

**USACHPPM
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR OPERATIONS
HEALTH INFORMATION OPERATIONS (HIO)
WEEKLY UPDATE**

7 January 2002

The HIO Weekly Update provides information regarding global medical and veterinary issues of interest to the United States (US) Army. The weekly update does not attempt to analyze the information regarding potential strategic or tactical impact to the US Army and as such, should not be regarded as a medical intelligence product. The information should provide an increased awareness of current and emerging health-related issues.

HOT ISSUES	2
Afghanistan Healthcare – World Health Organization (WHO)	2
Afghanistan Refugees – United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees (UNHCR).....	2
Afghanistan Food Security – United States Agency for International Development (USAID).....	2
Anthrax Decontamination – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).....	3
Anthrax Exposures – Centers For Disease Control And Prevention (CDC)	3
Anthrax Marketers – Federal Trade Commission (FTC).....	3
Defense Health Program – Defense Authorization Act of 2002.....	3
Influenza Surveillance – DoD	4
Influenza Surveillance – USA	4
Water Quality Guidelines – WHO	4
CENTCOM	5
Afghanistan Emergency Information Program (AEIP) – US Agency for International Development (USAID)	5
American Red Cross (ARC) Supports Operation Enduring Freedom.....	5
War on Terrorism Updates – White House	5
EUCOM	5
Ebola / Viral Hemorrhagic Fever – Gabon and Republic of the Congo.....	5
Influenza Surveillance – Europe	6
Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (SEAC) – November Meeting.....	6
Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD) – UK Decontamination Survey	7
JFCOM	7
Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) – Nebraska	7
Food Safety – Global Forum.....	8
Infectious Disease Reports – John Hopkins	8
Multidrug-Resistant <i>Streptococcus pneumoniae</i> in Child Care Center – CDC	8
Winter Olympic Task Force – USJFCOM.....	9
PACOM	9

Dengue Fever – Hawaii	9
HIV Epidemic Worsening in Vietnam	9
Nuclear Power Station Under Construction - China	9
STRATCOM.....	9
Ballistic Missile Defense Program – Defense Authorization Act of 2002	9
New USACHPPM Products	10

HOT ISSUES

Afghanistan Healthcare – World Health Organization (WHO)

On 3 January, the WHO began relocation from Islamabad to Kabul and 90 percent of the staff is expected to be in place by the end of the month. The WHO plans to work closely with the Ministry of Public Health in Afghanistan to provide technical guidance, leadership, and training. One of the first programs is a joint venture between the United Nations (UN), WHO and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to vaccinate nine million Afghan children between the ages of six months and 12 years for measles. The campaign started on New Years Day in Kabul and will include the entire country over the next three months. Afghanistan has the third highest measles mortality rate in the world. Measles kills more than 35,000 children per year and is the leading cause of death in children. The reports are at <http://www.who.int/disasters/repo/7490.html> and <http://www.who.int/disasters/repo/7487.html>.

Afghanistan Refugees – United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees (UNHCR)

The UNHCR has begun implementing plans for an organized repatriation of Afghan refugees in the spring, according to a WHO special report. The repatriation will include transport assistance, food for travel, a cash grant, and a repatriation package, which consists of blankets, clothing, soap, etc. Further assistance, such as seeds, tools, and shelter, will be provided to returnees on arrival. The UNHCR, the WHO, and NGOs are already implementing Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), which target water supplies and agriculture. Health and education are priorities during repatriation. Hospitals are being identified as potential referral facilities based on strategic location. The WHO plans to initiate a comprehensive database of *Who is doing What, Where in Afghanistan* to direct health relief. The UN estimates that 60,000 Afghan refugees have returned home from Pakistan and Iran during November and December. The report is at <http://www.who.int/disasters/repo/7492.pdf>.

Afghanistan Food Security – United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

On 3 January, the USAID reported that the UN World Food Program (WFP) exceeded the targeted distribution of food during the month of December and is reporting, “There will be no famine in Afghanistan this winter.” However, some NGOs are reporting the need to diversify food aid to meet the needs of malnourished populations. On 2

January, senior military officials from 17 countries arrived in Kabul to prepare for the arrival of 4,500 security troops of an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). An advance guard of 270 British troops is already operating in Kabul providing visible support for the interim government.

Anthrax Decontamination – Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

On 31 December, the EPA finished the third anthrax decontamination attempt for the Hart office building in Washington DC, which consisted of a three-day fumigation of the heat and ventilation system using chlorine dioxide gas. Decontamination technicians also conducted spot cleaning of trouble spots with liquid chlorine dioxide. The EPA reports that preliminary test results, test strips, indicate that the effort went well; however, after the second decontamination effort, preliminary tests had also indicated a successful operation, but trace amounts of anthrax were detected. More accurate laboratory tests will take 10-14 days.

Anthrax Exposures – Centers For Disease Control And Prevention (CDC)

On 3 January, the United States Postal Service (USPS) reported that as of 2 January 44 postal workers in New York, New Jersey, and the Washington DC metro area have enrolled in the anthrax vaccine program and 919 postal workers have opted to receive medication for an additional period of time. The CDC plans to conclude counseling and enrollment on 7 January.

Anthrax Marketers – Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

On 2 January, the FTC announced that a month after sending out 50 warnings to promoters of purported medicinal cures or treatments for anthrax and other bioterrorism agents, that an additional 71 notifications were sent to promoters of such dubious protection devices as air filters, gas masks, protective clothing, and ultraviolet light mechanisms. The initial wave of warnings in mid-November was sent primarily to promoters of medicinal products, while the latest round of letters sent in mid-December, targeted devices ostensibly providing protection from nuclear, biological, or chemical contaminants. So far, more than 25 of the initial 50 warned sites have eliminated suspect claims; others yet to comply face potential prosecution. Consumer protection information and websites are at <http://www.ftc.gov/opa/2002/01/round2web.htm>.

Defense Health Program – Defense Authorization Act of 2002

On 28 December, the Defense Authorization Act of 2002 was signed into law, which appropriated \$ 267,915,000 for fiscal year 2002 to the Department of Defense for procurement in carrying out health care programs, projects, and activities. The law also authorized an experimentation program in which the Army is to design a linkage between the current force structure and interim brigade combat teams. An evaluation to include deployment of the team to an evaluation site and team execution of combat mission across the full spectrum of potential threat and operational scenarios is

required. The DoD Director of Operational Test and Evaluation must first approve the operational evaluation.

Influenza Surveillance – DoD

The DoD Worldwide Influenza Surveillance Program is a laboratory-based influenza surveillance program managed by the Air Force. Two new cases of influenza A were identified since the last report: one in Yokota Air Base, Japan and one at Sheppard Air Force Base, TX. As of 3 January 72 (7%) of 1,054 submitted specimens have been identified as positive for influenza since the start of the influenza season (29 September). Of the 72 isolates, 20 (28%) have been subtyped, and all were influenza A (H3N2). Complete information, including a map-based view of data, is available at <https://pestilence.brooks.af.mil/Influenza/>. Note: Some users may experience difficulty accessing this restricted link; if this occurs, then copy and paste the hyperlink in your browser by right clicking on the link and choosing “hyperlink” then “copy hyperlink.”

Influenza Surveillance – USA

The last CDC weekly update posted on the web is for 16-22 December, which was reported in last week’s HIO Weekly Update. The CDC conducts surveillance for influenza in the USA each year from October through mid-May. Further information, including a map-based view is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/flu/weekly.htm>.

Water Quality Guidelines – WHO

The WHO recently announced publication of the book *Water Quality: Guidelines, Standards, and Health, Assessment of Risk and Risk Management for Water-Related Infectious Diseases* (ISBN 1900222280). This book is focused on issues related to microbial water quality and health and is primarily meant for environmental and public health scientists, water scientists, policy makers, and those responsible for developing standards and regulations. This publication combines information from three WHO guidelines concerned with water: *Guidelines for Drinking-Water Quality*; *Guidelines for the Safe Use of Wastewater and Excreta in Agriculture and Aquaculture*; and *Guidelines for Safe Recreational Water Environments*. The publication can be obtained by contacting the WHO at Publications@who.int.

The WHO also has developed the first edition of the WHO Water Sanitation and Health Electronic Library published on a CD-ROM. The CD-ROM includes documents on a variety of topics such as training documents, fact sheets, slides, teaching material, etc. The information is targeted toward scientists and policy-makers in government, operational agencies, consultancies, academia, NGOs, and other institutions. The WHO plans to update the electronic library yearly, with the next edition scheduled for release in October 2002. For further info contact bookorders@who.int.

CENTCOM

Afghanistan Emergency Information Program (AEIP) – US Agency for International Development (USAID)

On 3 January, the USAID launched the AEIP, a program designed to improve direct communication about humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people. Through this program more than 30,000 radios are being delivered to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other vulnerable groups with targeting for community leaders and groups like female teachers, municipal workers, hospitals, and families in villages. Over 20,000 radios (with battery sets) have been distributed in Herat, Taloquan, Andkhoi, Kunduz, and the Faryab region. The AEIP also provides funding for media broadcasts on health, agricultural news for farmers, and positive examples of inter-ethnic cooperation, as well as, grants to support the emergence of a local, independent press.

American Red Cross (ARC) Supports Operation Enduring Freedom

A Red Cross team arrived in southern Uzbekistan in late December to support American military forces in Operation Enduring Freedom. The responsibilities of the ARC Armed Forces Emergency Services (AFES) unit include providing emergency communications between deployed US service members and their families, related casework services, and “quality of life” activities. The 10th Mountain Division requested the AFES unit after being notified of their deployment to the region. There are five AFES teams deployed in support American forces – Bosnia, Kosovo, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, and Uzbekistan.

War on Terrorism Updates – White House

On 3 January, the White House announced a \$959 million economic assistance package to Egypt in order to help the country weather current global economic difficulties associated with the post-September 11 shock to the Egyptian economy. Egypt is considered a key partner in the campaign against terrorism and the pursuit of Middle East peace. Also on 3 January, the White House continued for one year the national emergency with respect to Libya. On 7 January 1986, a national emergency was declared to deal with the actions and policies of Libya regarding the Pan Am 103 bombing incident. Although Libya eventually turned over the bombing suspects, the Government has not yet complied with other UN sanctions, which require Libya to accept responsibility for the actions of its officials and pay compensation.

EUCOM

Ebola / Viral Hemorrhagic Fever – Gabon and Republic of the Congo

On 7 January, the WHO reported that as of 6 January 33 confirmed cases of Ebola -20 in Gabon and 13 in villages close to the border between the Gabon and the Republic of

the Congo. There has been 24 deaths (CFR = 73 percent). An additional 15 suspect cases in Gabon and 247 contacts (213 in Gabon and 34 in the Republic of the Congo) are under investigation. The Gabonese Red Cross Society is carrying out health education activities in the Gabonese villages. The WHO report is at <http://www.who.int/disease-outbreak-news/n2002/january/07january2002.html>.

Influenza Surveillance – Europe

EuroGROG reported that for the week 24-30 December influenza activity remained below or at baseline levels in all countries, although influenza-like illness (ILI) activity continued to slightly increase in France and Belgium. For this week, the European Influenza Surveillance Scheme (EISS) reported the following influenza activity: regional influenza A activity (influenza activity above the baseline level) in France and sporadic influenza B activity in Switzerland and Norway. Reports of respiratory syncytial virus continued to increase in France and Scotland, but decreased in England. All influenza A and B isolated/detected thus far resemble the strain in the influenza vaccine for this season. EISS reports that this data should be interpreted with caution as the holidays again this week interfered with proper reporting and analyses. The reports are available at <http://www.eiss.org/>.

Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (SEAC) – November Meeting

The SEAC Draft Minutes of the 21 November meeting were recently published and are subject to final agreement by the Committee at a subsequent meeting. The following topics were discussed. (1) Case review of variant Creutzfeldt Jakob disease (vCJD), which included 112 definite or probable cases in the UK, of whom 10 were still alive. Of the 112 cases, 60 were male and 52 were female. The mean age at death was 29 years and at onset was 27 years. Thus far in 2001, 18 people had died as compared to 28 in 2000. All cases tested thus far (96) were Methionine/Methionine at codon 129 of the PrP gene. The Public Health Laboratory Service reported the number of vCJD cases since 1995 continued to be significant. (2) Geographically-associated cases are now investigated under the *Protocol for the Investigation of Geographically Associated Cases of vCJD* to ensure consistency. Two cases were recently reported to have received oral polio vaccine from the same batch of vaccine. The vaccine was manufactured with UK-sourced fetal calf serum in the 1980's, but the product was removed from use in October 2000 when the UK Department of Health was informed of the manufacturing process. SEAC recommended that physicians record batch or serial numbers of vaccine to aid in future investigations. SEAC requested a copy of the FDA review carried out on animal-derived products used in human and veterinary vaccine manufacturing for the next meeting. (3) Members were updated on the National Scrapie Plan, a long-term program to increase the level of genetic resistance to scrapie in the national sheep flock. SEAC considered it paramount to try and establish a yardstick for determining the presence, or otherwise, of BSE in sheep. [Note: The UK is scheduled to initiate two separate sheep surveys beginning in January 2002.] (4) SEAC requested an update for the next meeting on the progress in reducing the potential risk of vCJD transmission through the use of contaminated surgical instruments.

Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (vCJD) – UK Decontamination Survey

On 11 December, the UK Department of Health published *A Review of the Decontamination of Surgical Instruments in the NHS in England*. This was the first comprehensive national survey of decontamination services for surgical instruments. The survey followed advice from SEAC that a key factor in reducing theoretical risk of person-to-person transmission of vCJD is a high standard of decontamination of surgical instruments. The UK's guidance for sterilization includes (1) single-use kits for all lumbar-puncture procedures and (2) consideration for use of single-use instruments for all procedures whereby clinical outcome is not compromised. The full report is at http://www.decontamination.nhsestates.gov.uk/downloads/decontamination_report.pdf. CDC has information regarding application of WHO infection control guidelines at http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/cjd/cjd_inf_ctrl_ga.htm.

JFCOM

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) – Nebraska

On 13 December, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission announced a wildlife disease emergency in the extreme northwestern section of the state bordering Wyoming. Five of ten whitetail deer tested positive for CWD in Sioux County. Hunters killed the deer on a fenced property that adjoins a captive elk herd. The Commission plans to conduct deer culling and testing operations in Sioux County beginning in January to determine if the disease in that area is limited to the captive herd or if it is in the wild population, to what extent. Whitetail deer are believed to be an amplifier host for CWD, and the Commission has expressed concern that the disease “could spread from the captive herd and eventually destroy the state’s entire whitetail population.” CWD is a spongiform disease that affects cervids such as elk and deer, but is not believed to infect cattle. CWD is always fatal to infected animals, and until recently there was no test for live animals. On 7 December, the Colorado Division of Wildlife announced the development of a test for CWD that samples tonsil tissue from live deer; however, the test is not effective in elk. The 5 November HIO Weekly Update reported that the USDA issued an emergency declaration effective 21 September regarding the threat of CWD to the livestock industry. The declaration allowed \$2.6 million in funds to implement a CWD surveillance and indemnity program. CWD is similar to scrapie in sheep and BSE in cattle. While the disease is believed to be non-infectious to humans, the Colorado and Nebraska wildlife authorities advise the following: wear rubber gloves when field-dressing game; minimize contact with brain and spinal cord, and wash hands after contact; don't eat brain or spinal cord; bone out meat and discard brain, spinal cord, eyes, spleen, and lymph nodes; and do not use household utensils to dress out the animal. CWD is endemic in free-ranging deer and elk in isolated locations of southeastern Wyoming, northeastern Colorado, and southwestern Nebraska. Positive captive elk herds have been identified in Colorado, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Canada.

Food Safety – Global Forum

On 20 December, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the WHO announced a Global Forum of Food Safety Regulations to be held 28-30 January in Morocco. Some of the subjects to be covered include: transboundary food safety emergencies; new food inspection techniques; risk management for the reduction of food-borne diseases; improvements to food safety systems; and resource mobilization.

Infectious Disease Reports – John Hopkins

John Hopkins posted the following topics of interest in their January 2002 News:

- (1) Cephalosporin allergies – review
- (2) Predicting the Unpredictable – estimation of total cases of vCJD in UK
- (3) Bioterrorism: A Clear and Present Danger – review of bioterrorism
- (4) US Dilutes Smallpox Vaccine Supplies – status of smallpox vaccine
- (5) Serious Adverse Events of Mefloquine in Relation to Blood Level and Gender
- (6) New Technologies and Infection Control Practices to Prevent Intravascular Catheter-Related Infections
- (7) Oxazolidinone Antibiotics – review of this new class of antibiotics
- (8) Early Goal-Directed Therapy in the Treatment of Severe Sepsis and Septic Shock – optimal methods to manage patients
- (9) Handwashing and Respiratory Illness Among Young Adults in Military Training – 45% reduction in outpatient visits after implementation of handwashing program

Excerpts and further information on these topics are at http://hopkins-abxguide.org/show_pages.cfm?content=news_content.html.

Multidrug-Resistant *Streptococcus pneumoniae* in Child Care Center – CDC

On 4 January, the CDC reported a refractory middle ear infection in an 11-month child from which was cultured *Streptococcus pneumoniae* that was resistant to penicillin, clindamycin, erythromycin, trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole, and tetracycline. The child attended a childcare center, and the investigation revealed other children in the center who were positive on nasopharyngeal culture for *S. pneumoniae* with the same susceptibility profile. Acute otitis media (AOM), or ear infection, is the most common clinical manifestation of pneumococcal infection among children and the most common outpatient diagnosis resulting in antibiotic prescriptions among children. Pneumococcal resistance to penicillin and other antibiotics has increased since 1995. Risk factors for carriage of and infection with multidrug-resistant *Streptococcus pneumoniae* in the US include recent antibiotic usage, childcare center attendance, and being Caucasian. A pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV7) (Prevnar™, Wyeth Lederle Vaccine) was licensed in February 2000 for use in children less than two years of age. PCV7 offers protection against the seven serotypes that most commonly cause invasive disease in children in the US. Although the efficacy of PCV7 against all AOM is only six percent, efficacies against PCV7 serotype-related pneumococcal AOM and invasive

pneumococcal disease are 57 percent and 94 percent, respectively. PCV7 became readily available to the medical community in February 2001. The full report is at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5051a2.htm>.

Winter Olympic Task Force – USJFCOM

The USJFCOM established the Joint Task Force Olympics (JTF-O) to provide support for the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City from 7-16 March. JTF-O will provide support in such areas as aviation, communication, explosive ordnance disposal, physical security, and temporary facilities. Army Brig. Gen. James D. Johnson, JTF-O Commander, stated that support for the Winter Olympics provides a model for the military's homeland security function. General William F. Kernan, USJFCOM CINC, earlier defined the military's role of homeland security as homeland defense and military support of civil authorities.

PACOM

Dengue Fever – Hawaii

On 31 December, the Hawaii Department of Health reported 97 confirmed cases of dengue fever in the state between 10 June and 31 December 2001 with the following cases by island: Maui 72 cases; Oahu 21 cases; and Kauai four cases. A histogram of the reported cases is at http://www.state.hi.us/health/dengue/onset_graph.html.

HIV Epidemic Worsening in Vietnam

Although the rate of HIV spread has begun to drop in Cambodia, HIV rates in Vietnam are accelerating. The centralized government reportedly deters condom accessibility. http://www.unaids.org.vn/PRIVATE/E_PAGE/situation/fr_situation.htm and http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/nm/20020102/hl/vietnam_1.html

Nuclear Power Station Under Construction - China

China has started preliminary work on the Sanmen nuclear power reactor after a delay of several years amid internal debate. Eight other reactors are under construction. <http://sg.news.yahoo.com/020107/1/29kro.html>

STRATCOM

Ballistic Missile Defense Program – Defense Authorization Act of 2002

On 28 December, the Defense Authorization Act of 2002 was signed into law. This document requires the Secretary of Defense to transfer responsibility for a ballistic missile defense program from the Director of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization to a military department. The Congress mandated that the military Department shall, at

a minimum, address the following: (1) technical maturity of program; (2) availability of facilities for production; and (3) commitment of the Secretary of the military department to procurement funding for the program.

New USACHPPM Products

Smallpox Information Website <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/smallpox/>

Cold Injury Prevention Website <http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/coldinjury/>

POC: Barbara E. Davis, DVM, MPH/MCHB-CS-OHD/584-7663
<mailto:Barbara.Davis1@APG.amedd.army.mil>