The Health Physics Society (HPS) and the Occupational Safety and
Health Administration (OSHA) entered into an agreement to provide
specific services regarding radiation safety matters (April 2004 Health
Physics News).

HPS President Ken Kase and the
Assistant Secretary of Labor for
Occupational Safety and Health, John
Henshaw, met at the Department of
Labor to sign this Alliance Agreement
on 20 February 2004.

The purpose of
the Alliance
Agreement is to
share our exper-
tise in current and
emerging radia-
tion safety topics
and to assist
OSHA as it
develops educa-
tion and commu-
ication programs
for its staff.

Within the scope
of this Alliance
Agreement, the
HPS will also
share its expertise with OSHA as
this federal agency addresses
radiation protection issues.

This Alliance Agreement was
initiated by an inquiry from OSHA to
HPS President John Frazier in May
2003. At that time, OSHA requested a
meeting with the HPS to discuss this
matter in more detail. Such a meeting
was held with HPS representatives
and Assistant Secretary Henshaw and
his staff in June 2003.

At this meeting, OSHA requested
that the HPS share its expertise in
radiation safety practices and prin-
ciples. The scope of this request was
directed primarily towards assisting
OSHA in fulfilling its anticipated
mission of protecting workers
involved in the cleanup of radioac-
tive materials in the event of a
terrorist event involving a radiologi-
cal dispersal device (RDD). In fact,
OSHA has been responsible for
ensuring that workers involved in the
cleanup of federal facilities
were adequately protected against
potential exposure to anthrax after
the terrorist attacks post September

Assistant Secretary Henshaw’s
staff members stated that their
Office of Outreach Services and
Alliances had acquired the exper-
tise of the American Biological
Safety Association (ABSA) to assist
in protecting workers from expo-
sure to biological pathogens. OSHA
noted that the HPS could forge an
Alliance Agreement with OSHA in a
similar fashion to provide our
expertise in protecting workers
from exposure to radiation and
radioactive materials.

In September 2003, President
Kase established an Ad Hoc
Committee, chaired by J. Scott
Kirk, to begin the process of
formalizing such an agreement with
OSHA’s Office of Outreach Ser-
vices and Alliances.

Over the course of the next few
months, Kirk worked with OSHA
staff to draft an Alliance Agreement
for consideration by both organiza-
tions. The HPS’ Board of Directors
unanimously approved the Alliance
Agreement in November 2003. This
Alliance Agreement was finalized at
the aforementioned signing cer-
emony on 20


The HPS Ad
Hoc Committee
met on 25 March
2004 with
representatives of
OSHA to formu-
late the actions
necessary to
implement the
Alliance Agree-
ment.

At this meeting,
OSHA stated that
it is considering
revising its radiation protection
standards (Title 29, Code of Federal
Regulations, Part 1910.1096) in the
near future.

The determination whether or not
to proceed with a rulemaking would
be based in part on information
submitted by stakeholders to OSHA in
response to a Request for Informa-
tion expected to be published in the
Federal Register in the near future.

OSHA is currently responsible for
ensuring that workers are pro-
tected against nonionizing sources
of radiation and ionizing sources
of radiation that are not covered
under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended.

Additionally, OSHA currently regulates sources of radiation at several Department of Energy facilities that are unrelated to the production of nuclear weapons. Under the scope of the Alliance Agreement, the HPS is expected to share its views regarding radiation protection issues.

To address their emerging regulatory responsibilities, members of the HPS shared their insights into the current interagency efforts at revising the National Response Plan (NRP) at the 25 March meeting. According to HPS representatives, these interagency deliberations are intended to delineate responsibilities for developing Late-Phase Protective Action Guides (PAGs) and ensuring occupational radiation protection should a terrorist event involving the use of radioactive materials occur in the United States.

Moreover, the potential complexities regarding which federal agency would have responsibilities for protecting workers should radioactive materials regulated under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 be involved was discussed.

Along these lines of discussion, the HPS shared with OSHA the recent HPS Position Statement titled Guidance for Protective Actions Following a Radiological Terrorist Event, which was issued in January 2004 (http://hps.org/documents/RDDPAGS.pdf).

OSHA staff members stated that their Salt Lake Technical Center located in Salt Lake City, Utah, is currently in the process of revising procedures and plans to address its responsibilities in the event of a radiological terrorist attack in the United States. Within the scope of the Alliance Agreement, OSHA requested assistance from the HPS in providing peer-review expertise on some of the plans/procedures.

OSHA informed the HPS of efforts by the National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements to revise the report titled Management of Terrorist Events Involving Radioactive Materials (Report 138) to reflect the PAGs under development by the Environmental Protection Agency. Moreover, it was noted that information regarding implementation of the PAGs would soon be published in the Federal Register.

OSHA requested that the HPS share its expertise in updating specific Safety and Health Topics currently listed on the OSHA Web site (see http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/alliances/hps/hps.html). According to OSHA, approximately two million viewers visit this section of its Web site each month.

The implementation team agreed to assist in establishing links between the HPS Web site and OSHA’s Web site.

Updates to OSHA’s Safety and Health Topics page will be a significant contribution by the HPS in fulfilling several of the outreach and communication commitments under the Alliance Agreement.

HPS members who attend the 49th Annual Meeting of the HPS in Washington, DC, are encouraged to visit the OSHA Alliance Booth that will be located at the Exhibit Hall. The HPS agreed to support this outreach effort to better inform its members of the activities that are currently underway within the scope of this Alliance Agreement.

The Alliance Agreement will remain in effect for a period of two years from the date of its signing, at which time it will be renewable for another two-year period. In addition, the Alliance Agreement specifies that the implementation team from both organizations will meet quarterly.

The next quarterly meeting is scheduled in conjunction with the 49th Annual Meeting of the HPS. As directed by President Kase, efforts are currently underway to consider designating the OSHA Implementation Team as a Standing Committee with the drafting of a proposed rule and Standard Operating Procedure.

Footnotes

1 OSHA’s Office of Outreach Services and Alliances is responsible for establishing Alliance Agreements. Alliances enable organizations committed to workplace safety and health to collaborate with OSHA to prevent injuries and illnesses in the workplace. OSHA and its allies work together to reach out to, educate, and lead the nation’s employers and their employees in improving and advancing workplace safety and health. For additional information on the Alliance program see http://www.osha.gov/dcsp/alliances.

2 OSHA participants who serve on the implementation team include Bob Curtis, Dave Hamel, Earl Hicks, Sandi Khan, Jeffrey Lodwick, Atkinson Longmire, and Lisa Ramber. Participants from the HPS include Ralph Andersen, Sean Austin, Cindy Boggis, Linda Farrell, J. Scott Kirk, and John Nagy.

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