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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

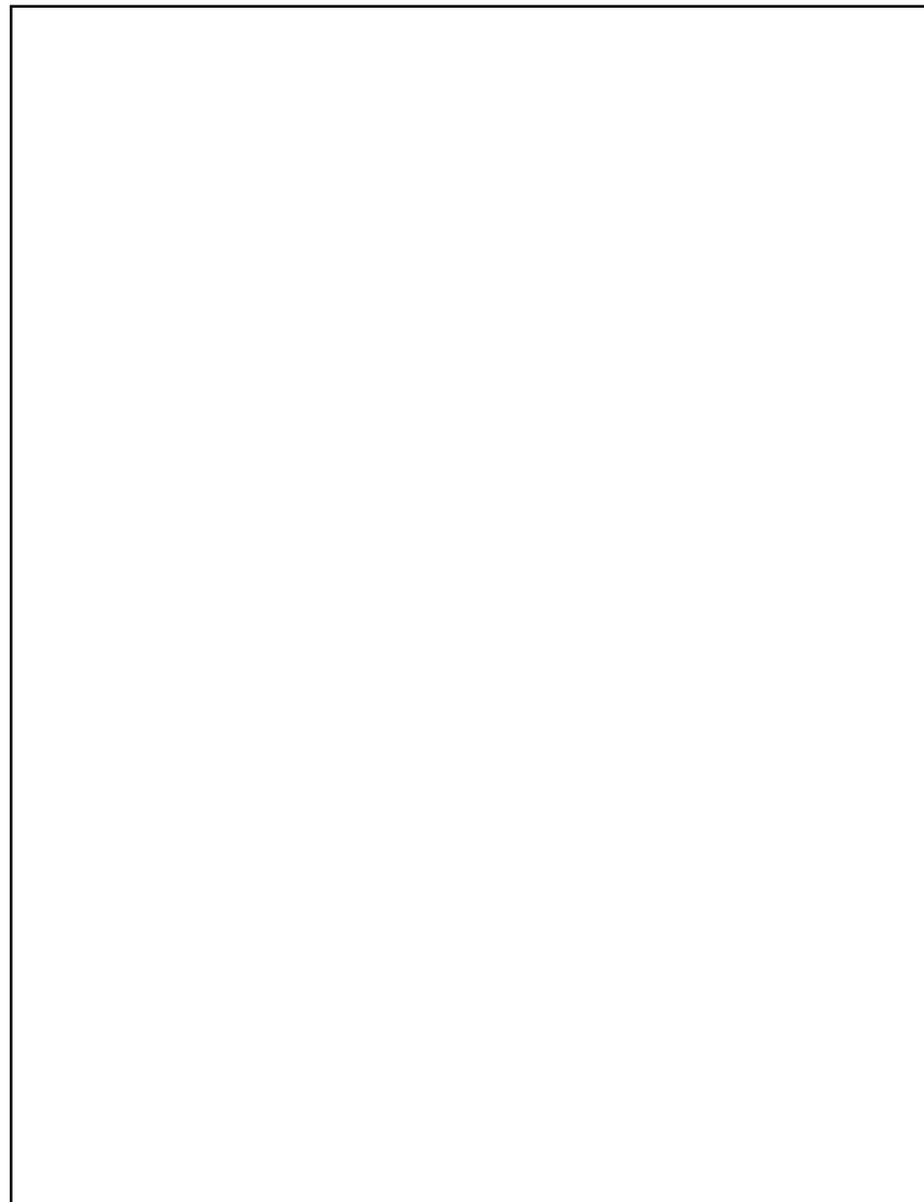
NATIONAL BIO AND AGRO-DEFENSE FACILITY
DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (NBAF DRAFT EIS)
PUBLIC MEETING
EVENING SESSION
AUGUST 7, 2008
Radisson Hill Country Resort
9800 Westover Hills Boulevard
San Antonio, Texas

RECORD OF PUBLIC MEETING

Catherine Coghill, Moderator

PANEL MEMBERS:

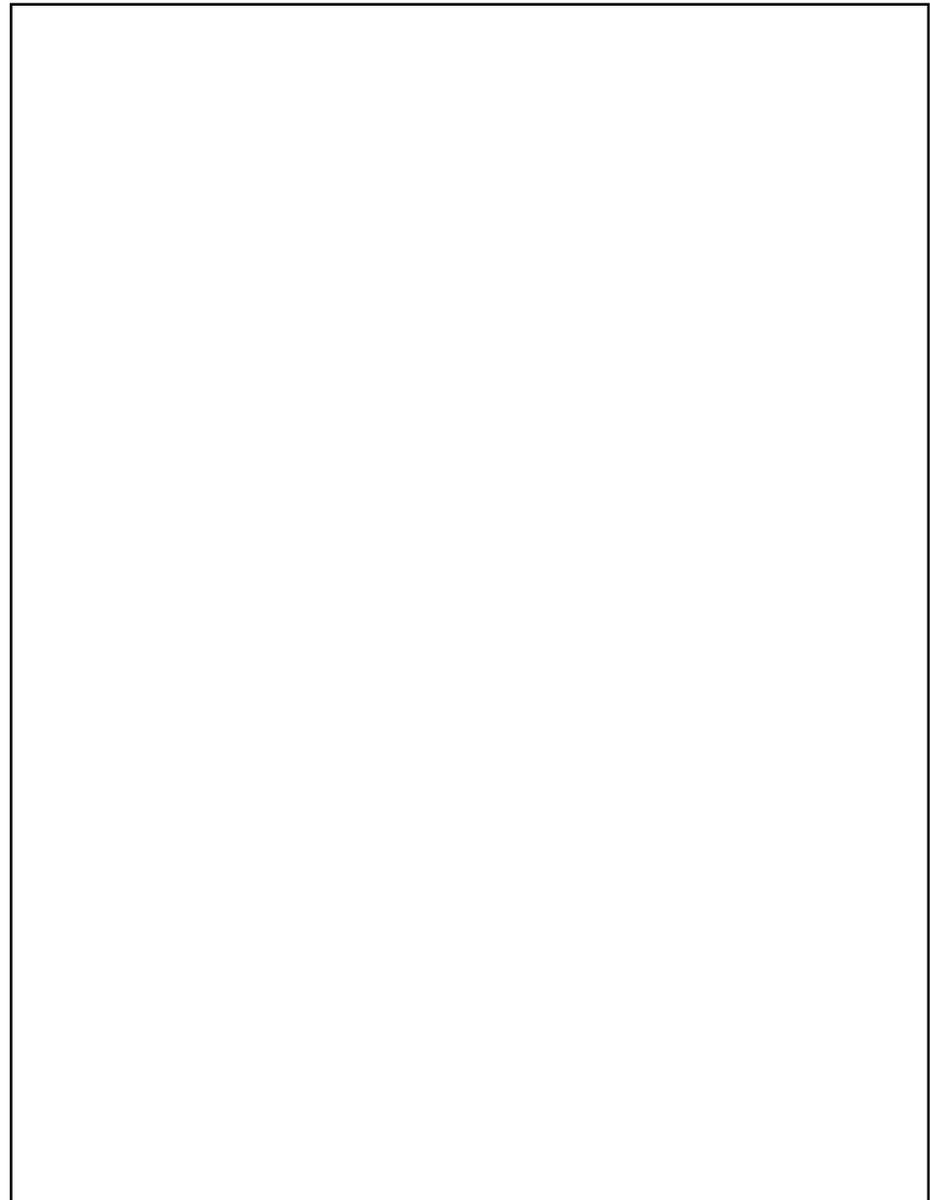
Mr. James Johnson, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Mr. Chuck Pergler, Tetra Tech, Inc.
Dr. Luis Rodriguez, U.S. Department of Agriculture



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1 question and answers.

2 So if anyone has a question, please
3 remember that we'd like that question to be directed
4 about the content of the presentation. If you have
5 anything that you need further clarification on, please
6 come to the microphone. If you'd like to give us your
7 name and organization, that would be great. If not,
8 that's fine as well.

9 Is there anyone who has a question that
10 they would like to pose to the panel at this point in
11 time? Yes, ma'am.

12 AUDIENCE MEMBER: Should I go to the mic?

13 MS. COGHILL: Yes, ma'am.

14 AUDIENCE MEMBER: My question is for the
15 gentlemen who is returning to his seat.

16 How can you possible extrapolate from
17 Pirbright when the Pirbright situation is unique in the
18 fact that Gordon Brown returned from vacation. He had
19 learned the lessons, the failed lessons of Prime
20 Minister Tony Blair. There was a lot of resource put
21 toward it. I don't understand how you can take an
22 example that occurs in the rural part of England and
23 apply it to five different distinct sites within the
24 United States.

25 MR. PERGLER: My answer regards

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1 socio-economics. And so what we did is, we looked at
2 the economics impact of that release. We did not delve
3 into necessarily the technical details of why it was
4 released, how it was released. But it gives us a good
5 barometer of what the effects are to livestock, what the
6 response is.

7 And so we can take that information and
8 other case studies. And we used more than just one case
9 study to arrive at the potential economic impacts. And
10 certainly because this was a very well-known event that
11 occurred, we wanted to make sure that we addressed it.

12 And so if you look into our methodology
13 that's found in the appendix of the EIS, you'll get an
14 idea of how we used that.

15 AUDIENCE MEMBER: What other case studies
16 did you look at besides Purebright?

17 MR. PERGLER: Well, we had the two events
18 and then we used -- in some cases, not necessarily case
19 studies, but Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory did
20 a study using livestock population numbers within the
21 region of influence of each of the six sites and
22 extrapolated the economic consequence of the release of
23 a pathogen on that livestock population.

24 So we tried -- so they took real numbers
25 as best they could and the value of that livestock to

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1 arrive at a number. And that's how we arrived at our
2 2.4 to \$4.2 billion. Even though that is a national
3 number, included in that is local response costs, as
4 well as the value of the animal.

5 MS. COGHILL: Next question, please.
6 Yes, sir.

7 AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm trying to
8 understand the logic of two points. Number one, on the
9 moderate risk in Texas, you sited ozone as a moderate
10 risk, I believe, and I believe that because the case
11 that ozone levels here are a little higher. But at the
12 same time, you had traffic as a moderate risk, while the
13 site that is in here in Texas has almost no traffic
14 right now. So that it's kind of -- so what's the logic
15 of the reverse that --

16 MR. PERGLER: Okay. For the traffic
17 analysis, even though the specific site location is
18 fairly isolated and doesn't have a lot, we look at the
19 region of influence as we call it, and that is more than
20 just one county area. So we're taking a rather big
21 chunk, looking at the traffic data in that area and then
22 extrapolating down. And you've got congested roadways
23 here.

24 Now we've had several comments on this
25 table to date, and what we're going to do is go back and

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1 look at how we've categorized that, just to make sure
2 that we got it right.

3 MS. COGHILL: Thank you. Next question.

4 Okay. What we're going to do now is open
5 the agenda up to the formal comment period where we will
6 hear from you-all on the comments that you would like to
7 present for the record this evening.

8 What I'm going to do is call your name
9 off of the list that folks use at the front of the room
10 to sign in. I'd like to go over the ground rules one
11 more time so we're all very clear on how we should
12 proceed, and that is each speaker, please remember you
13 only have three minutes. If you go over that time,
14 please do sit down and submit the rest of your comments
15 that you did not get to in writing because obviously we
16 want to make this as fair to be every individual here,
17 and this is the same process that we instilled at every
18 site as well.

19 So, also please come to the microphone.
20 Again, the meeting is being recorded. The court
21 reporter is up here to my left. To make sure she
22 captures everything accurately and correctly, please
23 make sure you're speaking to the front of the room so we
24 capture everything.

25 Our first speaker for this evening is

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1 John Dickson.

2 JOHN R. DICKSON: Welcome to San Antonio,
3 first of all. My name is John Dickson. I am an
4 atmospheric scientist with a practice here in San
5 Antonio as a consultant.

6 And first of all, I've got to tell you
7 I've read your Draft Environmental Impact Statement with
8 great interest. I found it to be a very well-written
9 document, very well organized and very methodical. And
10 I hope you don't mind if I kept a few sections on my
11 hard drive because I may need to look at it that sort of
12 thing in the future.

13 I would like to comment about your
14 conclusion regarding the moderately adverse impact on
15 atmosphere in air quality here in San Antonio. And I
16 think that you need to relook at some statements in the
17 EIS. San Antonio is an attainment area. We will not --
18 I hate to use the double negative -- we will not be
19 nonattainment until at the earliest April or May of
20 2010, will not be subject to those restrictions until
21 late 2010, probably at the very earliest. So that if
22 you were to apply for your permit for this facility any
23 time in the next 14, 15 months, it would not be subject
24 to any of the nonattainment review or any of the SIP
25 restrictions, conformity analysis, any of that sort of

19.6

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 9.6

DHS notes the commentor's disagreement with the Texas Research Park Site ozone designation. The Bexar County was redesignated by EPA on 4-2-08 as in attainment for ozone. Section 3.4.8 of the NBAF EIS has been modified to reflect the redesignation.

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1 thing.

2 From a subjective view, I would tell you
3 that I have personally permitted two plants very similar
4 to this facility in the last five years without any
5 difficulty at all. They were much larger plants than
6 this, with much greater emission rates. So I really
7 question whether or not these -- this plant would have a
8 moderately adverse impact on air quality.

9 I request or suggest that you take a look
10 at that conclusion, and I'd be happy to provide you with
11 some information to back that up.

12 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, sir.

13 One other thing I just wanted to mention
14 before we have our next speaker come up is, in this
15 portion of the meeting, under the National Environmental
16 Policy Act, we are here to listen to your comments. So
17 I don't want anyone to think that we're being
18 disrespectful.

19 In the event that you pose a question
20 during your comments, we will not answer them here
21 because what we have to do is take that and do some --
22 make sure we have a scientific analysis and the right
23 response, which we are required to do in what's called a
24 Comment Response Document.

25 Our next speaker is Jay Fraser.

1/26.0

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 26.0

DHS notes the commentor's opinion regarding air quality effects. The discussion of air quality is included in Section 3.4 of the NBAF EIS which includes the baseline air quality conditions and effects. The summary tables included in Section 2.5.1 provide an adjectival rating of the relative effects of the proposed alternatives on affected resources.

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1 JAY FRASER: Hi. I'm Jay Fraser, and I
2 actually moved to San Antonio about two and a half years
3 ago. And so tonight I'm very proud to be talking about
4 bringing the NBAF to San Antonio where I believe it
5 belongs.

6 I'm an entrepreneur, I'm a defense
7 contractor. I understand risk. I understand the ratio
8 between risk and reward, and I understand the value of
9 mitigation strategies. So as much I might disagree with
10 people who are against the lab, certainly they have
11 their right to be against the lab, whether it's here or
12 anywhere else. The fact is that risk is part of science
13 and technology. And along with that risk, as long as
14 you know that you have identified those risks and set in
15 motion the mitigation strategies to take care of
16 anything that might happen, the fact is that risk is
17 part of life. Risk is part of research.

18 Now, is there a risk associated with
19 putting the NBAF, whether it's here in San Antonio or in
20 Kansas or in North Carolina? Probably. But it's
21 mitigated. For anybody to believe that the planners,
22 whether it's at your side of the table or on our side of
23 the microphone, aren't recognizing the risk that's
24 associated with running a lab that's studying high risk
25 pathogens.

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1 Of course, the planners are looking at
2 that risk and they are mitigating the risk. So for
3 people who think there is a high level of risk
4 associated with that, I just think is really not looking
5 at and recognizing the way things like this is done.

6 The other thing that I want to talk about
7 is there has been a discussion about a mainland site
8 being a higher risk of terrorism than an island or an
9 offshore location. I came from Long Island before I
10 moved to San Antonio so I know where Plum Island is.
11 And I think that we all remember history, that on
12 September 10th, 2001, we actually thought that the
13 oceans protected us. Most of my friends in law
14 enforcement and counterterrorism work basically believe
15 that there is no place that's immune to terrorism.

16 So I think that, actually, when you look
17 at things, our Research Park location is a great place
18 to put the NBAF. We have a city that wants the NBAF.
19 We have a infrastructure of science and technology, and
20 we have a city that wants to grow, based on science and
21 technology.

22 So I hope that when the decision is made
23 ultimately that we end up being awarded the lab and that
24 we get the opportunity to greet those 350 Ph.D.
25 scientists to our region. Thank you.

1|24.6

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 24.6

DHS notes the commentor's support for the Texas Research Park Site Alternative.

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1 MS. COGHILL: Thank you, Mr. Fraser.

2 Gene Dawson.

3 GENE DAWSON: Thank you. My name is Gene

4 Dawson, and I'm president of Pape Dawson engineers. And

5 our firm has been representing the Texas Research Park

6 in master planning and infrastructure since the late

7 '80's. And since the -- that time, the infrastructure

8 has been designed to accommodate large-scale campus

9 research facilities. On-site utility and transportation

10 infrastructure already exists that can handle the

11 demands of the proposed NBAF facility.

12 I want to point out in table 3.1.1-1 and

13 other sections of the EIS, the statement incorrectly

14 identifies 4.6 miles of off-site sewer extension

15 required to serve the proposed facility, when, in fact,

16 sewer service is available adjacent to the property

17 today.

18 Combined with other existing

19 infrastructure and commitments from our local utility

20 and infrastructure departments, the Texas Research Park

21 is ready to serve the proposed NBAF facility today.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

24 Bill Rasco.

25 BILL RASCO: Good evening, I'm Bill

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 8.6

DHS acknowledges commentor's identification of new information pertaining to the sanitary sewage system infrastructure for the NBAF operation at the Texas Research Park Site Alternative. DHS will document, review and incorporate all appropriate new and/or revised information in the NBAF final design.

Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 8.6

DHS notes the commentor's statement.

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1 Rasco. I'm president and CEO of the Greater San Antonio
2 Hospital Council, and I was asked to comment on
3 hospitals and health systems within the region.

4 Our Hospital Council represents some 53
5 licensed hospitals and health care systems in 23
6 counties here in San Antonio and surrounding South
7 Texas. And the Hospital Council provides the leadership
8 advocacy for and cooperation among the members in
9 addressing the health of the communities we serve.

10 Our regions' hospitals provide the
11 largest economic impact of industry sector with over
12 \$4 1/2 billion dollars annually in the most recent year
13 for San Antonio alone. The total geographic area that
14 our hospitals cover is about 22,000 square miles,
15 roughly the size of the State of Delaware.

16 The facilities represent urban and rural
17 hospitals from 25 to over 1000 bedsides. And near-term
18 expansion plans include programs for four new acute-care
19 facilities and two total replacement facilities with
20 active discussion underway for two additional new
21 facilities in this region.

22 San Antonio also serves as a hub for
23 tertiary referral services, for patients requiring
24 specialized care, having three Level-2 trauma centers
25 here within San Antonio. And with the implementation of

18.6

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 8.6

DHS notes the information provided by the commentor.

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1 the National Base Realignment Closure Requirements, the
2 two Level-1 trauma centers, the military trauma centers
3 at BAMC and Wilford Hall Medical Center, will evolve
4 into the U.S. military's largest medical training
5 facilities anywhere in the world. Also headquartered
6 here is the South Texas Veterans' Health Care System,
7 providing extensive health care to services to veterans.

8 All federal health care systems in those
9 regions are members of the Hospital Council. The
10 hospitals and health care systems represent the broad
11 spectrum of services in the health care industry,
12 including mental health, renal-natal intensive care
13 services, and renown cancer and research therapy
14 centers.

15 Virtually all levels of medical
16 specialties are provided here in this region. An
17 integral partner is the University of Texas Health
18 Science Center of San Antonio, including medical and
19 dental schools, nursing schools, allied health schools.
20 Moreover, the critically significant needs in private
21 academic health care organizations, also members of our
22 Council, complement and round out the strong educational
23 environment in the San Antonio health care industry that
24 work closely with the nation's and with this region's
25 hospitals. Thank you.

1|8.6
cont.

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1 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

2 Ann Stevens.

3 ANN STEVENS: Hello. I am Ann Stevens,

4 president of Bio-Med SA. We are a nonprofit,

5 membership-based industry organization, supported in

6 part by the City of San Antonio and Bexar County.

7 While the primary purpose today is to

8 discuss the potential environmental impact of NBAF on

9 San Antonio, and from reading the EIS it sounds like the

10 benefits far outweigh the minimal risks, I would like to

11 kind of turn that around and describe the San Antonio

12 environment and its potential impact on the NBAF and its

13 mission.

14 As you've heard repeatedly today, San

15 Antonio is a city that embraces science and medicine.

16 We have unique research assets, diverse resources, and

17 strong infrastructure, some of which can be found

18 literally nowhere else, such as the nation's only

19 privately owned BSL-4 lab at the Southwest Foundation,

20 in addition to a number of other BSL-3 labs throughout

21 the city, highly regarded educational institutions, and

22 a thriving bio-medical research community.

23 Health care and bio-science is actually a

24 leading engine of the local economy, with an annual

25 economic impact exceeding \$15 billion, and that's

18.6

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 8.6
DHS notes the commentor's support for the Texas Research Park site alternative.

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1 actually a very conservative estimate with no multiplier
2 effect.

3 The sector employs more than 112,000
4 people or about one out of every seven members of the
5 San Antonio work force. And not included in these
6 already impressive figures are significant numbers of
7 other people employed in academic medicine and military
8 medicine, both of which are actually integral components
9 of our health care and bio-science industry.

10 As you were aware, San Antonio is also
11 becoming home to the largest military health care and
12 bio-medical research operations in the nation as a
13 result of the recent BRAC decisions.

1|8.6 cont.

14 The breadth, the depth, and the diversity
15 of our scientific research community provides unique
16 collaborative and recruiting opportunities that simply
17 are not available anywhere else. We already have, right
18 here with within our own community, the kinds of
19 knowledgeable technical staff needed to safely operate
20 high containment laboratories.

21 Scientists here are already investigating
22 numerous select agents and infectious diseases in
23 ongoing research programs. This depth of expertise,
24 along with San Antonio's excellent quality of life, is
25 an important advantage in recruiting top-level

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1 scientists, physicians, and professionals of all kinds.

2 In short, we believe the selection of San
3 Antonio's Texas Research Park would make a major,
4 positive, environmental impact on the NBAF facility and
5 mission. Thank you.

6 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

7 Dr. Fernando Guerra.

8 DR. FERNANDO GUERRA: Thank you very
9 much. And I also want to take this opportunity to
10 welcome you.

11 There will be three of us from the
12 Department of Health: myself, the director, Mr. Charles
13 Pruski, the administrator for different health services,
14 and then Mr. Roger Pollok, who coordinates our public
15 health emergency preparedness.

16 I am Dr. Fernando Guerra, Director of
17 Health and the health authority for the San Antonio
18 Metropolitan Health District, which is the public health
19 department for the City of San Antonio and Bexar
20 County. I have a privilege of also being a member of
21 the Institute of Medicine in the Academy of Medicine,
22 Science, and Engineering for the State of Texas.

23 Our mission is to provide leadership and
24 services for San Antonio and Bexar County, to prevent
25 illness and injury, promote healthy behaviors and

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1 protect against health hazards. Our vision is to assure
2 the optimal health for our communities and the
3 protection of our environment through the
4 implementations of the core values prevention, immerse
5 the equity and integrity.

6 In our public health work, we have the
7 responsibility for over 1.5 million people within our
8 jurisdiction, and at any given time, as you can well
9 understand, any visitors and guests in our community as
10 the tourism and convention businesses are major
11 contributors to the economic base after health care in
12 the Department of Defense programs. In this regard, we
13 must have the capacity to anticipate and respond to
14 unforeseen incidents that potentially could put
15 individuals at risk.

18.6

16 Because of the important place that this
17 geographic region occupies in the state and the country,
18 our responsibilities are taken very seriously.
19 Therefore, staff capabilities are carefully assessed and
20 upgraded on a regular basis, even beyond preparedness
21 and response related to the mandates of Homeland
22 Security.

23 Our staff continues to play an important
24 role in any areas of environmental concern, the
25 unnatural disasters and threats of terroristic

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 8.6

DHS notes the commentor's support for the Texas Research Park Site Alternative.

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1 activities, but certainly the environmental impact of
2 changing eco-systems, urban sprawl, that disrupt natural
3 habitats and the rapid population growth that we've
4 experienced in recent years.

5 With such a facility as NBAF is located
6 in our immediate region, I am confident that our
7 department and staff will expand its competencies and
8 capabilities to more closely assess the anticipated
9 environmental impact in the near term, with both active
10 and passive surveillance systems, which also includes
11 air monitoring, we can assess some of the longer term
12 consequences.

118.6
cont.

13 Our department has, for the past eight
14 years, had in place the Public Center for Environmental
15 Health, supported through the Department of Defense
16 contract as a research and policy center health for
17 assessing environmental impact, health effects, and
18 prior land use, and the potential adverse effects of
19 contaminants from a number of industrial operations.

20 The Department of Health has long enjoyed
21 a close working relationship with the Department of
22 State Health Services, Centers for Disease Control and
23 Prevention, the EPA Agency for Toxic Substances, Disease
24 Registry, and also the School of Public Health in
25 America, their institutions, their scientists and

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1 researchers as well as the medical community.

2 Finally, I would say as the Director of

3 Health that I am confident that our Department, our

4 community, and our community partners throughout the

5 region have in place the expertise and capacity to

6 provide vigilance and support for such a facility and

7 the surrounding environment. Coupled with this is the

8 ability to recognize and respond to any accident or

9 incident that would put us at risk for Foot and Mouth

10 Disease or other viruses that potentially affect

11 populations of livestock and agricultural products.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

14 Roger Pollok.

15 ROGER POLLOK: Good evening. My name is

16 Roger Pollok. I'm the Public Health Emergency

17 Coordinator for the San Antonio Metropolitan Health

18 District. My role as a coordinator or is to develop

19 all-hazards response plans, using local, state, and

20 federal resources, and to coordinate those resources

21 during an event to maximize efficiencies and response.

22 The all-hazards plan consists of response

23 systems for bio-terrorism, chemical terrorism,

24 radiological, natural disasters of many types, and

25 emerging infectious diseases. To effectively coordinate

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 8.6

DHS notes the information provided by the commentor.

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1 our response, the San Antonio Metropolitan Health
2 District has implemented a number of interlocal
3 agreements with all municipalities within Bexar County,
4 identifying the Director of the San Antonio Metropolitan
5 Health District as a health authority during an
6 all-hazards event.

7 The San Antonio Metropolitan Health
8 District also implemented memorandums of agreement with
9 all the school districts to utilize their facilities in
10 an effort to prophylax 1.6 million people in our
11 community. We also implemented agreements with many
12 agencies, such as University Health Systems, Bexar
13 County Medical Society, Baptist Child and Family
14 Services, to support and augment personnel resources in
15 a response.

16 As part of the all-hazards plan, the San
17 Antonio Metropolitan Health District has implemented
18 many surveillance and monitoring systems to measure the
19 health status in our community. Required by law, all
20 physicians, hospitals, and laboratories must report
21 those diseases as identified on the Texas Department of
22 State Health Services reportable disease list to their
23 local health departments.

24 Through some strong surveillance we
25 monitor the signs and symptoms of those patients who

18.6 cont.

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1 enter into the emergency departments here and around San
2 Antonio. We also monitor school absenteeism,
3 over-the-counter drug sales, which are often used as
4 community indicators.

5 An important key to responding
6 efficiently is laboratory support. The San Antonio
7 Metropolitan Health District currently operates a
8 Bio-Safety Level-3 laboratory located at Brooks City
9 Base. This laboratory is part of the laboratory
10 response network and is outfitted with cutting edge
11 technology to rapidly detect and identify those agents
12 that may be used in a bio-terrorism emerging infectious
13 disease event.

14 Finally, as we know, plans are rendered
15 useless if they're not exercised. The San Antonio
16 Metropolitan Health District exercises its all-hazards
17 plans in conjunction with emergency management, the
18 regional medical operation center --

19 (Beeper sounding)

20 MS. COGHILL: That's fine. Thank you.

21 Charles Pruski. Thank you.

22 CHARLES PRUSKI: Thank you. My name is
23 Charles Pruski, and I'm an Assistant District at the San
24 Antonio Metropolitan Health District. I have requested
25 to speak this evening in order to provide you

1|8.6 cont.

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1 information concerning the communication capabilities of
2 the Health District.

3 As a local public health department, we
4 frequently must provide information to our residents and
5 use a number of channels to do so. We have a public
6 relations manager who serves as our liaison with the
7 media. She contacts -- she has contacts with all the
8 local media outlets and communicates with them
9 frequently to get information out from our various
10 divisions and to assist them in obtaining information
11 and interviews from our staff.

12 All contacts that we have with media are
13 reported to the city's Office of Communications and
14 Public Affairs, where they are combined with those of
15 other departments and transmitted to the City Manager on
16 a daily basis. This information is shared with our
17 mayor and city council as warranted. In addition, we
18 have an extensive Web site, as we post information
19 frequently. Our Web address is:
20 www.sanantonio.gov/health.

21 Several of our staff have been trained to
22 use the Web site software and were supported by the
23 city's Information Technology Services Department, so
24 there is little delay in making new information
25 available to the public.

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1 As you may know, our work is not done in
2 a vacuum. We have literally hundreds of public health
3 partners that we communicate with and meet with very
4 often. This includes governmental entities, physicians'
5 offices, hospitals, schools, nonprofit organizations,
6 and many others. Generally we do this electronically
7 through e-mails that are -- can be sent out very quickly
8 to large groups. Similarly, we can very quickly e-mail
9 information to those entities that we regulate --
10 restaurants, for example.

11 During a public health emergency, we
12 leverage significant assets that we have, providing a
13 response. These are handled through an incident command
14 structure that can be expanded to accommodate any need.
15 San Antonio has a new, fully equipped, emergency
16 operations center that can be activated on very short
17 notice, and city, state and federal resources can be
18 efficiently mobilized and coordinated through this
19 facility.

20 We have an automated call-down system
21 that we quickly program to contact our staff via
22 telephone and mobilize them for service. Once employed,
23 they have access to landlines, cell phones, 800 MHz
24 radios, walkie-talkies, satellite phones, com radios, to
25 facilitate communication with other staff and with other

18.6 cont.

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1 agencies.

2 The EOC can accommodate video

3 conferencing, and we can also communicate through this

4 method at the Public Health Emergency Preparedness

5 offices that are across the street from the EOC.

6 To communicate with our medical partners,

7 we use the Public Health Information Network for

8 federal, state, and local responders to include

9 hospitals. Through EM alerts generated through the

10 Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council we also

11 communicate to local responders in hospitals.

12 There's an epinet system for emergency

13 infectious control practitioners in an e-mail blast-back

14 system that we use with the Bexar County Medical

15 Society. During a medical emergency, DISTRAC will stand

16 up to the Regional Medical Operations Center. This is

17 an entity that coordinates the efforts of all hospitals

18 in this region. The Health District maintains a

19 representative in the RBOC to facilitate communication.

20 Another tool that we use during an

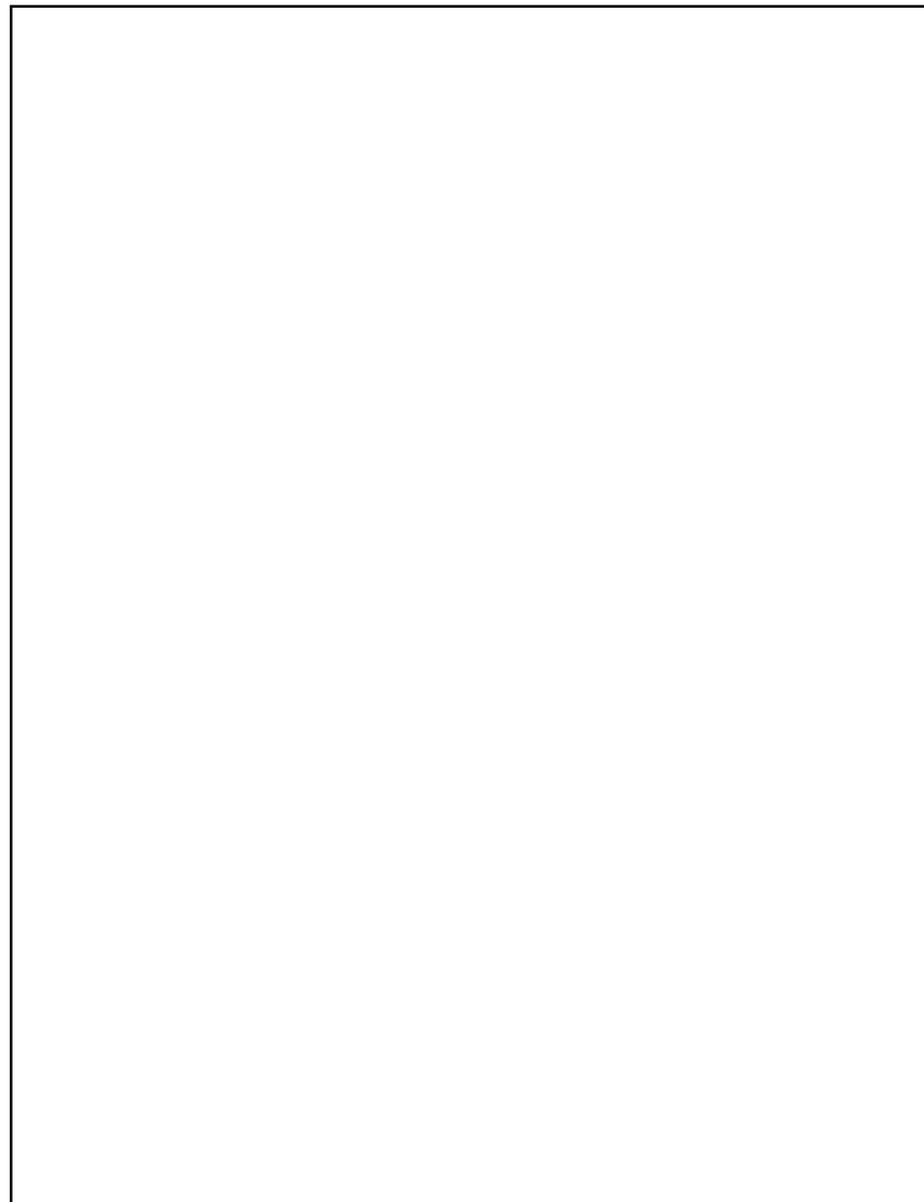
21 emergency event is Web ELC. This secure software allows

22 us to track and coordinate all aspects of an event.

23 Thank you.

24 MS. COGHILL: Thank you very much.

25 Eric Stevens is our next speaker.



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1 ERIC STEVENS: Good evening, I'm Eric
2 Stevens. I'm the Director of the 311 Human Systems Wing
3 at Brooks City Base and also the Installation Director,
4 so that makes me a federal employee. I work for the Air
5 Force. And what I want to talk about is the history of
6 Brooks City Base and the research that's gone on there
7 for the last 50 years, very similar to the timeframe of
8 Plum Island.

9 I want to make the point about the people
10 and the professional work force we have and also the
11 facilities, both wet lab facilities and vivarium
12 facilities at Brooks. The significance of this is, we
13 were one of the 27 sites at Brooks but we were not
14 selected to be a final site but we, in fact, are here in
15 San Antonio. And because of BRAC, most of our -- all of
16 our missions are moving from Brooks to other
17 installations by September 2011. So there may be some
18 interim use of facilities by the NBAF if the Texas
19 Research Site is selected.

20 The 50 years of history are pretty
21 unique. Again, we've been using live animal models. It
22 dates back to the '50s when we were part of the managed
23 space program partnering with NASA, so we are -- we have
24 experience with large, large national programs; in the
25 '70s and '80s, directed energy and radio frequency

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1 radiation, again with live animal models, and more
2 recently in the past couple decades, nuclear biological
3 and chemical terrorism, operational development and
4 testing of the hand-held devices. So we have a long
5 history of, again, doing research with live animals, as
6 well as -- well as human models.

7 The professional work force. Well, we
8 have approximately 550 engineers, bio-medical folks,
9 medical doctors, public health folks, as well as
10 scientists, that may or may not be moving with their
11 jobs. San Antonio is a great places to live culturally,
12 and we have indications that maybe only 10 or 15 percent
13 may be moving with their jobs to other locations, like
14 Dayton, Ohio. That gives a terrific work force of some
15 of the same skills you're going to be looking for in the
16 NBAF that are already here in San Antonio, not just at
17 Brooks but across the -- across the area in -- not only
18 metro health facilities but also in the universities.

1|24.6 cont.

19 The wet lab facilities. We have over
20 200,000 square feet of wet lab facilities that are in
21 use right now, and again, they're going to be vacated by
22 2011.

23 Animal care facilities, we have over
24 40,000 square feet of vivarium facilities. The army of
25 vets that support Plum Island also support us here at

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1 Brooks, and we have been ALAC accredited in our
2 facilities since 1967. So Brooks, in itself, can be a
3 very strong supporter of the NBAF site just because of
4 our presence and some of the stuff that we have going
5 away.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. COGHILL: Thank you very much.

8 Next speaker is Donald Jakeway.

9 DONALD E. JAKEWAY: Welcome back with the
10 EIS team to San Antonio. My partner, Eric Stevens, from
11 Brooks City Base, I couldn't add anything more to what
12 he said.

13 We were very proud to be a part of the
14 competition at Brooks City Base for this very facility.
15 We want you to know that the Brooks Development
16 Authority is a member of the TBAC, the very unique
17 consortium that came together in this community to
18 support this facility, and that the Brooks City Base and
19 all the these facilities will be standing ready for
20 anything that we can do to help in any kind of
21 transition to this facility, and/or support anything
22 that would come to be a support to the final facility in
23 the future.

24 So on behalf of the Brooks Development
25 Authority -- and by the way, Catherine, we submitted all

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1 of our comments in writing. So thank you very much.

2 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

3 Henry Cisneros.

4 HENRY CISNEROS: Yes, ma'am, gentlemen.

5 I am Henry Cisneros and serve as chairman of a housing
6 investment company named CityView. I had the great
7 honor of serving as mayor of San Antonio for four terms
8 in the 1980s and saw the consolidation of the city's
9 five medical institutions and in those years and since.

10 I'd like to talk about them as four
11 pillars. Medical education. It's some very substantial
12 institutions, including some of the best in the country,
13 like the UT Health Science Center Dental School.

14 Medical research. Again, including some
15 of the best, like the Southwest Foundation for
16 Bio-Medical Research. Clinical specialization. A very
17 important component of that being military medicine, and
18 bio and medical businesses that are growing here.

19 Now I'm not going to dwell on the
20 components of each of those because time doesn't allow
21 and because you're familiar with them. But I do want to
22 say a word about the results of that growing aggregation
23 of institutions and the implications for NBAF.

24 First we have, as a result of our efforts
25 over the years, sites and specialized facilities, like

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1 the Texas Research Park, which wouldn't exist but for
2 the efforts of a lot of people from all of these
3 sectors, Brooks City Base, The Southwest Foundation,
4 etc.

5 We have a personnel pipeline that's deep
6 in this field because of military medicine and because
7 of the 115,000 people involved in health care and the
8 bio-sciences. So recruiting ought to be easy from the
9 local work force.

10 We have training institutions of all
11 kinds, literally from the high school level, Health
12 Careers High School and community college focusing on
13 this, all the way through higher education of various
14 kinds.

118.6 cont.

15 We have knowledge of the federal system
16 with this city's long history of working with the
17 federal institutions, Army, Air Force, and now Navy, as
18 the consolidation of all military medicine occurs here.

19 The long and short is, we have working
20 for us and for you what economists refer to as
21 agglomeration effects, the effects where two plus two
22 equal five. Because people are working together, you
23 get the synergy of teams and institutions and funding
24 and budgets, a people working together on these
25 subjects. It's happening, literally, daily in San

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1 Antonio, things like BRAC; things like the Incarnate
2 Word setting up an optometry school and veterinary
3 school; like Texas A&M locating a new campus here;
4 Trinity University and its medical administration
5 program.

6 Let me just close with one other quick
7 point. Having been a Cabinet officer in President
8 Clinton's administration, I know that sometimes the
9 issue of diversity comes up. San Antonio is one of the
10 most diverse cities, and generally speaking, our
11 military institutions end up improving their diversity
12 scores simply because they're in San Antonio.

13 It's almost impossible to put a work
14 force together that isn't 40 or 50 percent minority, and
15 generally end up with the largest aggregation of
16 Hispanics in their work force because they're here. So
17 it's just an added bonus to the kinds of things and one
18 other piece of this agglomeration effect. Thank you.

19 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

20 George Irving.

21 GEORGE IRVING: Thank you again for the
22 opportunity to speak tonight. My name is George Irving,
23 I'm a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. I am also and have
24 had the privilege to be the past president -- a past
25 president of the American Association for Laboratory

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1 Animal Science. I'm currently a vice president for
 2 Conceptual Mindworks, Inc. I have over 40 years
 3 experience in laboratory operations, particularly those
 4 related to infectious diseases or radiation that demands
 5 presentation procedures and the use of laboratory
 6 animals.

7 CMI is a woman-owned, minority small
 8 business, based here in San Antonio. We are an applied
 9 research and software engineering company and have
 10 supported the Department of Defense District for over 18
 11 years. CMI is emerging over 10 years in developing
 12 counter-measures for bio-warfare agents, as a result
 13 that in Florida, proof patents, plus three pending
 14 patents that our scientists have written in numerous
 15 other locations in the course of executing this
 16 government programs.

17 One significant positive aspect of our
 18 San Antonio community is, that's not described in the
 19 EIS, is our demonstrated capability in the process of
 20 transport of biological samples. I have personal
 21 knowledge of the process that's used by the Air Force at
 22 Brooks City Base to receive and process tens of
 23 thousands of biological samples every year for worldwide
 24 tracking of diseases.

25 These processes are similar in nature to

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1 those required by the NBAF to receive biological
2 samples. They illustrate the San Antonio community has
3 the processes in existence and in place to support the
4 diagnostic mission of the NBAF.

5 When this Air Force experience is
6 combined with existing modular transportation of
7 patients by the San Antonio Health District, the Texas
8 Animal Health Commission, and the Texas Veterinarian
9 Diagnostic Laboratories, it is clear that Texas is ready
10 and safely able to administer biological sample
11 transportation needed by the NBAF.

12 As an experienced administrator and
13 laboratory veterinarian, I would like to emphasize that
14 San Antonio in particular and Texas in general have
15 exceptional experience in housing, care, and handling of
16 laboratory animals. That includes the gamut from
17 domestic farm animals to nonhuman primates.

18 We have outstanding internationally known
19 facilities here in San Antonio, accredited by the
20 American Association for the Accreditation of Outdoor
21 Animal Care, and at least 80 veterinarians in San
22 Antonio that are board certified in specific specialties
23 required by the NBAF.

24 I'm confident San Antonio has the desire
25 and capability to assist in building, operating, and

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2|24.6 cont.

1 maintaining laboratory animal facilities at the NBAF at
2 the highest state of the art. Thank you so much tonight
3 for my opportunity to speak. I am confident that the
4 nation is best served by locating the NBAF here in San
5 Antonio, Texas.

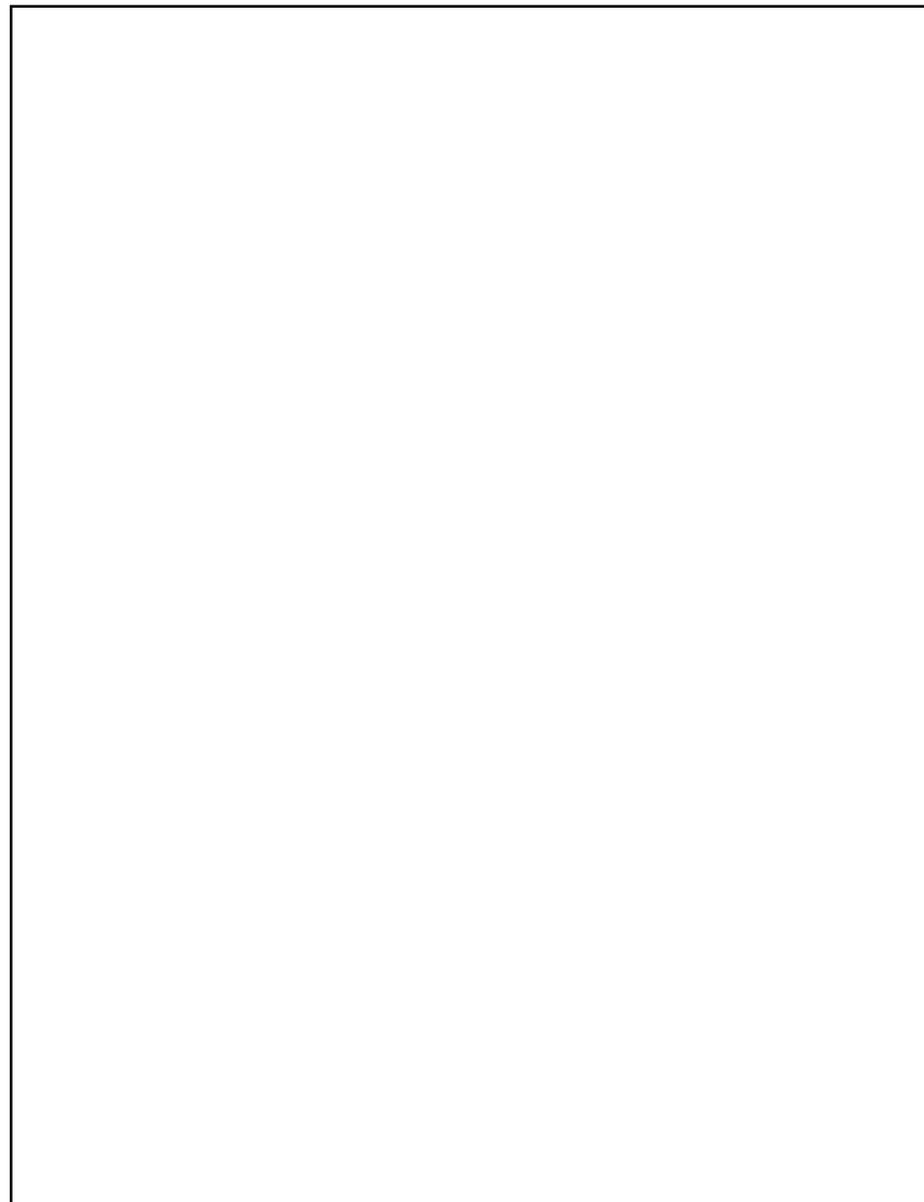
6 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

7 John Feik is our next speaker.

8 JOHN FEIK, JR: Good evening. My name is
9 John Feik, Jr, and I represent a company here in San
10 Antonio called DPT Laboratories. We're a pharmaceutical
11 research and development company. We do that on a
12 fee-for-service basis to the "who's who" of the
13 pharmaceutical industry as well as the bio-tech
14 community.

15 We have major research and development
16 facilities here in San Antonio, manufacturing located
17 just north of San Antonio, downtown San Antonio, with
18 new research and development facilities down at Brooks
19 City Base. We employ more than 1600 employees worldwide
20 with our facilities, 800 of those employees being here
21 in San Antonio. And this business originated here in
22 San Antonio.

23 I thought since we are talking about the
24 Environmental Impact Statement with the NBAF project,
25 I'd like to speak briefly about how DPT views the city



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1 for projects of this type.

2 First, DPT has been able to access a
3 great work force existing here in San Antonio. And when
4 we've needed to recruit folks from outside of San
5 Antonio, be it scientists or professionals, we've been
6 able to attract highly qualified people. In fact, we
7 employ more than 100 R&D scientists here in San Antonio
8 alone. In fact, it's been -- it's actually been a
9 recruiting tool to bring scientists, be it bio-chemists,
10 chemists, or microbiologists because of quality of life
11 that San Antonio affords, diversity of culture and
12 recreational happenings.

124.6

13 As aside to that, when we were recruiting
14 our scientists here to San Antonio, one of the things
15 that they're happy to learn is of the large and
16 accomplished scientific community we have here, as well
17 as the world-class research being done by a number of
18 institutions and companies like ours.

19 Secondly, we'd like you to know that
20 since 1990 the company's experienced great growth, a
21 tremendous growth. And I think that's important for
22 you-all to know, because without the city and the county
23 providing an environment that's conducive to supporting
24 our growth, this would not have been possible to
25 relocating our own R&D center down at Brooks City Base.

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1 We believe that San Antonio has had a
2 long track record of supporting this, whether it's
3 federal, state, or private, such as DPT or Southwest
4 Foundation for Bio-Medical Research.

5 Lastly, I'd like to point out another
6 environmental advantage that we view of San Antonio. We
7 view this as a clean climate from a standpoint that
8 we're not in tornado alley, we're not in danger of
9 hurricanes, and we're not in an earthquake zone. That's
10 important to DPT because there's minimal risk for our
11 employees, our facilities, and I think that should be
12 important for you guys as well.

13 For all these reasons and many more, the
14 DPT fully recommends that San Antonio be considered, and
15 we recommend that San Antonio be a logical choice for
16 the NBAF in relocating to our city. We hope you'll
17 choose the city.

18 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

19 Tom Long.

20 TOM LONG: Good evening. My name is Tom
21 Long, and I'm the senior manager for Customer
22 Relationships and Economic Development for CPS Energy.
23 My comments this evening will focus on the
24 infrastructure at the Texas Research Park site as
25 addressed in the Draft EIS.

1|24.6 cont.

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1 CPS Energy is the nation's largest
2 municipally owned combined electric and natural gas
3 utility. We serve over 680,000 electric customers and
4 320,000 natural gas customers in the San Antonio
5 region. We are positioned to provide NBAF power that
6 you need well into the 21st century, with a diverse fuel
7 mix and modern, well-maintained facilities.

8 We own and operate nine power plants,
9 fueled primarily by nuclear, coal, natural gas, and
10 renewable fuel sources. Combined, these plants provide
11 a maximum capacity of 5,825 megawatts, translating to a
12 20 percent reserve capacity and sufficient power to meet
13 NBAF's needs now and in the future.

14 The Texas Research Park site will be
15 provided with power through two diversely routed
16 circuits. These circuits will originate from different
17 transformers at the CPS Energy substation located
18 adjacent to the Texas Research Park. The two separate
19 lines would converge at the site and will be stepped
20 down to customer voltage by two transformers, each
21 capable of handling the entire facility load.

22 Likewise, the natural gas infrastructure
23 at Texas Research Park is in place today around the site
24 parameter and is adequate from a supply pressure level
25 to meet the needs of NBAF.

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1 CPS Energy is also committed to providing
 2 NBAF with not only affordable and reliable power but
 3 also to finding ways to -- for NBAF to be more energy
 4 efficient and to develop greater solutions for your
 5 long-term energy needs.

6 Our energy efficiency programs are backed
 7 by over \$96 million in customer incentives for
 8 residential and commercial customers who want to reduce
 9 their costs through lighting retrofits, general roof
 10 upgrades, and improvements to more energy efficient HVAC
 11 systems.

12 CPS Energy is the largest publicly owned
 13 purchaser of wind power in Texas. Currently we have a
 14 renewable energy power plant, in that we purchase over
 15 500 megawatts of wind power from north and west Texas.
 16 Late this year, we will be adding to that wind portfolio
 17 with an additional 75 megawatts from the Texas first
 18 coastal wind farm.

19 So why San Antonio for NBAF? Among the
 20 other reasons you've heard all day long today, consider
 21 the fact that San Antonio would provide NBAF with a
 22 unique opportunity to partner with a locally owned
 23 utility to provide NBAF with reliable power, affordable
 24 power, and renewable power. Thank you.

25 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

2|24.6

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1 John Herbold.

2 DR. JOHN HERBOLD: Good evening. My name

3 is John Herbold, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine,

4 president of the American College of Veterinary

5 Preventive Medicine, and Director of the University of

6 Texas Center for Bio Security and Public Health and

7 Preparedness.

8 I would like to speak specifically to the

9 health and safety section of the Environmental Impact

10 Statement. Over the past five years, our Center has

11 trained over 50,000 individuals, including public health

12 workers, first responders, physicians, nurses,

13 environmental scientists, and veterinarians. Our

14 workshops and training courses have covered basic and

15 advanced disaster life support, recognizing and

16 responding to bio-terrorism, disaster and crisis

17 leadership, border health, epidemiologic outbreak

18 investigations, laboratory preparedness, public health

19 and the law, personal protective equipment, overview of

20 agro-terrorism, protection of vulnerable populations,

21 rural health and risk communication.

22 The University of Texas, along with our

23 partners at the two other schools of the Public Health

24 in Texas at North Texas and Texas A&M, and other

25 academic health science centers, including University of

1|24.6: 19.6

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 19.6
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Comment No: 2 Issue Code: 24.6
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1 Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, have built a
2 significant work force infrastructure to protect,
3 respond, and support any potential hazardous incidents,
4 both human and animal.

5 Texas has a robust public health and
6 animal health surveillance and response infrastructure,
7 and as we deal with every day with the potential for
8 endemic animal and human diseases.

9 I live in San Antonio with my wife of 41
10 years. My son and daughter-in-law live in San Antonio,
11 and two of my six grandchildren live here in San
12 Antonio. I think NBAF is safe for us.

13 Thank you for this opportunity to
14 supplement the health and safety information available
15 to you.

16 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

17 Linda Loomis.

18 LINDA LOOMIS: As I mentioned during the
19 last meeting, I'm the distant great-granddaughter of the
20 Reverend Thomas Hooker and was injured by the smallpox
21 vaccine.

22 I was really disgusted by the last
23 meeting here, watching the audience reaction because we
24 had someone who said, Let's make it a Fiesta del NBAF.
25 I saw a professor from UT San Antonio give a "high five"

2|24.6

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1 to one of his graduate students after the graduate
2 student's presentation.

3 This is not a sporting event. This is
4 not a party for margaritas and cascarones. This is a
5 lab proposed for eight dangerous Level-4 animal
6 pathogens.

7 We moved here in '94. At that time, Herb
8 and Mary Sandler, who were the CEOs of Golden West
9 Financial and World Savings, waltzed into Governor Ann
10 Richards' office and said, Let's get a good road down
11 near World Savings. Well, that was in the early '90s,
12 and that road that was proposed out to Potranco, you say
13 it's mostly residential. We've been here 14 years, and
14 we're still waiting for a freeway out on 1604.

15 And if you talk about animal impact, we
16 can see your Environmental Impact Statements. The man
17 here at the last meeting from the State of Texas was
18 wise beyond what most of the other people proposed. He
19 said, Should there be an accidental release of a
20 pathogen, it would really, truly decimate Texas'
21 animals. This is a man with the State, and yet you
22 still have to on and do an EIS report?

23 There's growth to the west. There's Sea
24 World, a major tourist destination. There's Northwest
25 Vista College, City Bank and Wachovia campuses, and

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 25.6

DHS notes the commentor's opposition to the Texas Research Park Site Alternative.

1|25.6

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1 there's also a Southwest Research Center. To put two
2 BSL-4 labs within 10 or 12 miles of each other is
3 ludicrous.

4 I don't know what kind of security you
5 plan, whether it's helicopter surveillance as Clinton
6 and Schumer have recommended for Plum Island, but I
7 still don't see much to promote putting the lab in San
8 Antonio.

9 Why are so few people from San Antonio at
10 this meeting? Do a Jay Leno kind of walkabout. Go down
11 to Main Plaza. Ask them what Plum island is. Ask them
12 to tell you what a virus is. Ask them if they can
13 define the Nipah Virus or the Rift Valley Fever Virus.

14 You have an uneducated, highly illiterate
15 population, despite what others here promote as the
16 colleges in the area. I should know. I have a master's
17 in education. And they will not be able to tell you.

18 To put it here is environmental racism
19 because these people do not know what's going on.
20 You're not going to get that kind of coverage from the
21 Express News.

22 I see some presentation tonight that are
23 pure CYA, cover your ass. The mulch fire, if you're
24 looking for responses, it was a failure on the part of
25 Bexar Metropolitan Health. You have people who don't

2|20.6

Comment No: 2Issue Code: 20.6

DHS notes the commentor's concern. A local consortium, with the support of state and local officials, proposed that the NBAF be located at the Texas Research Park Site and that the National Environmental Policy Act requires all reasonable locations be considered. DHS has held public meetings and conducted outreach efforts to ensure that the surrounding communities are well aware of the proposed action. As described in Section 3.1 of the NBAF EIS, an analysis was conducted to determine if the proposed project alternatives would have disproportionately high and adverse impacts to minority and low-income populations within the Region of Influence (ROI) during the construction and normal operation of the proposed NBAF. For the Texas Research Park Site, the analysis determined that the ROI does not exhibit higher percentages of minority or low-income residents as compared to Bexar and Medina Counties and therefore there are no disproportionately high and adverse effects to low-income and minority populations.

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1 want to stay, educated people out of AT&T who are
2 leaving. You really ought to think twice about this.

3 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

4 Matthew Medina.

5 MATTHEW MEDINA: Hello. Thank you for
6 your time.

7 I got a few mainstream news articles
8 here. I got a wired news, CDC shuts down bio-weapons
9 lab after infections. The Center for Disease Control
10 suspended bio-weapons research at Texas A&M University
11 after the school failed to report exposure to biological
12 agents. This is the first time the CDC has ever forced
13 a research facility to stop work on so-called selective
14 agents.

15 Also I have here Associated Press. U.S.
16 labs mishandling deadly germs. American Laboratory's
17 handling of the world's deadliest germs and toxins have
18 experienced more than 100 accidents and missing
19 shipments since 2003. And the number's increasing
20 steadily as more labs across the country are approved to
21 do the work. But the documented cases reflect poorly on
22 procedures and oversight in high-security labs, some of
23 which worked with organisms and poisons so dangerous
24 that illness that have no cure. In some cases labs have
25 failed to report accidents as required by law.

119.6; 21.6

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Comment No: 1Issue Code: 21.6

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the NBAF. The purpose and need for the proposed action is discussed in Chapter 1 of the NBAF EIS. DHS can not guarantee that the NBAF would never experience an accident. However, as discussed in Section 2.2.1.1, modern biosafety design substantially diminishes the chances of a release as the primary design goal is to provide an adequate level of redundant safety and biocontainment that would be integrated into every component of the building. A discussion of human health and safety is included in Section 3.14.

Comment No: 1Issue Code: 19.6

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding the NBAF.

Accidents could occur in the form of procedural violations (operational accidents), natural phenomena accidents, external events, and intentional acts. Although some accidents are more likely to occur than others (e.g., safety protocol not being followed), the chances of an accidental release are low. The specific objective of the hazard identification, accident analysis, and risk assessment is to identify the likelihood and consequences from accidents or intentional subversive acts. In addition to identifying the potential for or likelihood of the scenarios leading to adverse consequences, this analysis provides support for the identification of specific engineering and administrative controls to either prevent a pathogen release or mitigate the consequences of such a release. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low, but the economic effect would be significant for all sites. As described in Section 3.10.9 of the NBAF EIS, the economic impact of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease virus has been previously studied and could result in a loss in the range of \$2.8 billion in the Plum Island region to \$4.2 billion in the Manhattan, Kansas area over an extended period of time. The economic loss is mainly due to potential foreign bans on U.S. livestock products. Although the effects of an outbreak of Rift Valley fever virus on the national economy has not been as extensively studied, the potential economic loss due to foreign bans on livestock could be similar to that of foot and mouth disease outbreak, while the additional cost due to its effect on the human population could be as high as \$50 billion. There is little economic data regarding the accidental or deliberate Nipah virus release. However, cost would be expected to be much lower than a release of foot and mouth disease virus or Rift Valley fever virus as the Nipah virus vector is not present in the western hemisphere.

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1 I have here another example of the same
2 article. Oklahoma City University in Stillwater in
3 December could not account for a dead mouse. Inoculated
4 bacteria that causes joint pain has been missed. Lymph
5 nodes from a rodent, one of 30 to be incinerated, was
6 never found.

7 And if you don't know, a Level-4 lab
8 poses a high risk of life-threatening diseases for which
9 no vaccine or therapy's available, despite all your
10 fail-safes.

11 And I have here another mainstream
12 article. Bear with me. I appreciate your time,
13 gentlemen and gentlewomen.

1|19.6; 21.6
cont.

14 New York Times, 2002 three-hour power
15 failure at Plum Island lab, the disease center. Failure
16 of all three backup generators raised fears and concern
17 that the containment of infectious pathogens could have
18 been seriously compromised.

19 And I also have here, The first case for
20 Lyme disease appeared 13 miles northeast of the facility
21 of Plum Island.

22 I'd just like for everyone to really
23 consider this, and this is for the safety of our San
24 Antonio future generation. And I speak as a concerned
25 citizen, and I thank you for your time.

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1 MS. COGHILL: Thank you.

2 Our next speaker is Steve McCrary.

3 STEVE MCCRARY: Good evening. Thank you

4 for this time to speak.

5 I have an article here from the New York

6 Times, January 24th, 2005. Exposure during lab

7 reignites a public health debate. I'm just going to

8 read a couple of little quotes from it.

9 Dr. David Osonoff, a professor of

10 environmental health at the Boston School of Public

11 Health, who originally supported the new laboratory but

12 now opposes it, argues that bio-defense spending has

13 shifted money away from bread and butter public and

14 health concerns. Given the diversion of resources and

15 the potential for germs to leak or be diverted, he said,

16 I believe the lab will make us less safe.

17 The flood of bio-defense financing has

18 drawn hundreds of inexperienced researchers into work

19 with hazardous organisms, Dr Ebright said. The Boston

20 accident, he added, shows gross basic incompetence and

21 raises real questions about the competence of that

22 institution to run a Bio-Safety Level-4 lab.

23 Thomas Aguilar, of Alternatives for

24 Community and Environment, a group opposed to the

25 laboratory said, Three infections in a five-month

1|19.0:21.0

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Comment No: 1Issue Code: 19.0

DHS notes the contractor's concern regarding the safety of the NBAF operation and the risk of a release due to NBAF personnel lack of experience or human error. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF, would enable NBAF to be safely operated with a minimal degree of risk, regardless of the site chosen. The NBAF would be designed, constructed, and operated to ensure the maximum level of public safety and to fulfill all necessary requirements to protect the environment. Chapter 3, Section 3.14 and Appendix E of the NBAF EIS, investigates the chances of a variety of accidents that could occur with the proposed NBAF and consequences of potential accidents, including releases due to weather events. The chances of an accidental release are low. Although some "accidents" are more likely to occur than others (e.g., safety protocol not being followed), the chances of an accidental release based on human error are low in large part due to the design and implementation of biocontainment safeguards in conjunction with rigorous personnel training. For example, as described in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2.1 of the NBAF EIS, all laboratory staff would receive thorough pre-operational training, as well as ongoing training, in the handling of hazardous infectious agents, understanding biocontainment functions of standard and special practices for each biosafety level, and understanding biocontainment equipment and laboratory characteristics. Appendix B to the EIS describes biocontainment lapses and laboratory acquired infections. Laboratory-acquired infections have not been shown to be a threat to the community at large. As set out in Chapter 3, Section 3.14.3.4 of the NBAF EIS, employees and contractors will be screened prior to employment or engagement and monitored while working, among other security measures. In addition, oversight of NBAF operations, as described in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2.6 of the NBAF EIS, will be conducted in part by the Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC), which includes community representative participation, and the Animal Research Policy and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (APHIS). Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF, site specific protocols would then be developed in coordination with local emergency response agencies and would consider the diversity and density of populations, including institutionalized populations, residing within the local area. The need for an evacuation under an accident conditions is considered to be a very low probability event. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and emergency response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of the NBAF, would enable the NBAF to be safely operated.

DHS notes the commenter's concerns about the sustainability of funding for NBAF to ensure safe and secure operations. The U.S. Congress and the President are responsible for determining funding priorities for government programs. DHS spends funds in accordance with congressional intent. DHS would maintain the NBAF and ancillary facilities in compliance with applicable environmental, safety, and health requirements and provide for safe operation and maintenance for the life of the

facility.

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 21.0

DHS notes the commenter's concern about the risk to health and safety from the NBAF operation. DHS believes that experience shows that facilities utilizing modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF, would enable NBAF to be safely operated on the U.S. mainland. The NBAF would provide state-of-the-art biocontainment features and operating procedures to minimize the potential for laboratory-acquired infections and accidental releases. The risk of an accidental release of a pathogen is extremely low. Chapter 3, Sections 3.8.9, 3.10.9, 3.14, and Appendices B, D, and E of the NBAF EIS, provide a detailed analysis of the consequences from an accidental or deliberate pathogen release. Should the NBAF Record of Decision call for the design, construction, and operations of the NBAF then site specific protocols and emergency response plans would be developed, in coordination with local emergency response agencies that would consider the diversity and density of human, livestock, and wildlife populations residing within the area. DHS would have site-specific standard operating procedures and emergency response plans in place prior to the initiation of research activities at the proposed NBAF. It has been shown that modern biosafety laboratories can be safely operated in populated areas. An example is the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in downtown Atlanta, Georgia, where such facilities employ modern biocontainment technologies and safety protocols, such as would be employed in the design, construction, and operation of NBAF.

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1 period, and this is all going on when Boston University
2 is saying how safe this dangerous laboratory is going to
3 be. A lot of people are saying it's even worse than we
4 thought.

5 Similar safety questions have been raised
6 by 200 incidents in 2002: the discovery of lethal
7 anthrax outside a high-security laboratory at the
8 military's premiere bio-defense laboratory, the Army
9 Medical Research Institute of Infectious at Fort
10 Dietrick in Maryland lead the sampling throughout the
11 institute. Investigators found three different strains
12 of anthrax bacteria outside the sealed-up laboratories,
13 indicating at least that many leaks, according to an
14 Army report.

15 I also have what are called bio-safety
16 bytes from SunshineProject.org/biodefense. I'm going to
17 be covering about three of these bytes. One is called,
18 The U.S. Army builds bio-defense lab, neglects to
19 inspect it. The U.S. Army-funded BSL-3 facility at Oak
20 Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee holds biological
21 and chemical weapons agents and is preparing to produce
22 ricin.

23 While the facility's physically a BSL-3
24 lab, it is said to operate at BSL-2 containment,
25 obviating the need for NEPA environmental review. The

1|19.0;21.0 cont.

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1 facility activities and agents held, however, suggests
2 that BSL-3 containment is already needed for safe
3 operation.

4 In December 2003, the OR&L Institutional
5 Bio-Safety Committee considered lab safety and resolved
6 that it remains comfortable of the review and
7 inspections of the chem bio-facility conducted by the
8 CDC and the Army. In fact, the lab had not been
9 inspected by the Army for three years, and CDC hadn't
10 visited for more than four.

11 No bio-safety meetings at Rockefeller
12 University. The sky-rocketing bio-defense budget, now
13 exceeding that of Manhattan Project, adjusted for
14 inflation, is rapidly increasing research on biological
15 weapons agents, including risky genetic engineering
16 projects. Despite this and the increasingly evident
17 chronic institutionalized problems with IBCs across the
18 country, the Bush administration maintains that
19 comprehensive laboratory safety and disclosure law is
20 unnecessary. It says that an alleged culture of
21 responsibility among institutional bio-safety
22 communities will protect Americans and the world from
23 its bio-defense research.

24 The IBC system lacks legal teeth and
25 can't adequately handle the jobs it presently has. How

1|19.0;21.0 cont.

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1|19.0: 21.0 cont.

1 then can it possibly rise to the change -- charge of
2 ensuring health safety and good judgement in the conduct
3 of duly use biological weapons research?

4 Thank you for your time.

5 MS. COGHILL: Thank you. We have
6 accommodated all the folks that signed up to speak for
7 this evening's meeting. What we'd like to do is, in the
8 event that there's someone here who didn't sign in and
9 who would like to speak, we would like to offer that up
10 to the person to come to the microphone at this point in
11 time.

12 Okay. We are running ahead of schedule.
13 What we'd like to do is take a break until 9 o'clock and
14 then we'll reopen the meeting in the event that someone
15 who would like to speak, just got off work, or just
16 arrived, so we can obviously give them an opportunity to
17 provide their comments. Thank you.

18 (Recess from 8:36 to 9:08 p.m.)

19 MS. COGHILL: Okay. At this point, we'd
20 just like to check in with everybody and see if there's
21 anyone else who'd like to make comments. No one else
22 has signed in but we just wanted to just double check.

23 Yes, ma'am.

24 MARY ALICE CISNEROS: Thank you. My name
25 is Mary Alice Cisneros, and I am a City Councilwoman on

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1 the City Council. Today is Thursday, we have our City
2 Council. We start at 9:00, and we finished on or about
3 6:30 this evening, so I have come after our meetings to
4 be sure that you know that you have City Council
5 support.

6 I know you heard from another City
7 Councilwoman Delicia Herrera, earlier today, and the
8 reason that some of the others didn't come is because we
9 had a long day today. But I wanted to represent the
10 City and the Mayor this evening.

11 This is not my part of my district. I
12 have more of a central district represented, but Delicia
13 Herrera, this is her area out here, and the Texas
14 Research Park would be part of her district as well and
15 so she was our representative here.

16 But I wanted you to know from me that you
17 have city and government of all levels support for this
18 project here in San Antonio. And we have the facility
19 ready, and we would welcome that support. And we
20 appreciate all the time that you have given us today and
21 this public hearing and the many individuals that have
22 come to speak on behalf of San Antonio and the project
23 here.

24 So thank you again. I just wanted to
25 make sure that I addressed you and be able to tell you

1|24.6

Comment No: 1

Issue Code: 24.6

DHS notes the commentor's support for the Texas Research Park Site Alternative.

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1 you have support here in San Antonio. Thank you for the
2 opportunity.

3 MS. COGHILL: Thank you very much.

4 Is there is there anyone else at this
5 point in time? All right. I'd like to turn the meeting
6 back over to Jamie Johnson.

7 MR. JOHNSON: Well, thank you, everyone,
8 for your comments tonight and earlier today if you were
9 with us this afternoon. And again, I do appreciate
10 people taking time out of busy schedules to come to
11 these meetings. It's been great to be here to get
12 comments on the Draft EIS and input from members of the
13 public, stakeholders, and all the officials here.

14 So we continue to want your comments. If
15 you think of comments that you didn't make tonight,
16 again, as I said earlier we are open for public comments
17 'til August 25th, and make your comments by then. It
18 will be addressed to and responded in the final EIS,
19 which, again, will come out later this fall.

20 So I will leave you with the final slide
21 here, the various mechanisms that you can make comments
22 on. We have people in the back to answer questions. So
23 with that, I will officially adjourn the meeting, and
24 again, thank you, everyone, for coming.

25 (Proceedings ended at 9:11 p.m.)

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

NATIONAL BIO AND AGRO-DEFENSE FACILITY

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(NBAF DRAFT EIS)

PUBLIC MEETING
DATE: AUGUST 11, 2008
7:00 p.m.

SAYBROOK POINT INN
TWO BRIDGE STREET
OLD SAYBROOK, CONNECTICUT 06475

Catherine Coghill, Moderator

PANEL MEMBERS:

Mr. James Johnson, U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security

Dr. Luis Rodriguez, U.S. Department of Agriculture

Mr. Chuck Pergler, Tetra Tech, Inc.

Sandra A. Descahine, Registered Professional

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6		PAGE	LINE
7	WELCOME		
8	James Johnson	3	1
9	Catherine Coghill (moderator)	4	16
10			
11			
12	PRESENTATION		
13	James Johnson	8	10
14		27	14
15	Luis Rodriguez	13	2
16	Chuck Pergler	16	6
17			
18	QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION		
19	NO QUESTIONS WERE ASKED		
20			
21	FORMAL COMMENT SESSION		
22	Mr. Wenderoth	30	3
23	Ms. Czarzasty	33	7
24			
25			



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1 night. So thank you again for coming.

2 THE MODERATOR: This concludes the
3 presentation portion of the agenda. So we are now
4 at the question-and-answer period. As a reminder,
5 we'd like to ask if anyone has any questions, to
6 please come forward to the microphone so everybody
7 can hear the question, and please be sure to face
8 the panel so our court reporter can accurately
9 record what you're asking. At this point in time,
10 is there anyone who has a question based on the
11 presentation that was provided this evening?

12 (No response.)

13 THE MODERATOR: Okay. We'll open up
14 the floor to formal comments. And there's no one
15 at this point in time who has a formal comment that
16 they would like to make. Has anyone changed their
17 mind, at this point in time, on whether or not they
18 would like to make a comment? What we'll do is
19 we'll take a ten-minute break, and we will see if
20 anyone else signs up or comes in later to the
21 meeting to sign up to speak, and we'll reconvene
22 and make sure that we accommodate those folks who
23 would like to talk. Thanks.

24 (Recess taken at 7:40 p.m. until 7:58 p.m.)

25 THE MODERATOR: Good evening. I

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1 understand there is one, Joe, who would like to
2 make a comment.

3 MR. WENDEROTH: There always has to be
4 somebody, so. I had a question for Mr. Pergler.
5 You mentioned something about ozone as a concern as
6 you go forward, and something that you're looking
7 at with respect to Plum Island. And we don't
8 produce any ozone on the Island. I know it may
9 be -- not a containment zone area for Suffolk
10 County, but do you anticipate the new facility
11 producing ozone in some fashion that would be a
12 concern?

13 MR. PERGLER: Very minor amounts. We
14 were just talking about the analysis. This is a
15 NEPA artifact, and I don't intend to denigrate
16 cumulative impacts. But it's always a challenge to
17 look at cumulative impacts because it, at times, if
18 not presented properly, can skew people's
19 impression of what the direct impacts are from a
20 facility. And certainly in the case where we
21 pointed out the four moderate categories, with the
22 exception of visual, all the rest, again, were
23 cumulative impacts, where NBAF may have just very
24 minor, incremental -- or increases to the
25 pollutant, or whatever the criteria is, but yet

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 9.1

DHS notes the commentor's concern with air pollution. As described in Sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2.1.2 of the NBAF EIS, Suffolk County is currently in non-attainment for the air pollutant ozone. Additional emissions from the NBAF would not prevent Suffolk County from regaining attainment status.

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 9.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern regarding air pollution. As described in the NBAF EIS Section 3.4.1, an EPA air dispersion model SCREEN3 (version 96043) was used to estimate NBAF emissions. These estimates included volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides, both precursors to ozone.

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1 it's given quite a bit of attention in analysis,
2 and it's always a subjective sort of thing, because
3 to get cumulative data is always a challenge, too.

4 THE MODERATOR: Does that answer your
5 question?

6 MR. WENDEROTH: Yes, I think so.

7 THE MODERATOR: Make sure you speak
8 into the microphone.

9 MR. WENDEROTH: I guess what you're
10 doing, is you're checking the box, basically, to
11 make sure that you've accounted for it down the
12 road in a fashion.

13 MR. PERGLER: Well, checking a box is
14 good, as long as you understand that it is a very
15 analytical process to get that box checked. It's
16 not something that we take trivially. We take it
17 seriously.

18 MR. WENDEROTH: Right. Okay.

19 THE MODERATOR: Would you like to
20 provide your name for the record?

21 MR. WENDEROTH: Sure. It's Charles
22 Wenderoth.

23 THE MODERATOR: Okay. Is there anyone
24 else who would like to provide a comment at this
25 point in time in the evening?

3|26.0

Comment No: 3 Issue Code: 26.0
DHS notes the commentor's statement.

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1 (No response.)

2 THE MODERATOR: What I would like to
3 do is turn it back over to Jamie, then.

4 MR. JOHNSON: Last chance for
5 comments. No comments. What we'd like to do, the
6 meeting portion is from eight to ten, so we'd like
7 to go ahead, and we'll take another break, in case
8 people come in. We'll keep the court reporter here
9 for a little while. Again, we thank people for
10 coming. We also invite folks, tomorrow night we'll
11 be in New York. Again, if you think of a comment
12 later, please submit it by August 25th.

13 So if that's all right, we'll go ahead
14 and take another break for twenty-five, thirty
15 minutes. We'll unofficially adjourn the meeting
16 for another twenty-five minutes. If anybody else
17 has come in, we can get their comments. If you
18 decide to leave, thank you for coming. Again, feel
19 free to make your comments, if not tonight, at some
20 other point in time. So thank you.

21 (Recess taken at 8:02 p.m. until 8:26 p.m.)

22 THE MODERATOR: All right. Folks, I
23 understand that there is someone here who would
24 like to make a comment. So we're going to go ahead
25 and convene so I can accommodate this person. Just

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1 as a reminder, the guidelines, and we are setting
2 this forward because we're making it fair for
3 everyone at every site, if you can please keep your
4 comments to three minutes, that would be great. To
5 the person who would like to speak, come forward to
6 the microphone.

7 MS. CZARZASTY: Thank you for hearing
8 me. I'm Nancy Czarzasty. I'm a local resident
9 here in Old Saybrook. I apologize for coming in at
10 the last minute here. We didn't realize this was
11 the forum tonight.

12 My comment is that I'm concerned,
13 being a representative of the local community, of
14 where this was actually published for the
15 information to be contained about what is
16 publicized for Plum Island, not on the public
17 comment section. But as to prior to that, what was
18 the proposal for, what was happening? The ad that
19 I read was in a very minor paper here in town, and
20 if I hadn't pursued it on the website, I would have
21 had absolutely no idea what anyone was speaking of.

22 I've spoken with several people in my
23 community, amongst the school systems, amongst
24 neighbors. I'm very active in our community, and
25 no one had any idea what we were coming here for

1|4.0

1 Cont. |4.0

Comment No: 1 Issue Code: 4.0

DHS notes the commentor's concern. DHS is committed to providing public access to pertinent information and has conducted a robust public participation program subsequent to the completion of the competitive site selection process, which is described in Section 2.3.1 of the NBAF EIS. To date, DHS has provided two opportunities for the public to provide comment and input to the environmental impact analyses presented in the NBAF EIS. An initial scoping comment period of 60 days followed the issuance of a Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS. Once a draft of the EIS was published, another notice was issued that provided 60 days for comment. The 60 day period for public review and comment on the NBAF Draft EIS, extended from June 27 through August 25, 2008. DHS accepted comments submitted by various means: mail, toll-free telephone and fax lines, NBAF Web page, and public meetings. DHS gave equal consideration to all comments, regardless of how or where they were received. All comments received during the public comment periods have been considered in this NBAF EIS.

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1 tonight, that that is an issue at hand. So I do
2 appreciate the fact that you're looking for public
3 input.

4 My concern is that the public hasn't
5 been notified truly as to what the proposal
6 actually is, and I think there's a lot of valuable
7 input here for residents to gain. Douglas Smith
8 here has told me that he's going to tell me which
9 of the papers that this was advertised in. I'm
10 hoping that there is some sort of article or
11 something, and maybe even another potential time
12 for residents to come and put in their comments. I
13 don't believe that the residents here in the
14 community have been informed about what this actual
15 proposal is.

16 I do have two other questions, and
17 Doug also is going to find those people, and just
18 so they're recorded. My question is regarding
19 waste, the hazardous waste that comes off of the
20 island. The first question being, I understand
21 that we will be sterilizing all of the waste coming
22 off of the island, and I want to know to what
23 measure we're calling sterile. Sterile is a very
24 relative term. I'd like to know what we're using
25 as that measure of sterile.

1 Cont,4.0

218.2

Comment No: 2

Issue Code: 18.2

As discussed in Section 3.13.2.2 of the NBAF EIS, the pretreatment processes that would be used to sterilize potentially infectious wastes generated at the NBAF must meet the requirements of Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories (BMBL). The NBAF is obligated to use a definition of sterile that is no less stringent than the BMBL definition. According to the BMBL, "Any item, device, or solution is considered to be sterile when it is completely free of all living microorganisms and viruses. The definition is categorical and absolute (i.e., an item is either sterile or it is not)....A sterilization procedure is one that kills all microorganisms, including high numbers of bacterial endospores. From an operational standpoint, a sterilization procedure cannot be categorically defined. Rather, the procedure is defined as a process, after which the probability of a microorganism surviving on an item subjected to treatment is less than one in one million (10⁻⁶). This is referred to as the "sterility assurance level."

Section 3.13.2.2 of the NBAF EIS discusses the disposition of sanitary sewer wastes, waste solids, and carcass/pathological wastes generated by the operation of the NBAF no matter where the NBAF is located. Section 3.13.3 (No Action Alternative) presents information on the disposition of waste liquids and solids at the current Plum Island Animal Disease Center (PIADC) location, and Section 3.13.7 presents information on the disposition of waste liquids and solids if the proposed NBAF is built at the Plum Island Site. Unlike the other candidate sites, Plum Island has its own wastewater treatment plant. As discussed in Section 3.13.7.3, the PIADC wastewater treatment plant may need to be expanded, or a new wastewater treatment plant may need to be built and permitted to accommodate proposed NBAF peak loads. Waste solids generated by PIADC currently undergo onsite treatment or they are transported to appropriately permitted offsite facilities. (PIADC currently operates three incinerators.) If the NBAF is built at the Plum Island location, these incinerators may be closed and additional waste solids may be transported to offsite locations after onsite pretreatment. Table 3.13.2.2-3 summarizes the pretreatment technologies that could be used to sterilize and, or decontaminate waste solids generated at the NBAF.

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2 Cont.118.2

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1 My second question and comment that
2 Doug is going to have someone answer for me is
3 regarding the waste. Once we have these hazards
4 sterilized, I understand they're to go into the
5 municipal waste system. I'd like to know what the
6 municipal waste system from Plum Island is. Thank
7 you.

8 THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.
9 Is there anyone else who would like to make a
10 comment?

11 (No response.)

12 THE MODERATOR: Well, the meeting has
13 been advertised until this evening, and so at this
14 point in time, I'd like to turn it over to Jamie,
15 and we will still be here to accommodate, if
16 there's folks that will come in the door and would
17 like to speak.

18 MR. JOHNSON: Thank you for your
19 questions and comments. What we'll do is
20 officially adjourn the meeting, and these folks
21 will be here the next hour in case people come in
22 or want to submit their comments, to accommodate
23 anybody who has come in late. So again, thank you
24 for coming. With that, we will adjourn the
25 hearing.

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(Hearing adjourned at 8:33 p.m.)

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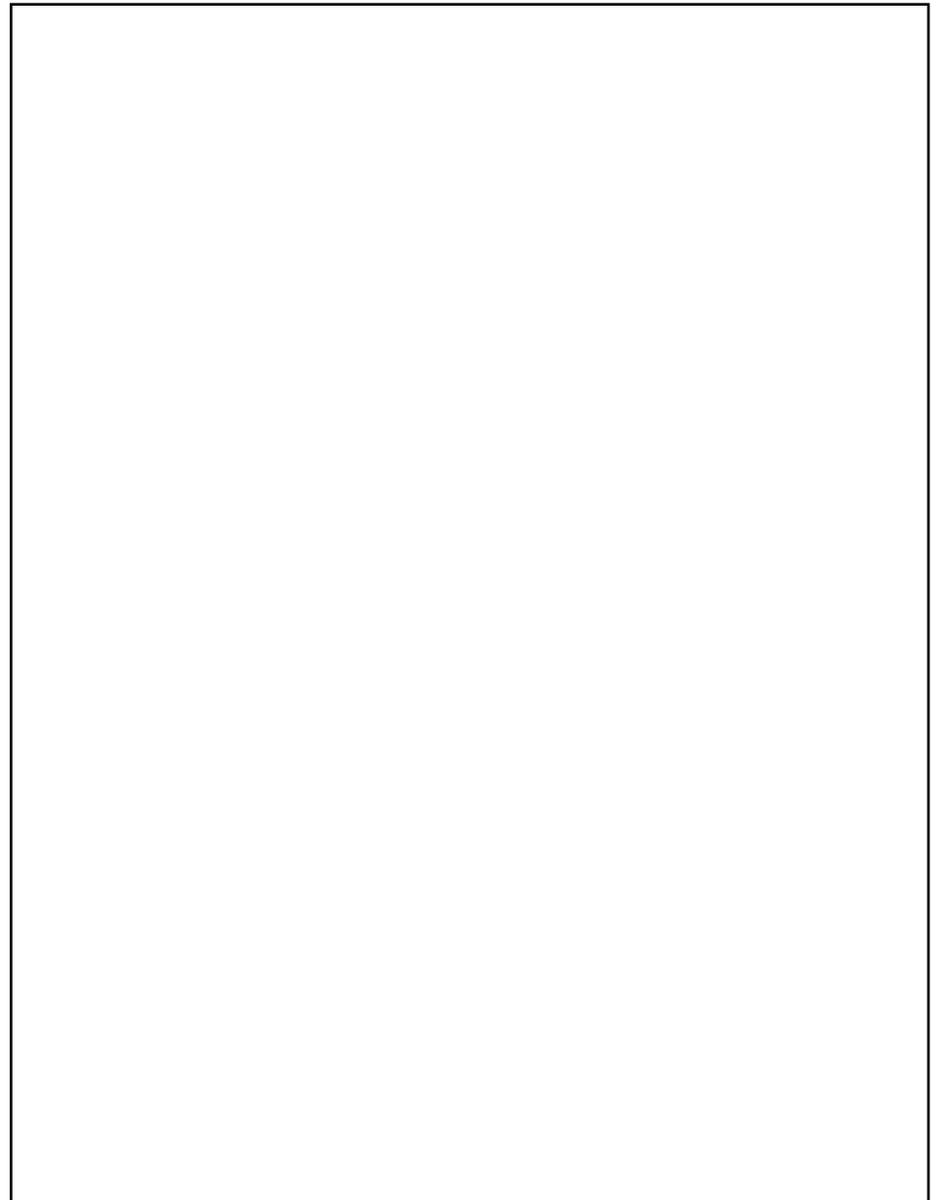
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1 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

2

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4 I, SANDRA DESCHAINED, RPR No. 805293,

5 Registered Professional Reporter, certify;

6 That the foregoing proceedings were taken

7 before me at the time and place therein set forth,

8 That the foregoing is a true and correct

9 transcript of my shorthand notes so taken.

10 I further certify that I am not a relative or

11 employee of any of the parties, nor financially

12 interested in the action.

13 I declare under the penalty of perjury under

14 the laws of California that the foregoing is true

15 and correct.

16 Dated the day of , 2008

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19 _____

20 SANDRA DESCHAINED, RPR No. 805293

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