

NCR-197 Meeting Minutes

November 1-2, 2000
Airport Hilton Hotel
St. Louis, MO

Members Present: Dale Vanderholm, Robert Aherin, Connie Baggett, Rhonda Brand, Howard Doss, Willard Downs, William Field, James Meyers, Mark Purschwitz, Brad Rein, Charles Schwab, Chryssoula Thodi-Retrou

The meeting began at 1:15 p.m.

A motion was passed that new officers (chair, secretary) would have two year terms and there would not be automatic succession of secretary to chair.

Charles Schwab was nominated for chair and Mark Purschwitz nominated for secretary. They were approved by acclimation.

Vanderholm reported correspondence from non-attendees:

Julia Storm (North Carolina State University Agromedicine Program) said she wanted to be kept informed. The "Healthy People Healthy Communities" survey was discussed. Question about redundancy of reporting. Rein suggested we cooperate with the national Agromedicine group. Discussion but no consensus.

A motion was made to ask the Agromedicine group (Julia Storm) to send us a current definitional statement of Agromedicine, their membership, goals and objectives. Discussion. Motion passed.

Rein mentioned that Agromedicine center in North Carolina will get federal funding through CSREES (earmarked money in budget).

Other various correspondence indicated continuing interest. Field will update the list. Vanderholm will supply the official list of responses from Experiment Stations. The request was sent originally to all NCR Experiment Station directors plus selected others on the advice of Rein. Vanderholm said we could still go broader.

(End of report on correspondence from non-attendees.)

Field was acknowledged for his work as interim chair. Aherin suggested the new chair send a letter to the Purdue Experiment Station director acknowledging his efforts.

Vanderholm handed out and discussed his advisor report, dated November 1, 2000.

He noted that on the 1999 list of research priorities for national initiatives (from the Experiment Station directors), priority #5 “Health” was really “Health and Safety” and was broad.

He also commented that the proposal for this committee was very ambitious, so this is a critical meeting to get off to a good start. Ian Gray, chair of the NCR Multi-State Research Committee, said in a letter that he recommends personnel on committees be evaluated for a balance of Extension, research, and various technical expertise. He also said it is important that a strategic process be developed to evaluate and reduce the extent of occupational injury.

There was discussion of the USDA and Experiment Station funding mechanisms, formulas, etc.

(End of Vanderholm report.)

The final NCR-197 proposal was reviewed. Field passed out copies and noted that there may be several minor editorial changes on the actual signed (official) copy. There was discussion of where to start, how to proceed, what to do first, and division of committee labor. Field suggested utilizing outcomes of the “Ag at Risk” conference being planned for Baltimore in March 2001 (Chip Petrea is lead organizer). There was lengthy discussion on the strengths and uniqueness of the land grant university system and the demonstrated ability to make things work.

Schwab said we need to get together somehow, such as electronically, in three months to report.

Aherin suggested we start with Objective 1 of the proposal for this next year, which states, “Establish a national Land Grant research and extension agenda for agricultural safety and health”. Discussion of time frame needed, how to approach this objective, gathering stakeholder input. Vanderholm reminded group of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA), which says each state develops plans of work for CSREES; the first plan of work must identify a mechanism for gathering stakeholder input, and the first annual progress report must include that input.

Small group tasks were assigned as follows:

- 1.1 Create and implement a mechanism for stakeholders inputs to the national agenda.** -- Purschwitz (chair), Aherin, Baggett. Will include formulating a mechanism for gathering input plus finding any existing stakeholder surveys. Due in three months (February 1, 2001).
- 1.2 Survey and assess national agricultural research and Extension safety and health resource investments, staffing, projects, and programs.** -- Field, Rein.

Will include looking at CRIS reports, the collections of Field and Carol Lehtola (University of Florida), and others. Due February 1, 2001.

- 1.3 Articulate highest priority agricultural and Extension needs and accomplishments, drawing on the strengths of land grant institutions.** -- Meyers, Doss, Downs (Rein to assist by finding impact statements). There was discussion about whether this could be done before action items 1.1 and 1.2. This item was broken down into two steps: First three months (due February 1, 2001): gather other farm safety priority lists, accomplishments for research and Extension, other priorities and impacts. Second three months (due May 1, 2001): draft an articulation statement.
- 1.4 Develop and distribute study papers on selected needs and opportunities.** -- Dennis Murphy, Thodi-Petrou. Will include looking for existing papers, look at March conference papers, Murphy's book, etc. Due August 1, 2001.
- 1.5 Develop, publish, and disseminate the "National Agenda for Action" document.** Schwab will ask Tom Bean if he will take the lead in assembling, writing, and designing our final product. Rein to discuss with Bean the process for possible use of USDA funds to produce the report. Due November 1, 2001.
- 1.6 Implement both technical and public reviews and assessments across the nation of the "National Agenda for Action.** This will be left for the second year of committee work.

Meeting adjourned for the day.

Day Two of meeting.

Rein gave a report from Washington.

He reported his change in position was made permanent in August; he is Section Leader, Process Engineering and Technology.

The 3d farm safety line item was increased to \$4 million (includes \$2.8 million for AgrAbility).

A RFA for new AgrAbility projects will probably be out in January. 1890 universities can apply.

The \$1.2 million for farm safety work is divided among 50 states and six territories. Funds are released with the "pink letter" that goes to all Extension directors. Rein will let us know when it is coming.

A line item under 3d was funded for “Youth Farm Safety Education Certification”, for \$500,000. (See www.reusda.gov, budget legislation.) There was a \$5 million request in the President’s budget, proposed by the White House’s National Economic Council, but only \$500,000 was provided. This came about because of pending legislation proposed by Senator Harkin to raise the age requirement for tractor and machinery operation certification (under the federal Dept. of Labor Hazardous Occupations for Youth order) from ages 14-15 to ages 16-17; the funds are to develop and conduct training. Rein expected it to require competitive proposals, and might be for only one year. He will let us know if the Harkin legislation passes, and also when the RFA is issued.

President Clinton signed ILO Convention 182, dealing with worldwide child labor abuses. The Dept. of Labor has the lead in this activity. Rein is on the National Economic Council task force, helping draft the safety and health section for agriculture within the national action plan. He noted that DOL is reevaluating the tractor and machinery certification standards, asking NIOSH for input but not USDA. He will try to get USDA representation.

(End of Rein report.)

Nobody was present to give a report on the role of the national Agromedicine Workgroup.

Aherin reported on the “Ag at Risk” conference as follows.

The conference is scheduled for March 2-3, 2001 in Baltimore, although some working groups will meet on the 4th. Chip Petrea is the lead facilitator. The purpose is to bring a variety of groups together to look at current and emerging issues over the next 10 years, and document progress made in the last 10 years. Anticipated attendance is 150-200 people.

Recommendations will be developed, reviewed by others, and eventually a document like “Ag at Risk: A Report to the Nation” will be produced. It should help land grant universities better see their role.

A web site is available via the University of Illinois Agricultural Engineering Department. (Secretary’s note: The web site is <http://www.age.uiuc.edu/agsafety/conf.htm>)

White papers will be written by multiple authors on a wide range of issues. Opportunities still exist to participate in white paper development. A \$500 honorarium is offered. Financial sponsorship is by a number of public and private organizations.

There was discussion on the conference, role of this committee, etc.

(End of Aherin report.)

The discussion returned to the objectives stated in the NCR-197 proposal, specifically Objective 2, “Enhance communication and awareness throughout the land grant system and among those associated with agriculture.”

- 2.1 Conduct annual meetings of the NCR committee, summarize activities, and distribute reports to directors of experiment stations and cooperative extension by web site and newsletter.** The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday-Thursday, November 7-8, 2001. Tentative location is Chicago – Schwab will check on facilities. It was noted that we need good attendance at NCR-197 meetings, because if Experiment Station directors see small numbers it will hurt us. We need to involve people with other types of expertise if possible, e.g., ag economists.
- 2.2 Distribute electronic and printed communications for committee members and provide another level of communication to distribution and exchange of information outside the committee membership.** Purschwitz is to send the minutes of this meeting to all attendees in 30 days for comments back to Purschwitz, with Schwab, Purschwitz, and Vanderholm finalizing in 60-90 days. Purschwitz will not use the a list serve for now, but send via e-mail with minutes as an MS Word attachment. Vanderholm said a list serve for NCT-177 still exists with ARS (Bonnie King). We may use it later for wider distribution, to involve more people.
- 2.3 Enhance and maintain a committee web site.** Our NCT-177 web site is on Schwab’s Iowa State server, will be left there and updated to NCR-197. The address will be www.tmvc.iastate.edu/ncr197. It was noted that the NCT-213 (grain) committee has a good web site.
- 2.4.1 Establish and maintain a database to identify agricultural safety and health professionals and their expertise.** Field discussed the need for the database and the types of information that should be pulled together. It was concluded that we need a list of land grant university people who have interest and/or expertise in agricultural safety and health or existing technologies. Field has already started such a database and will work on it, secondary to work on Objective 1. Rein is also working on a directory. Each committee member is to identify others in their department, college, and university who fit this criteria and ask them if they want to be in the database. Long discussion.

The other objectives and action items were not specifically discussed, except for action item 3.4.

- 3.4 Facilitate interaction with NIOSH (invite NIOSH representative to NCR meetings and meet as NCR committee of NIOSH).** Do we want to request a specific individual? What level within NIOSH? Discussion of the purpose of this type of interaction – To learn about funding opportunities? Information on what NIOSH is doing? What NIOSH centers are doing? Understanding of

methodologies that NIOSH uses, wants, and is invested in, to enhance our credibility?

Meyers argued the need for specific studies on narrow areas where a reduced incidence of injury/illness can be shown in a short term, 3-5 years. He also stated the need for evaluative studies, because NIOSH/ public health community looks only at incidence, not intermediate outcomes. Rein said the NIOSH representative could provide two-way communication on ways land grant universities can design research to intervene and evaluate the intervention.

It was concluded we do not want a policy-level person, but an information person. John Meiers at Morgantown was specifically requested. We will ask for him to attend one meeting, not be a long-term liaison. Schwab will invite John Meiers directly.

It was suggested that each committee member check their state's congressional delegation to see who might be interested and/or influential with respect to agricultural safety and health, to at least keep them informed.

Each attendee was given the opportunity to make final comments.

The suggestion was made that agricultural safety and health funding opportunities be better communicated to the master list/database Field is developing, and that this committee can help facilitate it.

It was suggested that within NCR-197 we should each tell each other what we are doing, to provide more information exchange.

The official title of NCR-197 is "Agricultural Safety and Health Research and Extension" until told otherwise. This title was intended to be on the final approved copy of the proposal, but we are not sure if it was stated that way.

Aherin noted he can set up conference calls at no cost through University of Illinois.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark A. Purschwitz, NCR-197 Secretary

Charles Schwab, NCR-197 Chair

Date

Dale Vanderhold, NCR-197 Administrative Advisor

Date