

Subject: RE: Comment on Beecher Anthrax analysis
From: "Garrett, Benjamin C." <Benjamin.Garrett@ic.fbi.gov>
Date: Thu, 23 Aug 2007 08:30:54 -0400
To: <hart@sipri.org>

John:

I was alerted to Kay Mereish's letter to the editor when it was received. In my role as the Lab's Senior Scientist, I advocated an investigation and, if warranted, prosecution of the scientist from the referenced September 2006 presentation. (Note: The reference provided by Mereish permits the scientist to be identified by name. The scientist is female; hence, all references to this scientist use the feminine pronoun.) An investigation ensued.

The issue, in my opinion, came down to either (a) the scientist revealed information she obtained in the course of an FBI investigation or (b) she revealed information she had not obtained. If option (a) obtained, then she could be prosecuted for unauthorized disclosure of law enforcement information. If option (b) obtained, then she is a fraud. The investigation proved the situation to be (b). There is no record that she performed any analyses for the FBI. There is no record that she was in any of the labs where the work took place. She is not a US Government scientist. She works for a contractor that was not authorized to support our investigation. Our records are exhaustive, as was the investigation. I imagine that she was passing along office gossip as though she had done the work. I concluded she is a fraud. In this case, the fraud warrants no prosecution. I felt, though, that a response was warranted.

The FBI Senior Leadership - meaning the Director, because the decision went to his office - opted to decline to comment on Mereish's letter. Dr. Beecher was exceedingly upset. He felt - justifiably, in my opinion - that his integrity had been attacked and that he was owed the opportunity to respond. That position, though, ran counter to the interests of the investigation.

One of the realities of working for the FBI is that individuals must subordinate their personal careers to the needs of the Bureau. In the case of Dr. Beecher, I am uncertain whether he will stay with the Bureau. The situation weighs heavily on him.

Regards
Ben

From: John Hart [<mailto:hart@sipri.org>]
Sent: Sun 8/5/2007 9:19 AM
To: Garrett, Benjamin C.
Subject: Comment on Beecher Anthrax analysis

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Letter to the Editor

Unsupported Conclusions on the Bacillus anthracis Spores Douglas J. Beecher reported on the methodology that a U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation laboratory used to identify an intentionally anthrax-contaminated letter(s) among mail collected from a Congressional building or postal facility that serves the U.S. Congress after the incident of contamination that occurred on 15 October 2001 (1). The described sampling strategy and initial screening and analysis methodology using direct plating were reported to be efficient and safe. However, the data supplied in the paper could not be used as evidence for judging the quality of the spores or to support or dismiss conceptions about the presence or absence of spore additives or about the production engineering used to prepare the spores. Furthermore, the type of sampling and analysis data presented in the paper could not be used for extrapolation of ideas concerning spore quality or the method of production. It is possible that!

Dr. Beecher's laboratory has performed additional analysis and obtained data that might support such conclusions but that were not included in the paper; if that is the case, it would be more scientifically appropriate to add "unpublished data" in parentheses next to the conclusions he offered concerning the apparent lack of additives, spore quality as reflected in particle size distribution, and the production engineering. In a meeting I attended in September 2006, a presentation was made by a scientist who had worked on samples of anthrax collected from letters involved in the same incident in October 2001; that scientist described the anthrax spore as uncoated but said that it contained an additive that affected the spore's electrical charges (D. Small, CBRN Counter-Proliferation and Response, Paris, France, 18-20 September 2006; organized by SMI [www.smi-online.co.uk]). It would be of importance for Dr. Beecher to submit data in support of his conclusions in another paper to establish a sound scientific basis for his arguments.

REFERENCE

1. Beecher, D. J. 2006. Forensic application of microbiological culture analysis to identify mail intentionally contaminated with Bacillus anthracis spores. Appl. Environ. Microbiol. 72:5304-5310.

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overview:

CBRN

Counter-Proliferation and Response

Formulating a strategy to combat CBRN threats goes hand in hand with countering terrorism in the 21st century. Following the success of our annual conferences on [Homeland Security](#) and [Maritime Security](#) The SMi Group has produced an event focussed on CBRN counter-proliferation and response, looking at the realities and challenges of integrating military CBRN agencies with CBRN and non-CBRN civilian agencies. At this event, attendees will have an opportunity to hear from experts involved in assessing the Washington anthrax incidents, the London 7/7 bombings and the aftermath of the Tokyo underground sarin attack.

SMi's Conference on CBRN aims to provide our delegates with an invaluable opportunity to hear from and interact with an international array of high-level government, public sector and military officials, leading suppliers and industry experts who will disseminate crucial information on how to abate and respond to CBRN threats. Time will also be devoted to tackling issues surrounding national capabilities and requirements, force preparation, consequence management, civilian first responders and the threat of bio-terrorism. In addition, attendees can discover developments in detection, protection and decontamination equipment and technologies.

The excellent line-up of speakers includes:

- **Andy Proudlove**, Deputy Head of WMD Center, **NATO**
- **Dr Dimitri Perricos**, Acting Executive Chairman, **The UN Monitoring and Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC)**
- **Dr Kerry Kartchner**, Office of Strategic Planning, **Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation, Department of State, US**
- **Ambassador Serguei Batsanov**, Director, **Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, Geneva Office & Former Deputy Director, Special Projects, OPCW**
- **Faiza Patel King**, Senior Policy Advisor, Verification Division, **The Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)**
- **Wolfgang Schroeder**, Capability Directorate, Protection & Survivability, **European Defence Agency**
- **Dr Olivia Bosch**, Senior Research Fellow, International Security Programme, **Chatham House (Royal Institute of International Affairs)**
- **Guenther Bretschneider**, Head, Operations Division, **The Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Centre (EADRCC)**
- **Christian Sommade**, Executive Director, **French High Committee for Civil Defence and President, European Homeland Security Association**
- **Lieutenant Colonel Ioannis Galatas**, Head, Department of Hospital CBRN Defence, **401 Army General Hospital, Athens**

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- **Major Edward Bacon**, The Chemical Biological Incident Response Force (CBIRF), **US Marine Corps**
- **Major Todd Burton**, Chief, Operations Planning Branch NGB J35, Future Operations, **National Guard Bureau, US**
- **Dr Tetsu Okumura**, Chief, Emergency Department, Juntendo University Hospital & Program Director, **Department of Acute and Disaster Medicine, Juntendo University**




Benefits of attending:

- **CONSIDER** the lessons learnt from the October 2005 Joint Assistance CBR Exercise carried out by **NATO** and the **OPCW**
- **GAIN** valuable information about national and multinational force preparation and doctrinal issues
- **RECEIVE** an update on the current equipment capability of the US, UK, France, and other countries
- **HEAR** from senior advisors integral in formulating the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)
- **ANALYSE** case studies of how various countries have integrated governmental health agencies and the military in order to deal with bioterrorism.
- **ASSESS** country-specific policies for emergency preparedness and consequence management
- **BE INFORMED** of recent advances and plans for future development in military, civil and industry CBRN technologies
- **INCREASE** your knowledge by participating in interactive workshops which will cover combined triage and decontamination for first responders as well as hands-on training to develop interagency, intergovernmental CBRN response plans.

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1.30 Registration and Coffee**1.45 Introduction**

- Description of the needs and efforts in responding to a CBRN event

2.00 Detection

- What capabilities exist for rapid on-site detection of CBRN agents, for early warning alarms and for provision of information about the incident site? When can CBRN agents be detected?
- To what extent and for which classes of agents must samples be taken and analyzed at laboratories?
- How possible is it to trace the origin of agents to potentially identify responsible parties, i.e. what are the forensics possibilities?

2.30 Early Diagnostics

- What are the leading triage approaches today and how well are they coordinated with other key components of CBRN response, such as detection, decontamination, and medical treatment?
- How capable are we of identifying a person exposed to CBRN agents on-site or in a laboratory?
- Can we predict serious latent effects in exposed persons after immediate response needs are met?

3.15 Coffee Break**3.30 Decontamination**

- What are the key factors affecting efficient and effective decontamination?
- What are the methods, developments, and needs for the future?
- How clean is clean; i.e. what standards exist for qualifying an area restored?

4.15 Scenario-based Training

- What are appropriate scenarios for training?
- What are the best tools for increased training efficiency?
- What chance is there for harmonization, inter-agency and international cooperation?

4.45 Discussion, questions and summary**5.00 Close of Interactive Workshop**