

Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference



2009 Work Plan

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Projected Accomplishments

The Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference anticipates accomplishing the following projects in 2009.

<u>Project Description</u>	<u>Number Projected</u>
PLANNING	
Biennial Meeting	1
Executive Board Meeting	2
<i>Vibrio</i> Education Subcommittee Meeting	2
<i>Vibrio</i> Management Committee Meeting	2
Other Committee Meetings	29
Solicit and Develop Proposals for Biennial Meeting	1
COMMUNICATIONS	
Annual Updates to Regional Conferences	4
Maintain and Enhance ISSC Website	1
Develop & Distribute Educational Materials	2
Notify States Concerning Shellfish Recalls/Closures	As needed
FACILITATION	
Initiating FDA Interpretations of the Model Ordinance	As needed
Assist States in Resolving FDA Compliance Issues	As needed
Assignments from Committees and Subcommittees	As needed
Agency Interactions	As needed
FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING	
Grant Administration	4
Budget Development	5
Budget Implementation	5
Audit	1

B. Program Deficiencies

None noted. This Section is reserved for the annual Work Plan Evaluation.

C. Program Concerns

The ISSC is in the final year of its assessment of *Vv* illness reduction goals associated with Proposal 00-201. Additionally, the ISSC adopted Proposal 07-202, which addresses *Vp* controls. It is anticipated the implementation of these two programs will place a significant resource burden on the ISSC. There are also concerns regarding the continuation of the present level of funding associated with the FDA/ISSC Cooperative Agreement.

Naturally occurring marine organisms including marine *Vibrios*, biotoxin producing algae and protozoans all pose potential public health risks to the consuming public. Additionally there are emerging pathogenic organisms that create new challenges for public health officials in shellfish sanitation control programs. The Conference is faced with developing frameworks for formulating and implementing control and monitoring plans to address these issues of risk. These activities are consuming an ever-increasing amount of time, though we have been able until recently to fit them into our current time demands. With ever increasing incidents of toxic algae blooms and shellfish disease cases and outbreaks the Conference will face an increasing demand on its time to address these issues of risk and to develop strategies to minimize the risk.

II. INTRODUCTION

The Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference has one Executive Office located in Columbia, SC, with three employees. The Conference has three main programs, the planning and execution of the Biennial Conference, the Executive Board Meetings and various other committee meetings, communication of essential shellfish

program information among the U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Conference and the states, and facilitation of the Model Ordinance implementation. The Executive Office carries out these three programs through cooperative relationships with federal agencies (FDA, NOAA, and EPA) the states and the shellfish industry. The Executive Office provides guidance policy, interprets the Model Ordinance, evaluates all aspects of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program, and conducts some field work (assisting in state program evaluations, inspections, occasional special studies, enforcement activities, etc.) The Conference is currently assigned three full time equivalent (FTE's) positions and the work plan has been developed on the basis of a full staff.

III. PRIORITIES

A. Executive Office

The highest priority work for the Executive Office is to assure the Biennial Conference occurs and that the proposals are developed and deliberated according the Constitution, Bylaws, and Procedures of the Conference. The second highest priority is to enhance communications among the involved federal agencies, the Conference, the states and shellfish industry in assuring the compliance with Model Ordinance. Third in priority is the facilitation of the uniform implementation of the National Shellfish Sanitation Program according to the requirements in the Model Ordinance provided in the Guide for the Control of Molluscan Shellfish. The fourth priority is to properly account for the financial assets of the Conference and disbursement of grant funding for the various grant-funding agencies with which the Conference is involved

1. Planning

The highest priority projects within the Executive Office involve the Biennial Meeting, the Executive Board Meetings and other committee and subcommittee meetings. Coordination of site selection and meeting arrangements are critical to the success of the Biennial Meeting. These tasks involve announcement of the time and location of Biennial Meeting and conducting a call for proposals to be deliberated. A proposal package is then developed based upon the proposals submitted to the Conference. The proposals are then assigned to Task Forces and various committees that are appointed by the Chairman. The Executive Board Chairman appoints individuals to the various committees, subcommittees or work groups that deliberate the proposals submitted to the Conference. After the proposals are deliberated and voted upon by the delegates at the Conference, the Executive Office develops and submits the Summary of Actions to the USFDA. After the FDA evaluates the issues and concurs or rejects the proposal action, the Executive Office incorporates these proposal outcomes as new revisions to the NSSP Guide for the Control of Molluscan Shellfish. These actions are designed to provide a legislative mechanism by which states and the shellfish industry can affect national shellfish sanitation policy. This cooperative policy development process is very productive but requires a significant amount of effort to maintain. Additionally, the Conference works cooperatively with the states, FDA and the shellfish industry to insure reasonable and proper implementation of all elements of the Model Ordinance requirements for the shellfish industry.

2. Communications

The second highest priority is communicating to the states, FDA, NOAA, EPA, the shellfish industry, and the public concerning the requirements to ensure shellfish sanitation and the minimization of public health risk. It is necessary at times to advise and alert these groups of emerging hazards and appropriate controls. Disseminating information concerning policy development within the Conference, emerging public health issues and shellfish recalls through electronic media has become of paramount importance. It is this concept of

communication to enhance prevention that is the cornerstone of the Conference's mission to protect public health. Educating the consuming public of potential risks from shellfish is another facet of the communication responsibility of the Conference. With the emergence of naturally occurring bacteria and toxin producing algae as potential public health threats, the role of the Conference in formulating communication strategies to inform the public of potential health risks from molluscan shellfish has become more challenging. Additionally, the Conference also coordinates and assists in states efforts to educate those at risk of shellfish borne disease. These activities enable the Conference to proactively prevent future public health problems concerning shellfish products, effectively implement shellfish harvest controls and assure that post harvest treatment technologies for molluscan shellfish achieve reductions in specific bacteria.

3. Facilitation

The facilitation of control plans for the reduction of risk of shellfish-borne *Vibrio vulnificus* septicemia illnesses and *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* illnesses will assume a high priority during this work plan period. Working with the molluscan shellfish industry to develop pre- and post-harvest controls to reduce levels of *Vibrio vulnificus* and *Vibrio parahaemolyticus* in the final product and minimize post-harvest growth will help in minimizing risk. The Conference will work cooperatively with academia and the shellfish industry in answering technical questions and developing post-harvest treatment regimes designed to minimize risk of illness.

Issues of compliance with the Model Ordinance involve the evaluation of state programs by the FDA. The Conference plays a role in facilitating conflict resolution between the states, federal agencies, and the shellfish industry concerning issues of Model Ordinance compliance. In many instances the Conference acts as a third party in clarifying Model Ordinance issues which result in disagreement between states, FDA, or the shellfish industry.

There are numerous Conference committees, subcommittees and work groups that meet either in person, through conference call, or through electronic media. The Executive Office facilitates these meetings and proceedings. While the Biennial Meeting provides the forum under which proposals are debated and voted up or down, it is the efforts of committees, subcommittees and work groups between the Biennial Meetings that provide the main platform under which complex issues are deliberated. Compiling the proceedings and carry out the support and tasks assigned by the committees requires a significant amount of effort by the Executive Office.

4. Financial Accounting

The top priority in the area of financial accounting is the implementation of a grants and general revenue budget. Funds from each grant are dispersed according to grant requirements and reported in accordance with federal guidelines. The collection of revenues through dues and conference attendance fees occurs annually and is tracked with expenditures from this general revenue budget. There is a renewed effort to provide oversight for the financial accounting activities of the ISSC office. The second priority is the trackings of grant accomplishments in relation to the funds dispersed. Spreadsheets are developed to indicate dispersal. The third priority of work is grant and general revenue budget development which is presented and approved by the Executive Board

IV. DEFICIENCIES (NOTE: This Section is reserved for the annual Work Plan Evaluation.)

V. PROJECTED WORKLOAD ACCOMPLISHMENTS

A. Planning

1. Biennial Meeting

The Executive Office plans for the Biennial Meeting by coordinating meeting scheduling, material needs, meeting room requirements and office operation requirements. Significant effort is dedicated to provide necessary to assure proper deliberation of proposals. Additionally, the operation of committees, Task Forces and the General Assembly are all guided by the Executive Office staff through training of chairpersons and members and support in the development and production of reports and resolutions.

Biennial Meeting Planning 1

2. Executive Board Meetings

The Executive Office prepares the materials for two Executive Board and VMC meetings and communicates issues during the interim Biennial Meeting periods to Board members to keep them apprised of Conference operations.

Executive Board Meeting Planning 2

3. *Vibrio* Management Committee Meeting

The Executive Office coordinates activities of the *Vibrio* Management Committee. In many cases there are multiple work groups that have assigned tasks. The committee completes assigned tasks between meetings. These tasks include surveying states and industry groups concerning *Vibrio* controls and disease reporting issues.

Vibrio Management Committee Meeting Planning 2

4. *Vibrio* Education Subcommittee Meeting

The Executive Office coordinates activities of the *Vibrio* Education Subcommittee in unison with the *Vibrio* Management Committee the *Vibrio* education coordinator. The ISSC *Vibrio* education coordinator works with the *Vibrio* education subcommittee chairman and the Executive Office staff along with work groups to complete assigned tasks. Committee assignments are also handled by the Executive Office. These tasks include working with state health education agencies; state shellfish control agencies; shellfish industry groups; and various funding agencies.

Vibrio Education Subcommittee Meeting Planning 2

5. The Executive Office coordinates the activities of the committees listed below in preparation for the Biennial Meeting: Administrative Procedures, Audit, Biotoxin, Chemical Contamination, Communications, Credentials, Depuration/Wet Storage, Education, Foreign Relations, Growing Area Classification, Harvester Sanitation, Import Assessment, Laboratory Methods Review, Laboratory Quality Assurance, NSSP Evaluation Criteria, Patrol, Plant Sanitation, Plant Standardization Advisory, Post-Harvesting Processing,

Processing and Handling, Product Recall, Proposal Review, Research Guidance, Resolutions, Shellfish Restoration, Time/Temperature, Traceability, Unresolved Issues, and Use of Press.

Meeting Planning 29

6. Proposal Development for Biennial Meeting

The Executive Office solicits proposals to be considered at the Biennial Meeting. The solicitation for proposals is distributed per requirements of the Constitution, Bylaws, and Procedures. The proposals are then reviewed in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and Procedures and are organized, printed and distributed to the Conference membership prior to the Biennial Meeting.

Proposal Development for Biennial Meeting 1

B. Communications

1. Annual Updates at Regional Shellfish Conferences

The Executive Office prepares and maintains a presentation of the activities of the Conference and the Executive Office during the previous year. This presentation is given to regional shellfish group meetings and other external constituencies that have interests in shellfish sanitation. These groups include state officials, members of academia and the shellfish industry. These meetings provide a forum to communicate changes in shellfish policy that have been adopted by the Conference.

Number of Regional Shellfish Conferences 4

2. Maintain and Enhance ISSC Website

The ISSC Executive Office staff, in conjunction with an internet technology service and development provider, constructs and maintains a website that provides information about the functions of the ISSC. Various links to additional information relevant to shellfish sanitation are provided at this site. There is a continual effort to update proceedings, deliberations and actions of the Conference.

ISSC Website Maintenance and Enhancement Project 1

3. Develop Educational Material

The Executive Office at the direction of the Conference is pursuing several educational efforts. The Conference has a grant funded contractual employee that coordinates this effort in consultation with the Executive Director and the Executive Board. Efforts involve educating the general public concerning the risk associated with *Vibrios* in raw shellfish. Efforts also address educating the at-risk community, health care providers, interest groups, shellfish processors and harvesters.

Educational Effort(s) As needed

4. Notify States Concerning Shellfish Closures and Recalls

The Executive Office plays a critical role in coordinating responses and communicating information on shellfish recalls to the appropriate state agencies. This timely communication assures that recalls are performed as quickly as possible to minimize health risk from shellfish that may be associated with a shellfish borne disease outbreak

C. Facilitation

1. Initiating FDA Interpretations of the Model Ordinance

The Executive Office receives numerous inquiries concerning interpretation of the Model Ordinance. In response to these inquiries the Executive Office performs two functions. One is to assist individuals in understanding interpretations. The second is to request that an interpretation be developed by the FDA on a specific issue.

Interpretations of the Model Ordinance

As needed

2. Assist States in Resolving FDA Compliance Issues

Should the FDA and states disagree over the findings of a State Shellfish Sanitation Program evaluation and are unable to resolve these differences the Executive Director can provide assistance. This role is critical in resolving issues. The work of the Executive Director can often assist affected parties in avoiding the formal Unresolved Issue Process of the Conference. In the instances where there is disagreement in the evaluation of a state shellfish sanitation control program the Executive Director is looked upon as the first step to facilitating a resolution to the disagreement.

Assistance to States in Resolving FDA Compliance Issues

As needed

3. Assignments from Committees and Subcommittees

In the course of committee, subcommittee, and work group meetings there are tasks assigned to the Executive Office staff. Additionally, the Executive Office tracks the progress of these committees, subcommittees, and work groups and provides technical and logistical assistance. For committees, subcommittees, and workgroups to accomplish assigned tasks they must function in most cases during times between the Biennial Meeting. It is through the assistance and guidance of the Executive Office that they are able to accomplish their tasks. The Executive Committee and Board can send proposals to committees and receive reports from these committees. The logistics of the committee functions is a duty of the Executive Office. The Executive Office takes a very active role in assuring that all committee, subcommittee, and work group efforts are completed in compliance with required time frames.

Assignments from Committees and Subcommittees

29

4. Agency Interactions

The Conference works cooperatively with other governmental agencies in the pursuit or advancement of issues concerning shellfish sanitation. These projects enhance the ability of the Conference to accomplish its mission and Executive Board objectives. The ISSC will enter into discussions with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to discuss the 2007 shellfish harvesting data collection from states.

Agency Interactions

As needed

5. Training

It is necessary to continually assure that Executive Office staff is adequately trained in Conference policies and procedures to maximize efficiency. Additionally, the staff is provided with training opportunities to advance their knowledge, skills and abilities to maximize their performance. Providing opportunities for advancing technical knowledge, skills and abilities of the Executive Office staff are of critical importance to the advancement of the Conference.

Training

As needed

C. Financial Accounting

1. Grant Administration

The Conference has successfully obtained grants that assist in the administrative costs of the day-to-day operations of the Executive Office. Additionally, there are grants that are specific to activities involved in the control of *Vibrio* related shellfish borne disease. Tracking and administering these grants is critical to the continued success of Conference to obtain such grants.

Number of Grants Currently Administered

5

2. Budget Development

The Executive Office works to develop a general revenue-operating budget that focuses on the costs of the Biennial Meeting and a portion of the Executive Office operating budget.

Number of Budgets Developed

4

3. Budget Implementation

The Executive Office implements the budgets adopted by the Conference Executive Board. This involves assuring that monies are spent properly within each budget line item and that amounts designated within these line items are not exceeded without assuring that the total budget is under the projected yearly total. The tracking of expenditures and prompt payment of accounts payable is a primary focus of the financial accounting function.

Number of Budgets Implemented

4

4. Audit

The Executive Office works with the Audit Committee to assure that the budgets developed and implemented by the Executive Office are properly audited on an annual basis. The Executive Office provides guidance to the committee concerning current financial operations and audit controls practiced by the Executive Office. Additionally, the Executive Office implements any supplementary directives from the Audit Committee or auditor.

Number of Audits

1