolved by the GoKZ].

Dr. Atshabar inquired about training facilities for his staff and was reassured that training support would be provided for staff that will be working in the EMS system as well as the Central Reference Laboratory (CRL) to be located at KSCQZD.

Dr. Atshabar expressed his concern over the demolition of warehouses and lack of Institute storage space located at the site of CRL construction. Dr Atshabar will provide a prioritized list of warehouses that are most important to the Institute's storage needs. CDR Chaves indicated that since the BWPPP budget was limited, DTRA would carefully assess which warehouses it could and could not afford to demolish and reconstruct. Also, design plans for demolition/reconstruction of warehouses are included in the TO10 Bridge contract.

Dr. Atshabar requested that an animal vivarium for breeding purposes be included in the CRL as well as an isolation clinic for infected workers which Dr. Atshabar said was required by law. CDR Chaves explained that he would address both issues with the BWPPP TADR team first and then provide Dr: Atshabar with a response.

The impact of the IA not being signed by September 15, 2004 was explained to Dr. Atshabar.

*Implementing Agreement*

### NATIONAL VETERINARY CENTER-SEPT 9

The biosecurity team met with Dr Kanat Shenzanov, Deputy Director. Dr. Shenzanov claims that the NVC is considered the central designated repository for Veterinary EDPs.

Significant upgrades have been conducted and provided by the Government of Kazakhstan. The facility is refurbished, and contains BSCs and other new lab equipment. A security system and other upgrades are being installed. There is little evidence of on-going work of any kind at present.

### REPUBLICAN VETERINARY LABORATORY-SEPT 9

The biosecurity team met with Drs Yamashov (sp) and Tonoriev (sp), Deputy Directors, RVL. There is an administration building in Astana and a separate laboratory in another location, which has been extensively modified. Significant upgrades have been conducted at the laboratory. The facility is refurbished, and contains BSCs and other new lab equipment. A security system and other upgrades are being installed. There is little evidence of on-going work of any kind at present. The site does have a separate vivarium, which is being upgraded, and a separate virology building-which is also undergoing renovation. The RVL does supervise a network of Oblast sites (18) and Rayon labs (193). The institute is financed through the Ministry of Agriculture.

### BIOMEDPREPARAT (STEPNOGORSK) AND TECHNOPARK-SEPT 10

The DTRA team discussed the status of demolition work being conducted at Biomedpreparat. Yury Rufov, President of Biomedpreparat, inquired as to why buildings 221 and 600 were the only buildings being considered for demolition. He indicated that it was understood that building 231 would also be demolished.

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[Deputy PM comment - Demolition of 221 & 600 only was agreed to by GokZ during a March 2003 meeting with Ministry of Science and Higher education (Bektorganov), Andy Weber from the CTR Policy office and CDR Cali of DTRA. Reason for not eliminating building 231 was GokZ desire to retain for an Ethanol Factory. This is yet another indication of poor communications within the GokZ]

The team was photographed, videotaped and tape-recorded during the office call.

The status of environmental sampling was discussed and explained to Mr. Rufov that air sampling will be conducted during demolition to ensure the safety and health of the workers.

DTRA requested a tour of the facilities being demolished and the work being conducted at Technopark, a relatively new government/private biomedical/agricultural enterprise.

After the tour, the DTRA team met with Mr. Galiv shareholder president of Technopark on the capabilities of Technopark and potential engagement with the BWPPP Cooperative Biological Research (CBR) program. Mr. Galiv was non-committal nor descriptive of the work currently being conducted at Technopark. Access to the Technopark facilities and a meeting with Valeriy A. Shimanayev, President of Technopark, was granted.

While a tour of the Technopark facilities were conducted by DTRA technical representatives (tour was rushed with < 20% of the facility was viewed), discussions regarding the future of the Technopark program were held between CDR Chaves and Valeriy Shimanayev. It is understood that Technopark maintains a pathogen collection for its work. Again, no clarification regarding Technopark related industries were provided.

### **SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE (OTAR)-SEPT 11**

CDR Chaves was introduced to Dr. Mamadaliyev, Director of Otar, and the DTRA team was provided a tour of the facilities. Status of BWPPP projects was discussed while touring the facilities. No major issues, outside the impact of the IA, were discussed.

### **TALDYKORGAN ANTI PLAGUE STATION -SEPT 13**

The DTRA team first visited the Taldykorgan APS and discussed and toured the facility with Valeriy Sapozhnikov, Head, Senior Sanitary Physician. Built in 1950 the Taldykorgan APS is responsible for monitoring 120 square kilometers for Plague and Cholera. The APS employs 250 people. The APS is further supported by ten out-stations. The APS works year round actively collecting rodents that serve as disease vectors and administers Plague vaccine regularly to high risk groups, including farmers, animal breeders and veterinarians. Funding for the APS is provided at the federal level from the MOH. The Station works closely with the Taldykorgan SES regarding joint training and disease identification.

### **TALDYKORGAN SANITARY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SERVICE-SEPT 13**

The DTRA team also visited the Taldykorgan SES and discussed and toured the facility with Yerkin Ye. Durumbetov, Head, Chief State Sanitary Physician for Almaty Oblast. The Taldykorgan SES consists of an Especially Dangerous Pathogen laboratory, bacteriology and

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virology laboratories. The SES is responsible for epidemiological monitoring of 264,000 square kilometers and training staff in surveillance methods. The 24 outstations report disease data to the Taldykorgan SES via email. The Station employs 1600 people in the region. The SES is funded at the regional level (i.e., county/state vice federal). The SES works jointly with the APS, where the SES station collects samples in the field and the APS assists with disease diagnosis. The SES also provides prophylaxis for diseases. Once diseases are diagnosed samples in culture form are sent to the SES headquarters located in Almaty.

General observations indicate that both the Taldykorgan APS and SES are in good working order and facilities for disease work are above standard for the country.

### **BIOCOMBINAT-SEPT 14**

The DTRA team toured the Biocombinat facility located in Almaty with the Institute's Director, Erlan M. Ramanculov. Biocombinat possesses a large capacity to produce livestock vaccines for Brucellosis and Anthrax. Biocombinat presently consists of approximately 100 .5-5 ton fermentors used for vaccine production. Similar equipment from a much larger adjoining building was sold off two years ago, however, the Director could not confirm who the purchaser was (foreign or domestic). Biocombinat has been privatized and is under control of the Bettastar Corporation, a real estate investment firm. Biocombinat employs 150 people experienced in vaccine production activities. Security at Biocombinat is private, whereas access to the pathogen repository is limited to one person.

Required by the KZ Government to maintain the vaccine production portfolio for seven years, Bettastar plans to develop the land after release from this requirement. Bettastar desires to sell off excess vaccine production capacity (approximately 50%) and make vaccine production more profitable while it is required to maintain this portfolio.

Major concerns to the USG are related to previous equipment liquidation, including amount and type of equipment disbursed and to which enterprises. In addition, former employees of Biocombinat have started private businesses utilizing Biocombinat equipment previously removed from the Institute.

### **KAZAKH NATIONAL VETERINARY INSTITUTE (KZNVI)-SEPT 14**

The DTRA team met with Sanzybai Rysbaiuly, Director of the Institute, to learn more about the Institute's capabilities and determine whether BWPPP engagement is warranted. The Director explained that the Institute serves as a major repository to many bacterial and viral diseases. These disease examples include, Anthrax, Brucellosis, Glanders, Foot and Mouth Disease, Plague and Newcastle disease. The Institute is primarily focused on research and creating prophylaxis and other biomedical products for treatment of such diseases. EDPs are stored centrally onsite as well as in working labs.

Although, the Ministry of Agriculture announced that the National Veterinary Center (NVC) in Astana would serve as the new repository for animal diseases no such coordination to move KZNVI pathogen collections to NVC has been enacted. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture is aware that the Government of Kazakhstan announced that Otar would serve as the future

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animal disease central repository based on negotiations with the USG. Therefore, until an animal disease consolidation plan is enacted KZNV is likely to maintain possession of its EDPs.

Of concern, the Director indicated that KZNV is a former biological weapon's facility and possess former Anthrax biological weapon's scientists.

### **MINISTRY OF DEFENSE MEDICAL FACILITY-SEPT 14**

The DTRA team toured the Ministry of Defense Medical Facility. The site is currently being renovated and will serve as central hub for disease epidemiological monitoring for KZ troop protection. Approximately, \$200,000-\$300,000 is being provided by the KZ Government to the Institute for renovation. The institute will serve as a diagnostic center and will not store any EDPs onsite. Once diseases are identified, samples will be sent to KSCQZD for storage and disease information communicated to the MOH. Eleven military hospitals will report to the medical facility once the facility is up and running. The medical facility currently possesses at least two mobile laboratories, one for radiological and one for biological detection. The current medical facility exists in North Almaty, however the Government of KZ has directed the facility be moved to the site the DTRA team toured.

### **RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF MICROBIOLOGY AND VIROLOGY-SEPT 15**

The DTRA team introduced themselves to Balgimbaeva Sultayouva, Deputy Director of the Institute, and toured the facilities. The Director, Vladimir Berezin, was not available to meet the team. The Institute conducts research on a number of bacterial and viral diseases. Examples of diseases studied at the Institute include, Influenza, Newcastle disease, Hepatitis and HIV. No EDP research is conducted at the Institute. Diseases are stored in another facility that the DTRA team did not tour, however a pathogen list was provided to the team for information purposes. The Institute is comprised of 76 scientists and 30 technicians.

### **☒ PROGRAMMATIC DISCUSSIONS**

#### **US EMBASSY-SEPT 8**

The DTRA team discussed the status of the KZ BWPPP Implementing Agreement (IA) with Karin Kitsman, Second Secretary Political Section, and Dave Hunter, DTRO-Almaty/ACIU Chief. Karin indicated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has control over the release of the signed Implementing Agreement. The MFA has had possession of the IA for two months. Ms. Kitsman indicated that no new information was available as to when the IA would be released.

#### **MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (MOA) -SEPT 9**

Introduced CDR Chaves to Alim B. Bizhanov, Chief of the of Veterinary. CDR Chaves explained to the Director that BWPPP work in KZ would stop if the IA were not signed by September 15, 2004. The Director indicated that he understood and explained that the MOA had already signed off on the IA as it was written. No other major issues were discussed.

#### **MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MOH) -SEPT 9**

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CDR Chaves was introduced to Vice Minister Belanog. During the meeting the following topics were discussed: status of the IA, the EMS system and JRIP status.

CDR Chaves explained to the Vice Minister that work in KZ will stop if the IA is not signed by September 15, 2004. The Vice Minister indicated that he understood and said that the MOH had already agreed to the language of the IA and that it was with the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (MEMR) for final signature.

Vice Minister Belanog explained that a final EMS list of ten locations, including a mix of Anti-Plague Stations as well as Sanitary Epidemiological Stations, has been agreed to and released by the Ministry to the US. When given a contrary list of EMS locations provided by KSCQZD, the Vice Minister explained that he would clarify any miscommunication with Dr. Atshabar.

The Vice Minister indicated the MOH was comfortable with the JRIP language and explained that it was with the MEMR for final review.

### **MINISTRY OF DEFENSE-SEPT 9**

CDR Chaves discussed the role of the BWPPP Program with the Colonel in charge of the MOD medical facility. CDR Chaves also discussed the need for site access to MOD related biological facilities, the status of the IA and JRIP.

The Colonel granted access to the MOD medical facility in Almaty and scheduled a visit for the DTRA team for September 14, 2004.

The Colonel indicated that MOD had already provided input on the IA.

The Colonel was familiar with the JRIP documentation and explained that ministry review was being coordinated by the MEMR.

### **MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES-SEP 9**

CDR Chaves introduced himself and the team to Almaz K. Tulebayev, Director of Technical Services. Mr. Tulebayev indicated that he expected final signature and release of the IA by the following week (week of 13 September 2004).

Mr. Tulebayev explained that the JRIP was being coordinated by MEMR and that he was still awaiting approval from other ministries before releasing the edited version. He provided no specific timeframe as to when the document would be returned to the US.

Mr. Tulebayev expressed concern over potential Anthrax contamination remaining on Voz Island, specifically contamination from animals crossing into KZ from the UZ side. He indicates that additional tests on the KZ side of the Island are necessary.

### **MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE-SEP 10**

The status of the IA and Technopark capabilities were discussed with Vice Minister.

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CDR Chaves indicated that BWPPP work in KZ would be put on hold after September 15, 2004 if the IA has not been signed.

The majority of the discussion focused on whether the US could provide official certification that Anthrax contamination is no longer present at Biomedpreparat. Technopark is having difficulties in obtaining foreign assistance for developing industries located at Biomedpreparat due to the speculation that Anthrax contamination still exists onsite. Again, little clarification was provided regarding the nature of Technopark work and the commercial industries they hope to establish.

### **CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL -SEPT 16**

The DTRA team met with Dr. Favorov, Director of the CDC in Central Asia, to discuss the status of the IACRO agreement between the DoD and DHHS on CDC support for the TADR project. CDC will primarily support the TADR project by providing syndromic disease detection training to personnel involved in disease diagnostics in the field. Dr. Favorov indicated that the contract with DoD should be signed by the beginning of October. At that point CDC plans to hire approximately 30 people to support the training effort over the next few years. Dr. Favorov indicates that at least 5000 people will require syndromic training in KZ and UZ. Training is expected to take three years to complete once initiated. In addition, Alex Stolyarov, Bechtel KZ Program Manager, and Tim Pruett, Deputy Executive Officer for USAID, will discuss BWPPP equipment importation issues. Mr. Pruett indicated that he may be able to improve the Program's procurement process based on his experiences in country.

[Deputy PM comment – Dr Favorov has obviously not been in contact with headquarters CDC which is supporting development of the training requirements for TADR. Dr Favorov's estimates are not to be taken as gospel and are subject to revision via an IPT process between USG and GoKZ personnel.]

### **US EMBASSY-SEPT 16**

The DTRA team discussed findings of the two-week BWPPP trip with the new Ambassador, John Ordway. Of particular concern was the lack of information provided while visiting Stepnogorsk and the type and quantity of equipment remaining and previously liquidated at Biocombinat. Also, discussed with the Ambassador was the status of the IA.

PROGRAM REVIEW

SUPPORT TO POLICY

The team reminded each ministry representative that by not signing the KZ Implementing Agreement a BWPPP work slow-down/stoppage would be executed.

# Relationship of KZ Institutes

