

## Chem-Bio News

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- 2. [AU] MUSTARD GAS MEN GAIN RECOGNITION:** "Three RAAF armourers who risked their lives working with mustard gas in Glenbrook during World War II returned to the village last Wednesday to unveil a plaque commemorating the men who worked on the top secret project."
- 3. NUCLEAR FALLOUT ROCKS PAKISTAN:** "Pakistan has reacted strongly to an article in The New Yorker by investigative reporter Seymour Hersh on November 16, "Defending the arsenal", in which he claimed that Pakistan was discussing "understandings" with the US that could even see specialists take sophisticated nuclear triggers out of the country to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands."
- 4. WORLD'S TOP GENE SYNTHESIS COMPANIES ESTABLISH TOUGH BIOSECURITY SCREENING PROTOCOL:** "Five of the world's leading gene synthesis companies today announced agreement that they will apply a common screening protocol to promote biosecurity in the gene synthesis industry. By screening the sequences of synthetic gene orders and the customers who place them, the companies aim to support government efforts to prevent the misuse of gene synthesis technology. Blue Heron Biotechnology, DNA2.0,"
- 5. [AU] NEW CHECKS FOR BIO-TERROR AGENT HANDLERS:** "The new measure would enable the federal health minister to determine that background checking of people who handle SSBA's [security sensitive biological agents] is conducted by the Australian Background Checking Service, or AusCheck, of the Attorney-General's Department."
- 6. INTEROP: NEW YORK TESTS XBOX-BASED ALERT SYSTEM:** "Gamers are used to confronting invading terrorists, nuclear attacks, and natural calamities—in virtual form. But those living in New York State could soon receive warnings about real emergencies through their favorite video console."

## Chem-Demil News

- 1. TOOELE CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY (TOCDF) - NEW FILTRATION SYSTEM MOVING AHEAD:** "The TOCDF's new \$33 million Pollution Abatement System (PAS) Filtration System (PFS) is running smoothly through required tests and demonstrations."

# CB Daily Report

## Chem-Bio News

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### **[NZ] SIS SEEKS VARSITY HELP IN WEAPON WATCH**

By Tina Law  
The Press [NZ]  
November 18, 2009

"New Zealand's spy agency, the Security Intelligence Service (SIS), wants universities to alert the SIS to any illicit science relating to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

SIS director Dr Warren Tucker met the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee (NZVCC) and sent university managers a letter and a brochure called A Guide to Weapons of Mass Destruction: Your Role in Preventing Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction."

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“TEU president Dr Tom Ryan said asking university staff to report back to a spy agency would undermine the legislated autonomy of institutions, including the guarantee of academic freedom.”

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“The SIS pamphlet provided information and guidance for scientists, exporters and academics on how to identify proliferation-related activity and what to do should they become aware of such activity or have suspicions or concerns.

Tucker said of particular relevance to New Zealand universities was the potential application of knowledge or skills in the hard science, engineering, mathematical and medical fields to weapons programmes.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/news/3072825/SIS-seeks-varsity-help-in-weapon-watch>

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### **[AU] MUSTARD GAS MEN GAIN RECOGNITION**

Blue Mountain Gazette

November 18, 2009

“Three RAAF armourers who risked their lives working with mustard gas in Glenbrook during World War II returned to the village last Wednesday to unveil a plaque commemorating the men who worked on the top secret project.

Geoff Burn, Doug Bain and Arthur Lewis were the guests of honour at the special Remembrance Day ceremony at Panthers Glenbrook.

Now in their mid-80s, the men worked with secret stockpiles of mustard gas in a disused Glenbrook railway tunnel during World War II but struggled for decades to gain formal recognition for their role in the war effort.”

The full article can be found at:

<http://www.bluemountaingazette.com.au/news/local/news/general/mustard-gas-men-gain-recognition/1680969.aspx>

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### **NUCLEAR FALLOUT ROCKS PAKISTAN**

By Syed Saleem Shahzad

Asia Times

November 20, 2009

“Pakistan has reacted strongly to an article in The New Yorker by investigative reporter Seymour Hersh on November 16, "Defending the arsenal", in which he claimed that Pakistan was discussing "understandings" with the US that could even see specialists take sophisticated nuclear triggers out of the country to prevent them from falling into the wrong hands.”

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“General Tariq Majid, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, said the claims were "absurd and plain mischievous".

This might be the case, but within Pakistan, the issue of the arsenal - estimated to contain between 80

and 100 warheads - has turned into a major political row.

In an obvious attempt to address international concerns, the chairman of the National Assembly's standing committee on defense, Azra Fazal Pechuho, rushed a report of her 17-member committee into the assembly on November 11 seeking immediate legal endorsement to the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA) ordinance of 2007, which sets out a multi-layered structure for the control of the nuclear arsenal.

According to this report, the president would be chairman of the authority and the prime minister would be the deputy chairman. Other members would be the ministers for foreign affairs, defense, finance and interior, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, three services chiefs and the director general of the Strategic Planning Division.

The operational control of the nuclear weapons is currently solely in the hands of the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of the Staff Committee, General Majid.

The Nuclear Command Authority bill seeks to bring into law an ordinance from the time of former president, General Pervez Musharraf, to strengthen control over the country's nuclear weapons.

However, the bill was deferred by the speaker, Fehmida Mirza, on a request from Parliamentary Affairs Minister Babar Awani, who gave no reason for the move.

Asia Times Online has learned that obstacles created by former premier, Nawaz Sharif, led to the deferment. Sharif, leader of the opposition, apparently sees Zardari as unreliable, and wants the authority to be headed by the prime minister. He also urged that the leader of the opposition be a part of the NCA."

The full article can be found at: [http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South\\_Asia/KK20Df08.html](http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KK20Df08.html)

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## **WORLD'S TOP GENE SYNTHESIS COMPANIES ESTABLISH TOUGH BIOSECURITY SCREENING PROTOCOL**

EarthTimes

November 19, 2009

"Five of the world's leading gene synthesis companies today announced agreement that they will apply a common screening protocol to promote biosecurity in the gene synthesis industry. By screening the sequences of synthetic gene orders and the customers who place them, the companies aim to support government efforts to prevent the misuse of gene synthesis technology. Blue Heron Biotechnology, DNA2.0, GENEART, GenScript and Integrated DNA Technologies together represent approximately 80 percent of the global gene synthesis capacity. They have formed the International Gene Synthesis Consortium (IGSC) to coordinate ongoing best practices development and to work together with governments and others concerned to promote the beneficial application of gene synthesis technology and to safeguard biosecurity."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/worlds-top-gene-synthesis-companies-establish-tough-biosecurity-screening-protocol,1054186.shtml>

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## **[AU] NEW CHECKS FOR BIO-TERROR AGENT HANDLERS**

Brisbane Times

November 19, 2009

"Health Minister Nicola Roxon says the change will enhance Australia's capacity to secure biological agents of diseases such as anthrax, smallpox and the plague.

They are known as security sensitive biological agents, or SSBA's.

There were already stringent requirements covering such agents, Ms Roxon said.

The new measure would enable the federal health minister to determine that background checking of people who handle SSBA's is conducted by the Australian Background Checking Service, or AusCheck, of the Attorney-General's Department."

The full article can be found at: <http://news.brisbanetimes.com.au/breaking-news-national/new-checks-for-bioterror-agent-handlers-20091119-ino8.html>

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## **INTEROP: NEW YORK TESTS XBOX-BASED ALERT SYSTEM**

By Paul McDougall  
Information Week  
November 19, 2009

"Gamers are used to confronting invading terrorists, nuclear attacks, and natural calamities—in virtual form. But those living in New York State could soon receive warnings about real emergencies through their favorite video console.

State authorities are testing a plan that would see the Emergency Management Office issue alerts over online gaming networks in addition to regular channels.

The goal, said New York State Deputy CIO Rico Singleton, is to reach younger residents who spend more time on the Xbox, PlayStation, or Wii than with television or radio."

The full article can be found at: [http://www.informationweek.com/news/government/state-local/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=221900336&cid=RSSfeed\\_IWK\\_All](http://www.informationweek.com/news/government/state-local/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=221900336&cid=RSSfeed_IWK_All)

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## ***Chem-Demil News***

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### **TOOELE CHEMICAL AGENT DISPOSAL FACILITY (TOCDF) - NEW FILTRATION SYSTEM MOVING AHEAD**

US Army Chemical Materials Agency News Release  
November 19, 2009

"The TOCDF's new \$33 million Pollution Abatement System (PAS) Filtration System (PFS) is running smoothly through required tests and demonstrations. There are three separate PFS carbon filter units—one for the metal parts furnace (MPF) and one for each liquid incinerator (LIC)—each is designed to capture mercury from contaminated exhaust gases, allowing the TOCDF to safely destroy those mustard munitions with high levels of mercury.

On Oct. 14, the PFS started its shakedown period, which allows operators to become more familiar with the system and determine optimum operating parameters and conditions while processing actual munitions contaminated with mercury.

As part of the shakedown, the PFS is undergoing a series of planned performance tests, including the Alternative Monitoring Request-Relative Accuracy Test Audit (AMR-RATA), which demonstrates the TOCDF's capability and accuracy in monitoring exhaust gas for mercury. Each furnace and its

associated carbon filtration unit—the MPF and both LICs—have successfully completed the AMR-RATA.

The shakedown period also includes what is referred to as a “mini-burn.” This is the same kind of demonstration test that is done for state regulators, only shorter. The MPF miniburn went well; the MPF demonstration tests are happening this week. The LIC mini-burn has also been completed; the official LIC demonstration test will take place in early December. State officials have agreed that performance data from a single LIC/PFS demo test will be applied to the other LIC/PFS system.

Once the demonstration tests are completed, the HT 4.2-inch mortar campaign is expected to re-start in January.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.cma.army.mil/include/docrendition.asp?DocID=003681906>  
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