

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 6, 2001

TO: Frank Hawkins, Mohandas Bhat, Ruth Neta, and Libby White

FROM: Barrett Fountos 

SUBJECT: Summary of the March 5, 2001 Meeting of the Chernobyl Oversight Panel

The Chernobyl Oversight Panel (COP) of the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics (DCEG) met at NCI to review the status of the Chernobyl thyroid and leukemia studies. Dr. Shelia Zahm, Deputy Director, chaired the meeting. Attendees included Dr. André Bouville, Dr. Alina Brenner, Dr. Gil Beebe, Ms. Betsy Duane, Dr. Patricia Hartge, Dr. Robert Hoover, Dr. Charles Land, Dr. Nick Luckyanov, Dr. Ihor Masnyk, Ms. Kathi Stine, Dr. Terry Thomas, Dr. Bruce Wachholz, and me.

Most of the discussion focused on the draft publication on the methodology of the thyroid studies, draft international agreements with Belarus and Ukraine on NCI rights to the data, and updates on the status of the thyroid and leukemia studies.

COP members agreed with my recommendation that new language containing decision criteria for continuing or terminating the studies be developed and inserted into the revised thyroid study protocols. The original protocols envisioned 30 year studies. However, because it makes sense to examine the data after each two-year screening cycle, the group agreed to develop and incorporate "stopping rules" in the next draft of the protocols.

Dr. Masnyk arranged for the ISTC in Moscow to send payments to the Belarussian scientists for their local supplemental salary support. He said that he is waiting for the original document to arrive from Moscow for signature. In Ukraine, the agreement with STCU to send payments to Ukrainian scientists for their local supplemental salary support is working well.

The Belarussian Red Cross has agreed to serve as the intermediary to pay incentives to study participants in the Belarus thyroid study. In addition, the Government of Luxembourg has contributed incentives with a value of 50% of NCI's contribution. However, the Belarussian staff forgot to include a statement about the payment of incentives in the most recent (January 2001) letters of invitation to study subjects.

Dr. Bouville reported that investigators in both countries have been working on the content of the thyroid dosimetry survey instrument. From the first round of screening, it became evident that those less than 10 at the time of the accident were too young to have accurate recall about milk consumption, etc. Consequently, investigators plan to invite about 100 mothers of study subjects to determine response rates and the quality of recalled information.

**5 March 2001
André Bouville**

DOSIMETRY ACTIVITIES (CHORNOBYL)

1 – THYROID

1.1. Process the direct thyroid measurements:

- **BY: simulation study; analysis of original notebooks;**
- **UA: search for measurements.**

1.2. Obtain information on individual behaviour and characteristics:

- **dietary and lifestyle habits (interview of the subjects or of their mothers);**
- **thyroid volume at the time of the accident (1986).**

1.3. Estimate the thyroid dose:

- **preparation of a joint thyroid dose model for Iodine-131 intakes:**
 - **methodology: atmospheric transport model; distribution of milk in cities; collaboration with IARC;**
 - **input data: deposition densities; I-129 measurements; I-131 concentrations in milk; other;**
 - **uncertainty analysis: variability of metabolic parameters.**

1.4. Assess the role of the short-lived radiodines.

1.5. Assess the role of external irradiation and of internal irradiation from long-lived radionuclides.

2 – LEUKEMIA

2.1. IARC/NCI work;

2.2. Collaboration with NIST (EPR measurements).