

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Research and Development**

**BOARD OF SCIENTIFIC COUNSELORS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
CONFERENCE CALL**

**September 21, 1999**

Dr. Costel Denson (University of Delaware) quickly reviewed the agenda for the conference call and asked if anyone wanted to make any additions or changes. No changes were suggested by call participants.

**Self-Study Questions for the Particulate Matter (PM) Manager**

In preparation for the BOSC review of EPA's PM research program management, Dr. Denson asked Dr. John Vandenberg (EPA)—the PM Manager—to respond to seven self-study questions. Dr. Denson reminded the BOSC members that these questions were developed during the April 29-30, 1999 BOSC Meeting. The answers to the self-study questions will be provided to BOSC members and *ad hoc* committee members prior to the October 28, 1999 BOSC Meeting to be held in Durham, NC.

Dr. Vandenberg indicated that the questions were straightforward, but he requested clarification on Questions 4 and 5. Does question 4 address two issues—leadership and communication outside of ORD? Dr. Ann Bostrom (Georgia Institute of Technology) replied that the purpose of Question 4 is to provide the BOSC an understand of the leadership of ORD in the scientific community. Dr. Jerald Schnoor (University of Iowa) agreed and noted that the two issues are linked because strong leadership is difficult to achieve without good communication. Dr. Vandenberg asked if Question 5 should be answered as two separate questions? Dr. Schnoor explained that this question arose from a discussion at the April BOSC meeting about contingency plans. Do contingency plans exist to address recognized problems in the program? How are goals monitored so that changes can be made as needed? Dr. Rae Zimmerman (New York University) pointed out that monitoring is necessary to answer the first part of Question 5. Dr. William Cooper (Michigan State University) indicated that it is difficult to identify potential problems in a research program; therefore, he believes that the response will be limited to global statements and such statements may not be insightful. Dr. Vandenberg agreed. Dr. Denson suggested that different variables could be assessed; for example, if a particular problem is recognized, management could determine if the program has the appropriate human resources as well as equipment, funding, and timeframe. Dr. Vandenberg thanked Dr. Denson for his comment, and mentioned that the budget process can be onerous. Dr. Schnoor agreed, and suggested that it may be useful to discuss the budget process in the response to this question.

Dr. Vandenberg acknowledged that many of the issues raised in the self-study questions are on target, but they are not limited to the PM Program. Dr. Cooper responded that there is a flaw in the design of the PM Program in that most monitoring efforts occur outdoors even though most PM exposure is from indoor air. Dr. Vandenberg pointed out that Dr. Cooper's example illustrates a technical research problem, not a management issue. Dr. Denson agreed and added that the BOSC's review provides Dr. Vandenberg an opportunity to ask questions and point out problems; he should not necessarily limit his presentation to the responses to the self-study questions because the BOSC is interested in learning more about the thoughts of those in the PM Program. Dr. Denson emphasized that this is a constructive exercise intended to enable the PM Program to better promote EPA's goals and objectives; he believes that significant benefit could be realized from the review. He added that there will be an opportunity to have dialogue about these questions during the upcoming BOSC meeting.

## **Structure and Content of October 28, 1999 Meeting**

Dr. Vandenberg asked if an overview of the PM Program would be necessary to accommodate new BOSC members who are less familiar with the program. Dr. Denson suggested that the new members familiarize themselves with the program before the October meeting. The BOSC would prefer to devote as much time as possible on the 28<sup>th</sup> to discussing the programmatic review of PM. To facilitate this, Ms. Shirley Hamilton (EPA) agreed to circulate a previous PM presentation to the new members. Dr. Denson asked Dr. Vandenberg to send his documents (response to self-study questions) to Ms. Hamilton by October 14, 1999, who will circulate them immediately to the BOSC and Subcommittee members.

Dr. Peter Preuss (EPA) noted that a National Research Council (NRC) report entitled, *Research Priorities for Airborne Particulate Matter: II. Evaluating Research Progress and Updating the Portfolio* was issued in August 1999; he suggested that Dr. Vandenberg be prepared to discuss this report at the meeting. Dr. Vandenberg agreed to send 30 copies of the NRC report to Dr. Preuss, who will send it to each BOSC member prior to the October meeting.

Starting at 1:00 p.m. on October 28, there will be four concurrent sessions—exposure/atmospheric, epidemiology/toxicology, assessment, and risk management. These sessions will be two hours long (from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.), with one hour for each subject in the double-topic sessions. Dr. Michael Kavanaugh (Malcolm Pirnie) commented that the self-study questions are fairly broad; they are designed to give the Laboratories and Centers the opportunity to consider how they fit into ORD's research paradigm. In response to Dr. Zimmerman's question regarding whether Laboratory Directors should address questions to the Chairs and Vice Chairs, Dr. Denson replied yes. He agreed to coordinate the logistics of circulating the self-reports with Ms. Hamilton and Dr. Preuss. Dr. William Farland (EPA), who indicated that he is in the process of developing answers to the questions based on staff suggestions, said that he would like to focus on the risk assessment research process. Dr. Denson approved this approach.

Seeking clarification on the second question in his September 9<sup>th</sup> letter, Dr. Lawrence Reiter (EPA) asked if the question refers to how the research program is managed to ensure good linkages between *in vivo* and *in vitro* models. Because the question was posed by Dr. James Bus (Dow), who did not participate in the conference call, the question was tabled. Dr. Johnnie Pearson (EPA), representing Dr. Gary Foley (EPA), asked if questions on strategic planning for exposure could be added. Dr. Schnoor replied that it would be acceptable if Dr. Foley approved.

For the interviews with Laboratory/Center science managers and staff scientists, six concurrent sessions are planned, with one to two branch chiefs and one to two benchtop scientists in each of the six interview rooms.

## **Selection of *Ad Hoc* Subcommittee Members**

Ms. Hamilton requested the following data for all candidate Subcommittee members including: date of birth, social security number, and express mailing address. She also needs this information for Drs. Carol Henry (CMA), Cliff Davidson (Carnegie Mellon), and Murray Johnston (University of Delaware). Dr. Preuss cautioned the BOSC members that there is little time to process the necessary paperwork for the Subcommittee members; he noted that it could take 6 weeks to complete the paperwork. He pointed out that even if these individuals are on the Science Advisory Board (SAB) the applicable paperwork must be completed to allow them to participate in this effort. Dr. Denson remarked that an adequate number of candidate Subcommittee members has been identified and he asked if those who have been invited will be able to participate. Dr. Preuss suggested that those individuals should keep their calendars clear, but it may not be possible for them to be involved. It was noted that Dr. Driscoll (Proctor and Gamble) had not provided the required information to Dr. Bus (one of the Subcommittee Chairs); Dr. Denson agreed to send Dr. Driscoll's information to Ms. Hamilton.

## **Preparation and Content of Reports**

Dr. Denson suggested that the Subcommittees use the time from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on October 29<sup>th</sup> to develop working documents that reflect the responses of the self-study reports of the Laboratories and Centers. He also suggested that the BOSC members may wish to formulate their thoughts at the end of the first day to facilitate the report writing process. Dr. Denson reminded the BOSC members that these documents will be publicly available once approved by the entire BOSC. Dr. Preuss commented that Dr. Norine Noonan (EPA) is expected to attend a portion of the second day, and he believes that Dr. Noonan would be interested in hearing the BOSC's thoughts. Dr. Denson was pleased that Dr. Noonan may attend, and he agreed to adjust the agenda to provide an opportunity for her to participate in a discussion with the BOSC members. A number of BOSC members indicated that they will be bringing laptops to the meeting; they asked that a printer be available onsite. Ms. Hamilton agreed to arrange for a printer, and also asked that any BOSC member who will need a laptop at the meeting contact her.

## **Public Comments and Wrap-Up**

A representative of the Cotton Council who was present on the conference call indicated that he did not have any comments. In response to Dr. Timothy Oppelt's (EPA) question, Dr. Preuss reminded participants that the BOSC meetings are open to the public. This meeting, because of its location, will be a good opportunity for EPA researchers to attend and gain insight on the thoughts of the BOSC members.

Dr. Preuss was unsure if each Subcommittee will have a dedicated room in which to prepare its report. The BOSC members voiced their preference for separate rooms, but understood that this may not be feasible. Dr. Preuss indicated that details regarding the meeting (agenda, structure, logistical information) would be circulated as soon as they are available. Ms. Hamilton added that travel arrangements would be completed and provided to the BOSC members in the near future.

## **Action Items**

- Ms. Shirley Hamilton will circulate a past presentation on the PM Program to the new BOSC members.
- Dr. John Vandenberg will send his documents (response to self-study questions) to Ms. Hamilton by October 14, 1999.
- Ms. Shirley Hamilton will circulate Dr. John Vandenberg's documents to the BOSC and Subcommittee members.
- Dr. John Vandenberg will send 30 copies of the August NRC PM report to Dr. Peter Preuss.
- Dr. Peter Preuss will circulate a copy of the August NRC PM report to each BOSC member prior to the October 28, 1999 meeting.
- Dr. Costel Denson, Dr. Peter Preuss, and Ms. Shirley Hamilton will ensure that the Laboratory/Center self-study reports are circulated to the BOSC members prior to the October 28-29, 1999, meeting.
- Dr. Costel Denson will send Dr. Driscoll's information to Ms. Shirley Hamilton.
- BOSC members who will need a laptop at the October meeting should notify Ms. Shirley Hamilton.
- Ms. Shirley Hamilton will make arrangements for a printer and the requested laptops for the October 28 meeting.

## Conference Call Participants

### BOSC Executive Committee Members

Dr. Ann Bostrom  
Dr. Marilyn Brown  
Dr. Thomas Burke  
Dr. James Bus  
Dr. William Cooper  
Dr. Costel Denson  
Dr. Michael Kavanaugh  
Dr. Bonnie McKay  
Dr. Jerald Schnoor  
Dr. Mitchell Small  
Dr. Rae Zimmerman

### Additional Participants

Dr. William Farland  
Ms. Shirley Hamilton  
Dr. Timothy Oppelt  
Dr. Peter Preuss  
Dr. John Puzak  
Dr. Johnnie Pearson  
Dr. Lawrence Reiter  
Dr. John Vandenberg