

Meeting Summary

International Discussion of Bioterrorism Risk Symposium
Sandia National Laboratory, Albuquerque NM

8 October, 2009

Themes and Observations – Scope and Problem Definition

Bioterrorism risk (or even CBRN risk) receives different levels of attention and a range of national importance compared to other priorities.

- Perceived terrorism threat differences between different nations
- Many gaps in governmental policies identified
- Balancing natural, non-intentional risks against the intentional risks
 - Different perspectives on the ease or appropriateness of combining into all-hazards approaches

Biosecurity measures are becoming more the standard

- Many different types of biological control lists have been created
- A number of national acts recently enacted

Themes and Observations – Scope and Problem Definition

All of the nations represented here seemed to initiate execution of their assessments by constructing and discussing scenarios and/or simulations

For the most part, risk seemed to be fairly consistently defined

- Likelihood x Consequences/Vulnerability/Impact

Themes and Observations – Methodology

Of the approaches presented here, most of them were expert elicitation judgment

- Likelihood/Consequence Scoring systems:
 - “-10 to +15” or 0 to 10
 - “Impossible to High probability”
 - “<6 to 18-21”

Technology and capabilities focus and competence levels addressed

- Simple and advanced genetic modification, synthetic biology
- Construction, propagation, expression, function etc.
- Education level and expert level

Themes and Observations – How Risk Assessments are Received and Used

- *Similarities and differences in decision making environments in different nations with respect to how risk assessments are received, interpreted, and used.*
 - Decision making under uncertainty – differences in how uncertainty is captured, represented, and communicated to decision makers
 - Different levels of willingness of decision makers to use assessment results

Roundtable Discussion VI: Advancements/Progress and Update from Last Year

Recommendations from last year's meeting:

- There is a need for a variety of tools and resources to facilitate terrorism-based risk assessments
 - Tools and resources should be developed and distributed to the international community
 - Important to create a common international language and understanding of basic bioterrorism risk assessment concepts

- Similarly, risk assessment methodologies and results should be shared
 - The types of information requested most often included scenarios types and results, gaps and uncertainty results, risk communication, and risk management practices

**Are next year's recommendation's the same?
If so, how do we get there?**

Additional recommendations?