



**COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**  
HEALTH & CONSUMER PROTECTION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate G - Public Health, Luxembourg  
**The Director**

Luxembourg, 17 December 2001  
G/FS D(2001) GG

**PROGRAMME OF COOPERATION ON PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE TO  
BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL AGENT ATTACKS  
[HEALTH SECURITY]**

**Overall aim**

To coordinate and support the public health/health security preparedness and response capacity and planning of the Member States against biological and chemical agent attacks.

**Objectives**

Set up a mechanism for information exchange, consultation and coordination for the handling of health-related issues related to attacks in which biological and chemical agents might be used or have been used;

Create a EU-wide capability for the timely detection and identification of biological and chemical agents that might be used in attacks and for the rapid and reliable determination and diagnosis of relevant cases, in particular by building on systems already available and aiming at long-term sustainability ;

Create a medicines stock and health services database and a stand-by facility for making medicines and health care specialists available in cases of suspected or unfolding attacks;

Draw-up rules and disseminate guidance on facing-up to attacks from the health point of view and coordinating the EU response and links with third countries and international organisations.

## **Actions**

### Objective A : EU coordination mechanism

Setting up a Health Security Committee at EU level which will meet regularly and will be on stand-by to

- address at short notice and coordinate together with the Commission all responses in terms of public health related to attacks in which biological and chemical agents might be used ;
- exchange information on plans and arrangements for preparedness and response;
- consider and provide advice on all aspects of public health preparedness for emergencies related to such attacks, and help in the implementation at Member State level of arrangements and strategies that may be agreed at EU level.

Establishment of a dedicated 24h/7 days-a-week multi-layered access network, to serve in particular the Health Security Committee members, using secure telephone, fax and internet connections (especially e-mail and video-conference) among the Member States and the Commission with agreed operational procedures that cover

- early warning (suspected and alleged events or cases, preliminary indications for nature and extent of attacks);
- alert (confirmed events or cases in unfolding situations );
- notification (confirmed, investigated and controlled events and cases);

*[To consider issues of definition of events in relation to the production, storage, movement, release and migration and spread of agents, definition of cases, description of trigger symptoms or other phenomena or indications]*

Establishment of secure and effective links of the network under (2) above with the networks for food alert, radiological emergencies alert, zoonoses notification, etc. and civil protection information exchange and provide for filtering and user-friendly presentation of relevant data *[in collaboration with other Commission services]*.

### Objective B: Rapid detection and identification of agents and cases

Elaboration of an agreed updateable list of biological and chemical agents that are susceptible to be used in attacks or threats of attack, together with their characteristics and associated symptoms and diseases and indications that permit their timely detection and identification/diagnosis with agreed levels of certainty.

Drawing-up inventories of such biological and chemical agents in the Member States and agreed guidelines for their surveillance and notification of production, movement and processing *[in collaboration with other Commission services]*.

Establishment of detection methods and classifications of unusual events/attacks as a function of occurrence (geographical and temporal spread), virulence and toxicity,

number of persons susceptible to be affected and availability of means to counter the spread of agents and protect those affected or intervening, as well as of methods for risk assessment related to such events/attacks.

Definition of the minimum requirements for resources that need to be deployed in the Member States to provide mutual re-assurance as to the timely detection, identification, risk assessment and control of biological and chemical agents that might be used in attacks.

*[To consider issues of kind of expertise, training, number of experts per given area and population, space, equipment, methods and materials needed, minimum standards in terms of quantity and quality]*

Elaboration and or dissemination of common methods and protocols for environmental sampling, investigation and assessment and for field and clinical investigations for cases corresponding to exposure to biological or chemical agents that might be used in attacks.

Drawing-up for each agreed class of biological and chemical agents of a directory of experts that have duties in the field of communicable disease surveillance, control and treatment, with separate identification of those that can be deployed at short notice as part of joint teams to assist in field and clinical investigations.

Definition of procedures to be used for the setting-up of joint investigation teams with identification of the liaison and contact points for logistical support *[in collaboration with other Commission services]*.

Reviewing and updating the inventory of EU laboratory facilities with precise indication of their classification, surge capacities and other relevant characteristics, and determination of the minimum standards required; identification of the possible deployment of emergency facilities (including private, veterinary and environmental laboratories) that may be commanded to perform work related to attacks or perceived attacks and development of agreed methodologies for coping with excess demand for checks.

Drawing-up models of memorandum of understanding or cooperation agreement to be used in the linkage or mutual support of laboratories in the Member States using agreed procedures for forwarding and security clearances and agreed acceptance criteria and reporting requirements.

Help put in place arrangements for support to be provided among laboratories in case of emergency.

### *Objective C: Inventory and use of medicines and services*

Evaluation of existing stocks and production capacities of preventive, prophylactic and therapeutic medicines for the biological and chemical agents identified *[in collaboration with other Commission services and the EMEA]*.

Elaboration of concerted stockpiling, siting, availability and recycling strategies and arrangements for creation and use anywhere in the EU of stand-by stocks of such medicines in emergencies [*in collaboration with other Commission services*].

Elaboration of strategies and instruments to allow the development of such medicines in sufficient quantity, acceptable cost and enhanced effectiveness and safety [*in collaboration with other Commission services and the EMEA*].

Evaluation of the capacity in each Member State for the treatment of cases and identification of capacity that can be made available to other Member States and for the number and specialties of doctors that could be made available to other Member States.

*Objective D: EU rules and guidelines and international links*

Elaboration of arrangements that can be made in particular under Council directive 64/221/EEC of 25.2.1964 on the coordination of special measures concerning the movement and residence of persons which are justified on grounds of public policy, public security or public health, and WHO's International Health regulations, in case of nationals of other Member States that might have been affected or come into contact with those affected in an attack in a Member State in which biological agents are used [*in collaboration with other Commission services*].

Elaboration of arrangements for the interdiction or restrictions on the circulation of products (food, materials, precursors), produce and animals on health grounds following an attack in which biological or chemical agents are used [*in collaboration with other Commission services*].

Elaboration and/or dissemination of agreed guidelines, advice and references to sources or stand-by facilities for authoritative advice to health authorities and health professionals with respect to reporting, preventing the spread, treating cases and dealing with persons affected or susceptible to have been affected in attacks.

Establishment of a rapid consultation and clearance procedure with agreed anchor points at the appropriate level of authority in each health administration for public communications and announcements.

Elaboration of guidance on restoration of vital health functions and decontamination and on alternative processes and means for keeping vital health services and air circulation, water supply and sanitary and hygiene systems functional in case of damage, incapacitation or contamination in attacks [*in collaboration with other Commission services*].

Elaboration of guidelines for the long-term strengthening, from the health point of view, of distribution systems, such as post, and distribution chains with devices and processes (irradiation, filters etc) [*in collaboration with other Commission services*].

Establishment of appropriate links of the networks and facilities developed under this programme with those of third countries and competent international organisations, notably the WHO, and make arrangements for the extension of procedures, availability of

materials and medicines and adherence to procedures covered /dealt with under this programme *[in collaboration with other Commission services]*.

Drawing-up of training modules in respect of the use of the networks and the procedures that are to be developed and delivered under this programme and arrange for the reliable transfer of the relevant duties to those entities that will be designated for this purpose.

**Timeframe for work**

18 months, starting in May 2002;

Key tasks and milestones are:

<b>TASKS</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Completion</b>
Biological and chemical agent threats network established and operational	May 2002	July 2002
Inventories of agents	May 2002	September 2002
Classification of events and investigation protocols	July 2002	March 2003
Lab inventories, requirements and standards	June 2002	June 2003
Experts' directories and investigation team rules	May 2002	January 2003
Guidelines for health professionals	September 2002	October 2003
Medicine stock inventories	May 2002	November 2002
Health services inventories	July 2002	June 2003
Stand-by facilities	July 2002	October 2003
Rules on circulation of persons, animals and products	May 2002	October 2003
Guidelines on decontamination and restoration	November 2002	October 2003
Training modules	July 2002	October 2003

<i>Milestones</i>	May 2002	June 2002	July 2002	August 2002	September 2002	October 2002	November 2002	December 2002	January 2003	February 2003	March 2003	April 2003	May 2003	June 2003	July 2003	August 2003	September 2003	October 2003	
Biological and chemical agent threats network established and operational	█	█	█																
Inventories of agents	█	█	█	█	█														
Classification of events and investigation protocols			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█					
Lab inventories, requirements and standards		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█				
Experts' directories and investigation team rules	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█									
Guidelines for health professionals				█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Medicine stock inventories	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█											
Health services inventories		█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
Stand-by facilities			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Rules on circulation of persons, animals and products																			
Guidelines on decontamination and restoration						█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Training modules			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█

## **Deliverables**

They will comprise:

- An ad hoc network that can be integrated as a secure branch of the Network on communicable diseases;
- List of agents susceptible to be used in attacks;
- Inventory of agents (report);
- Classification of events;
- Minimum requirements for resources (recommendation or binding instrument);
- Protocols for field and clinical investigation (recommendation or manual of operating procedures);
- Directories of experts;
- Procedure for setting-up investigation teams;
- Inventory of and minimum standards for laboratory facilities (report and recommendation);
- Models of cooperation agreements for links between laboratories;
- Guidelines for health professionals (recommendation);
- Procedure for public communications;
- Inventory of stocks of medicines (report);
- Siting and availability of stand-by stocks (recommendation and/or cooperation agreement);
- Inventory of treatment services (report);
- Coordination of movement of foreign nationals ( possible amendment to directive 64/221/EEC);
- Possible amendments to Directives on the circulation of products and produce ;
- Guidelines on decontamination and restoration of services (recommendation);
- Guidelines on strengthening health-related systems (recommendation);
- Links with third countries and the WHO (memoranda of understanding or cooperation agreements);
- Training modules (manuals).