



EU Field Exercise on Biological Incident Response and Environmental Sampling BIOTECH 2006

Informal Seminar on Bio-preparedness
Workshop 2: European Capacity to
Respond to Bio-Threat

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Helmut WALERIUS
European Commission
“Health Threats” Unit



BIOTECH 2006

- Workshop and field exercise on incident response and environmental sampling, BIOTECH 2006, was held by the Danish National Centre for Biological Defence, on behalf of the European Commission, 8-11 May 2006;
- 80 participants from 16 EU Member States;
- Operational incident response teams: health, police, fire brigades, civil protection, military and environment;
- Five scenarios:
 - Improvised biological agent production facility,
 - Manufacturing installation for delivery systems of biological agents,
 - Improvised dispersal device on a public train,
 - Delivery of dry biological agent through the ventilation system of a building,
 - Outbreak of disease as a result of intentional food contamination.

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- The mission of the response teams was to identify:
 - the threat,
 - the area of contamination,
 - possible countermeasures.
- In the presence of independent observers from the EU;
- Lessons learnt:
 - High value of specialised expertise within the field investigation teams: medical, intelligence, CBRN, weapons specialists, dispersal assessment, forensic;
 - Preparation of European guidelines on principles of field investigation for biological incident response.

Biological Incident Response & Environmental Sampling:

Draft European Guidelines on Principles of Field Investigation

- Scope: principles of response in the initial phase of a biological incident

Biological Incident Response: Draft European Guidelines on Principles of Field Investigation

■ Stages in a biological attack:



Biological Incident Response: Draft European Guidelines on Principles of Field Investigation

- Type 1 incidents: attack is suspected or detected;
- Type 2 incidents: outbreak of disease without prior warning;
- Evaluation of a suspected threat requires combination of intelligence information and a specific technical threat assessment
 - (Expertise in biological weapons, agents and delivery systems, forensic epidemiology, microbiology and infectious diseases);

Biological Incident Response: Draft European Guidelines on Principles of Field Investigation

■ Investigation of a serious threat:

- Primary purpose: initiate efficient counter-measures;
- Secondary purpose: identify the perpetrator;
- Solid prognosis of agent, amount, number and location of exposed, expected time-course and possible treatment options ideally no more than 24-48 hours after the attack;

Biological Incident Response: Draft European Guidelines on Principles of Field Investigation

■ Field Investigation Team (FIT)

- Essential expertise: biological weapons, intelligence assessment, disease surveillance, diagnostic laboratory, dispersal assessment;
- Mission objectives:
 - Obtain information about the hazard through on-site assessment;
 - Obtain samples for subsequent laboratory and forensic analysis;
 - Render safe any potential hazard.

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■ Field Investigation Team (FIT) *(continued)*

Reporting

- What ?
(Intelligence, witnesses, clinical manifestations, other)
- When ?
(Intelligence, witnesses, clinical manifestations, other)
- Where ?
(Amounts and dispersal methods, dispersal period, dispersal assessment)
- Prognosis
(+ / - Intervention, timeline, casualty estimation)
- Recommendations
(Cordon, personal protective equipment, quarantine or isolation, prophylaxis, treatment, information, medication and vaccination procedures)

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■ Field Investigation Team (FIT) *(continued)*

- As the scene of a biological incident is a crime scene, the FIT procedures should comply with police investigation procedures;
- FIT missions should be documented rather rigorously;
- Classified channels of communication are to be preferred;
- Media strategy.

Biological Incident Response: Draft European Guidelines on Principles of Field Investigation

■ EU aspects:

- Interoperability at the strategic level between EU Member States;
- Sharing of response components, e.g. FIT, dispersal assessment;
- Coordinated, relevant counter-measures;
- Crisis management system.