

MCTF Best Practices Subcommittee Meeting Minutes 12 20 21

Minutes for the Mosquito Control for the Twenty-First Century (MCTF) Task Force Meeting

Subcommittee Meeting: Best Practices

December 20, 2021, 12:00 p.m. via Zoom

Meeting Topics:

- Open Meeting, Roll Call, and Welcome (chair)
- Review the agenda and process check-in (facilitator)
- Review the homework: goals drafted by the Subcommittee (facilitator)
- Draft recommendations for the IPM Directive
- Discuss Next Steps (facilitator)
- Closing Remarks and Adjourn

Roll call was conducted at 12:01 pm and a quorum was established. Subcommittee members in attendance included Richard Robinson (chair), Russell Hopping, Richard Pollack, Helen Poynton, Priscilla Matton, Kim LeBeau, and Heidi Ricci. Cheryl Keenan reviewed the agenda and proposed moving the 1/3 meeting to 1/5. In addition, the group was reminded that the second meeting in January was scheduled for 1/19 due to the MLK Day holiday. The change was agreed upon by all subcommittee members in attendance.

Follow up Items

Cheryl Keenan expressed the need to get recommendations drafted due to the 3/31 task force deadline. Cheryl mentioned that ERG could assist in developing straw recommendations based on subcommittee discussions. An alternate recommended approach would be to ask for volunteers to draft text to move recommendations forward. Richard Robinson commented that he was comfortable with either approach.

The next follow up item related to Heidi Ricci's comments on low dose pesticide information. Heidi Ricci located a 2021 article related to human health concerns, which was provided to the group in the chat. Heidi provided an overview of the articles content. Cheryl noted that the subcommittee meeting was focused on IPM and that there have been a lot of ideas generated that the subcommittee needed to start working through.

Review the homework: goals drafted by the Subcommittee

Cheryl mentioned that setting the goals of mosquito control was up to the full task force, and it would not be decided by the subcommittee. Everyone's ideas could be documented and sent along to the full task force for consideration. Three documented goal recommendations were drafted and sent to Cheryl prior to the meeting. Cheryl shared the documentation that was drafted by Priscilla Matton, Helen Poynton, and Richard Pollack. The draft goal statements covered topics related to mosquito control using the best techniques in IPM to address a particular problem. Creating a balanced approach to protect human health, the environment, and mental health through education and awareness of mosquito control practices. In addition, there was examination of 60 to 70 domestic and international mosquito control mission statements which generated a goal recommendation to provide more benefit than risk to people and the environment.

Other Comments or Additions

Heidi commented that the goal of a mosquito control program should be to protect the public from mosquito borne disease in the most environmental way possible, as a true IPM program would focus on source reduction and land management. It was noted that there should be more focus on helping municipalities on best practices for land development, so they do not create mosquito habitat. Heidi clarified that she was not saying to not use pesticides but needed something more rigorous to trigger action for pesticides and efficacy of pesticide use.

Richard Robinson added that mosquito control by the state falls on a broader goal of fostering public health and that the best mosquito control program may be education because other actions have risks that are larger than the

benefit that it can provide. Kathy Baskin and Russell Hopping agreed with the draft goal recommendations that were presented. Kathy noted minimizing impacts to the economy, environment, and public health were important, in addition to keeping the public engaged and part of the process. Kathy would also incorporate research projects to help minimize mosquito breeding and increase efficacy of treatment applications that are applied.

Richard Pollack added that he agreed with the research commentary. Richard mentioned that any mosquito that was attracted to a person and bothers or bites the person was a public health problem. It was a quality-of-life issue which was a public health issue. All mosquitos that annoy people are deleterious and have the capacity of causing harm. The vast majority of people that call for mosquito control are calling for assistance because they are being bothered by mosquitos in addition to protecting people against acquiring an infection. Russell and Heidi discussed the need of the overall goal to look at modernizing mosquito control through technology, science, better wetland management, and through personal protective measures. It was noted that there was a lot that people could do to avoid mosquito bites without having to use pesticides.

Priscilla Matton commented on what the state does versus what the MCDs do. Priscilla clarified that MCD funding comes from cities and towns and discussed current service and funding components. Richard Robinson asked Priscilla about the implication for making mosquito control state-managed. Priscilla commented on the DOR formula and the need to figure out a different funding mechanism if mosquito control moved to a state-based program. Alisha Bouchard noted that it would be a line item in the state budget and that it could be set up like DOT with regional offices across the state. Heidi Ricci recommended a hybrid model of statewide education and surveillance and communities handling other aspects of mosquito management and opting into MCDs if they wanted additional services.

Draft recommendations for the IPM Directive

Richard Robinson noted the need to find where the subcommittee agreed and disagreed and to move these recommendations out of discussion and into the court of the committee. Russell commented that he was not ready to say yay or nay and he recommended fleshing it out into more specific recommendation to try to figure out and drill down to what the subcommittee was trying to address. Heidi Ricci agreed with Russell that more framework was needed.

The first recommendation displayed was on surveillance. Heidi noted that the DPH arborvirus surveillance plan had never been subjected to public input or public comment. Also, because of the current structure it was only advisory and there was nothing statutory of what the MCDs are doing on a day-to-day basis that ties them to the plan. Heidi discussed the need for surveillance at a local level as it may provide a different perspective than state level surveillance. Priscilla thought this would be a good recommendation but based on Heidi's comments it may still need some work. Priscilla mentioned that if surveillance became a statewide program with DPH, that it should not come at the expense of the MCDs paying DPH more money for testing and sampling. Heidi noted that she could support a statewide program of testing through DPH but with flexibility for the municipalities. Russell agreed with a state funded surveillance program, and as part of IPM, towns could start with doing an assessment on their town to address source reduction first.

Richard Robinson noted that towns may benefit from the services an MCD can offer, even if a town was not a member of an MCD. For example, receiving the benefit of surveillance and source reduction. Priscilla and Alisha discussed if surveillance was being done by DPH in every town or just non MCD member towns. Alisha was going to follow up on this topic. Richard Pollack added that historically DPH maintained a few dozen traps in certain sites and noted a benefit of looking at surveillance based on regional ecology and need. Richard Robinson noted his opinion that this was a statewide concern and that it be applied equitably.

Priscilla noted that if statewide surveillance was done it would only be adult surveillance and, in some cases, there may be an issue based on what we want for surveillance. For example, timing and mosquito species. Richard Robinson didn't think that we could be as granular as everyone preferred, but was comfortable noting that the state should conduct statewide surveillance to make the point that this was a responsibility that belongs above MCDs to protect public health. Russell added that the primary focus of surveillance should be on the mosquito

species that was most problematic to public health. As a follow up, Alisha confirmed with DPH that surveillance was done in communities with a focus on EEE, habitat, and evidence of previous activity.

Cheryl noted the next recommendation or series of recommendations focused on variability in IPM implementation across the state. Priscilla preferred to change the language and noted MCDs are responsive and are always using objective criteria. MCDs may not respond without additional data, such as other requests nearby, data from surveillance, habitat, temperature. Priscilla commented that there was a balance. Richard Pollack agreed with everything that Priscilla said and noted that it was an incorrect notion that MCDs just spray when requested. Richard noted that there was a lot that went into the decision-making process. Richard Pollack suggested that we want to have variability and that MCDs should be able to decide what is the right tool to use. There are highly trained people in the MCDs and drawing together their experiences and data to make decisions would be a benefit.

Subcommittee members discussed the need for a framework for MCDs. There were conversations related to the rewording of the recommendation and Richard Robinson noted that he would be happy to recraft the wording on the recommendation. Priscilla mentioned the Generic Environmental Impact Report (GEIR). Many of the parts of IPM may be clearly defined there. Subcommittee members discussed what might help the public feel more comfortable about MCDs taking a unified approach on IPM. Richard Pollack mentioned with a change in the Legislation there may be an opportunity to define what IPM is. Jessica noted that there was currently a definition of IPM in Chapter 132B and provided the link via chat.

Helen Poynton mentioned a guidebook on best practices versus a framework. Russell agreed with Helen's commentary and noted that this may be the starting point. Having a plan for what IPM means for mosquito control, such as a guidebook, could go a long way to articulate to the public what mosquito management entails and what the MCDs do. Jessica cautioned against creating a conflicting definition of IPM since one already existed under Chapter 132B. Priscilla commented that she thought the GEIR allowed for public comment and people could make suggestions to the document. This may address some concerns related to public input into the process. Jessica noted that there are laws on the books that may address some of this and often this can be a combination of best practices and legal requirements. Russell noted that the group may want to address the concern of variability in IPM by making the recommendation of updating the language in the GEIR.

Discuss Next Steps

Cheryl asked subcommittee members if there was anything people wanted to volunteer for or have ERG do to assist in moving progress forward. Priscilla agreed to work with ERG on the GEIR. Cheryl asked subcommittee members what they felt would be most helpful to move recommendations forwards. Priscilla noted that she could look at the GEIR to determine if it addressed the questions/goals and complies with the multitude of legislative and regulatory definitions. All subcommittee members in attendance agreed with that approach. Richard Robinson asked ERG to take the surveillance discussion and work it into a straw recommendation as something that the group could review and vote on in the next meeting.

Closing Remarks and Adjourn

Seeing no other questions or comments from the group Richard Robinson took a motion to adjourn from Priscilla Matton, seconded by Kim LeBeau. All in favor said aye. The meeting was adjourned at 1:57 p.m.