

25 September 2009

## **Chem-Bio News**

**1. IRAN ADMITS TO SECRET SECOND NUCLEAR PLANT:** *"Tehran sent a letter to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna confessing that they have concealed the nuclear facility inside a mountain."*

**2. HIGH-CONTAINMENT LABORATORIES - NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR OVERSIGHT IS NEEDED:** *"GAO is recommending that (1) the National Security Advisor name an entity charged with government-wide strategic evaluation of high-containment laboratories and (2) the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture address specific oversight issues regarding high-containment laboratories. The Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture agreed with our recommendations relevant to them."*

**3. BIOSAFETY LABORATORIES - BSL-4 LABORATORIES IMPROVED PERIMETER SECURITY DESPITE LIMITED ACTION BY CDC:** *"Significant perimeter security differences continue to exist among the nation's five BSL-4 laboratories operational at the time of GAO's assessment."*

**4. HANFORD LANDFILL STILL GROWING:** *"Work has started to make Hanford's massive landfill for low-level radioactive waste even larger."*

**5. NNSA ANNOUNCES EQUIVALENT OF MORE THAN 15,000 NUCLEAR WEAPONS OF RUSSIAN HEU ELIMINATED:** *"The 1993 U.S.-Russian HEU Purchase Agreement, which will convert 500 MT of HEU from dismantled Russian nuclear weapons into peaceful use by 2013, is now 75 percent complete."*

**6. AIR FILTER SYSTEM 'COULD END SPREAD OF BUGS ON FLIGHTS':** *"A revolutionary new air filter could help reduce the spread of swine flu and other illnesses among passengers on board commercial airline flights, British researchers say."*

**7. FORT DETRICK LEADER: SAFETY A PRIORITY AT BIOLAB:** *"A \$680 million laboratory building under construction at Fort Detrick will likely be safer than the decades-old complex it will replace, an Army biodefense official told a scientific review panel Tuesday."*

## **Chem-Demil News**

**1. PINE BLUFF ARSENAL PREPARES FOR THE UNEXPECTED:** *"A mock employee hostage situation at the Pine Bluff Arsenal Thursday gave personnel an opportunity to test and practice emergency response procedures."*

# **CB Daily Report**

**Chem-Bio News**

---

## **IRAN ADMITS TO SECRET SECOND NUCLEAR PLANT**

By Nico Hines

TimesOnline (UK)

September 25, 2009

"Iran has admitted to running a secret second uranium enrichment plant, pre-empting President Obama and Gordon Brown who were due to reveal its existence to the world later today.

Tehran sent a letter to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna confessing that they have concealed the nuclear facility inside a mountain.

Mr Brown, Mr Obama and President Sarkozy were due to make the dramatic announcement within hours, before the G20 meetings in Pittsburgh.

Western intelligence agencies have been monitoring the illicit site for years but the leaders decided to publicise the findings after learning that Iran had recently discovered that the project was under surveillance, according to The New York Times."

The full article can be found at: [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle\\_east/article6848615.ece](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/middle_east/article6848615.ece)

[Return to Top](#)

---

## **HIGH-CONTAINMENT LABORATORIES - NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR OVERSIGHT IS NEEDED**

US Government Accountability Office

September 2009

"GAO is recommending that (1) the National Security Advisor name an entity charged with governmentwide strategic evaluation of high-containment laboratories and (2) the Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture address specific oversight issues regarding high-containment laboratories. The Secretaries of Health and Human Services and Agriculture agreed with our recommendations relevant to them."

.....

"What GAO Found

The recent expansion of high-containment laboratories in the United States began in response to the need to develop medical countermeasures after the anthrax attacks in 2001. Understandably, the expansion initially lacked a clear, government-wide coordinated strategy. In that emergency situation, the expansion was based on individual agency perceptions of the capacity their high-containment

labs required as well as the availability of congressionally approved funding. Decisions to

fund the construction of high-containment labs were made by multiple federal agencies in multiple budget cycles. Federal and state agencies, academia, and the private sector considered their individual requirements, but an assessment of national needs was lacking. Even now, after more than 7 years, GAO was unable to find any projections based on a governmentwide strategic evaluation of future capacity requirements set in light of existing capacity; the numbers, location, and mission of the laboratories needed to effectively counter biothreats; and national public health goals. Such information is needed to ensure that the United States will have facilities in the right place with the right specifications.

Furthermore, since no single agency is in charge of the expansion, no one is determining the aggregate risks associated with this expansion. As a consequence, no federal agency can determine whether high-containment laboratory capacity may now meet or exceed the national need or is at a level that can be operated safely. If an agency were tasked, or a mechanism were established, with the purpose of overseeing the expansion of high-containment laboratories, it could develop a strategic plan to (1) ensure that the numbers and capabilities of potentially dangerous high-containment laboratories are no greater than necessary, (2) balance the risks and benefits of expanding such laboratories, and (3) determine the type of oversight needed.

Four highly publicized incidents in high-containment laboratories, as well as evidence in scientific literature, demonstrate that (1) while laboratory accidents are rare, they do occur, primarily due to human error or systems (management and technical operations) failure, including the failure of safety equipment and procedures, (2) insiders can pose a risk, and (3) it is difficult to control inventories of biological agents with currently available technologies.

Taken as a whole, these incidents demonstrate failures of systems and procedures meant to maintain biosafety and biosecurity in high-containment laboratories. For example, they revealed the failure to comply with regulatory requirements, safety measures that were not commensurate with the level of risk to public health posed by laboratory workers and pathogens in the laboratories, and the failure to fund ongoing facility maintenance and monitor the operational effectiveness of laboratory physical infrastructure.

Oversight plays a critical role in improving biosafety and ensuring that high-containment laboratories comply with regulations. However, some aspects of the current oversight programs provided by the Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture are dependent upon entities monitoring themselves and reporting incidents to federal regulators. Since 2001, personnel reliability programs have been established to counter insider risks, but their cost, effectiveness, and impact has not been evaluated."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d09574.pdf>

[Return to Top](#)

---

## **BIOSAFETY LABORATORIES - BSL-4 LABORATORIES IMPROVED PERIMETER SECURITY DESPITE LIMITED ACTION BY CDC**

Statement of Gregory D. Kutz, Managing Director, Forensic Audits and Special Investigations

“Significant perimeter security differences continue to exist among the nation’s five BSL-4 laboratories operational at the time of GAO’s assessment. In September 2008, GAO reported that three of the five labs had all or nearly all of the 15 key controls GAO evaluated. Two labs, however, demonstrated a significant lack of these controls, such as camera coverage for all exterior lab entrances and vehicle screening. As a result, GAO recommended that CDC work with USDA to require specific perimeter security controls at high-containment facilities. However, as we reported in July 2009, CDC has taken limited action on the GAO recommendation.

In July 2009, GAO reported that the two deficient labs made progress on their own despite CDC’s limited action. One made a significant number of improvements, thus reducing the likelihood of intrusion. The second made a few changes and formed a committee to consider and prioritize other improvements. The following table shows progress on 9 of the 15 controls GAO initially assessed for these two labs.

[Table omitted]

Two additional observations about BSL-4 labs concern the significant perimeter security differences among the five labs GAO originally assessed for our September 2008 report. First, labs with stronger perimeter controls had additional security requirements mandated by other federal agencies. For example, one lab is a military facility subject to far stricter Department of Defense physical security requirements. Second, CDC inspection officials stated their training and experience has been focused on safety. CDC officials said they are developing a comprehensive strategy for safety and security of labs and will adjust the training and inspection process to match this strategy.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-09-1038T>

[Return to Top](#)

---

## **HANFORD LANDFILL STILL GROWING**

By Annette Cary  
TriCity Herald  
September 24, 2009

“Work has started to make Hanford's massive landfill for low-level radioactive waste even larger.

Improvements also are being made to help the landfill, the Environmental Restoration Disposal Facility, or ERDF, keep up with the accelerated pace of environmental cleanup at the nuclear reservation.

Cleanup work at Hanford is increasing with the infusion of \$1.96 billion in federal economic

stimulus money. With more cleanup work comes the need for more waste disposal capacity, so the stimulus funding includes about \$100 million for work at ERDF.

"The pace of cleanup at Hanford is totally linked to the capabilities of ERDF," said Dave Einan, an environmental engineer for the Environmental Protection Agency, which regulates the Department of Energy project.

Now an average of 250 containers of waste are hauled to the landfill daily, each holding about 20 tons of waste. That includes dirt with low-level radioactive or hazardous chemical contamination dug up from the ground and potentially contaminated rubble from buildings and other structures that are being demolished.

As cleanup work gears up, particularly in central Hanford, DOE expects the landfill could receive up to 600 containers of waste a day, said Mark French, DOE federal project director for cleanup along the Columbia River.

Operations have come a long way since the landfill opened in 1996, accepting one container of waste on its first day and then building initially to 15 containers a day, Einan said.

The current expansion is the fourth since it opened, said Bruce Covert, waste operations director for Washington Closure Hanford, which manages the landfill for DOE. It will increase capacity by 50 percent to about 16 million tons."

The full article can be found at: [http://www.tri-cityherald.com/kennewick\\_pasco\\_richland/story/728486.html](http://www.tri-cityherald.com/kennewick_pasco_richland/story/728486.html)

[Return to Top](#)

---

## **NNSA ANNOUNCES EQUIVALENT OF MORE THAN 15,000 NUCLEAR WEAPONS OF RUSSIAN HEU ELIMINATED**

US National Nuclear Security Administration News Release

September 23, 2009

"The National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) today announced that it has monitored the elimination of more than 375 metric tons (MT) of Russian highly enriched uranium (HEU) – the equivalent of more than 15,000 nuclear weapons – under a landmark nuclear nonproliferation program. The 1993 U.S.-Russian HEU Purchase Agreement, which will convert 500 MT of HEU from dismantled Russian nuclear weapons into peaceful use by 2013, is now 75 percent complete.

"The continued success of this important bilateral agreement demonstrates the enduring U. S.-Russian commitment to the safe and irreversible elimination of excess fissile materials, as recently reaffirmed by Presidents Obama and Medvedev in Moscow," said NNSA Administrator Thomas D'Agostino. "This milestone puts us one step closer to accomplishing the President's goal of securing or eliminating weapons-usable nuclear materials worldwide."

Under the International Atomic Energy Agency's definition of a Significant Quantity of

nuclear material, 375 metric tons of HEU is equivalent to more than 15,000 nuclear weapons.

The U.S.-Russian HEU Purchase Agreement requires Russia to blend down HEU into low enriched uranium (LEU) for peaceful purposes in the United States. NNSA's HEU Transparency Program ensures that the material is derived from weapons, processed, and converted to a nonweapons-useable form for delivery and use in U.S. commercial reactors. The resulting LEU is used to generate about 10 percent of all electrical power in the United States today.

The HEU Transparency Program implements extensive access and monitoring rights during 24 Special Monitoring Visits per year to four Russian uranium-processing facilities. U.S. experts measure and observe HEU processing firsthand at these facilities, and this information provides the basis for an overall assessment of Russian HEU conversion and downblending activities subject to the Agreement.

To date, the Program has conducted 270 Special Monitoring Visits to monitor Russian uranium-processing, with U.S. experts monitoring the elimination of 30 metric tons of HEU – the equivalent of 1,200 nuclear weapons – each year. The Russian Federation also conducts reciprocal monitoring activities at U.S. facilities to ensure peaceful use. By the Agreement's completion in 2013, NNSA will have monitored the elimination of the equivalent of 20,000 nuclear weapons."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.nnsa.energy.gov/2592.htm>

[Return to Top](#)

---

## **AIR FILTER SYSTEM 'COULD END SPREAD OF BUGS ON FLIGHTS'**

By David Rose

TimesOnline (UK)

September 15, 2009

"A revolutionary new air filter could help reduce the spread of swine flu and other illnesses among passengers on board commercial airline flights, British researchers say.

The aerospace giant BAE Systems has joined forces with Quest International, a small company based in Cheadle, near Manchester, to develop a machine that destroys up to 99.9 per cent of infectious viruses and bacteria as well as pollutants that can circulate in the confines of an aircraft, especially on long-haul flights.

The device, called AirManager, uses a controlled electric field to filter out and destroy any airborne particles or germs as they pass through an aircraft's air conditioning system, emitting only clean, sterilised air.

After four years of development and tests, BAE says it has received its first orders from a major European airline and announced the technology is also being considered for use in NHS hospitals as a way to stop the spread of "superbugs" such as MRSA and Clostridium

difficile.

The air on board a passenger jet must be pressurised in order for passengers to be able to breathe, but scientists and lobby groups have previously claimed that passengers can be exposed to toxins as a result of the "bleed air" system that is used to redirect air from the engines to the cabin and cockpit.

Air inside the cabin is then circulated and re-circulated up to 30 times an hour, far more than in conventional air conditioning systems, meaning that infectious viruses and bacteria can quickly spread.

Unlike conventional filters, which are designed to sieve out particles from the air as it passes through perforated barriers at high speed, David Hallam, an engineer and founder of Quest International, said that the AirManager used an "avalanche of electrons" emitted in a closed electric field to break down and destroy the atomic structure of any pollutants or germs."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/travel/news/article6835459.ece>

[Return to Top](#)

---

## **FORT DETRICK LEADER: SAFETY A PRIORITY AT BIOLAB**

By David Dishneau

The Associated Press on Google News

September 23, 2009

"A \$680 million laboratory building under construction at Fort Detrick will likely be safer than the decades-old complex it will replace, an Army biodefense official told a scientific review panel Tuesday.

But a citizens group critical of the expansion told the National Academy of Sciences panel that the military hasn't fully considered the possibility of a release of deadly germs by a disturbed or disgruntled worker."

.....

"Col. Roger Martin, the institute's deputy director, said the lab has undergone a "cultural change" in recent years focusing on security.

"Inherent in everything that we do on a daily basis at USAMRIID is safety," Martin said, adding that new technology incorporated into the building design "will likely enhance our safety position."

The safety review was requested by critics who say planners haven't adequately considered insider threats to military biolabs."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gF10hzkUPBSBldrJmafLAMzuPgMQD9ASKNOO3>

[Return to Top](#)

---

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

---

### **PINE BLUFF ARSENAL PREPARES FOR THE UNEXPECTED**

By Wes Clement  
Pine Bluff Commercial  
September 24, 2009

"A mock employee hostage situation at the Pine Bluff Arsenal Thursday gave personnel an opportunity to test and practice emergency response procedures.

Arsenal spokeswoman Cheryl Avery said non-chemical emergency drills are typically conducted annually, and it is unknown to personnel what type of emergency scenario will be presented.

"It may be a tornado, it may be an intruder, terrorist situation, we don't know," Avery said Thursday morning before the drill began.

Following Sept. 11, 2001, and the establishment of U.S. Department of Homeland Security, that department created a preparedness campaign resulting in September becoming National Preparedness Month in 2004.

"It was a (mock) security incident this morning where an employee took hostages," Avery said.

She said the drill allowed personnel to practice using the newly adopted National Incident Management System (NIMS). Most government agencies, she said, are using the new system."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.pbcommercial.com/articles/2009/09/25/news/news4.txt>

[Return to Top](#)

---

**END** of CB Daily Report.

Send subscription requests, unsubscribing requests, questions and comments to:

**Steve Tesko:** [Steve.Tesko@anser.org](mailto:Steve.Tesko@anser.org)

Copyright 2008. *Analytic Services Inc.*

[Analytic Services Inc. DMCA Copyright Notice: http://www.homelandsecurity.org/bulletin/Draft\\_ANSER\\_DCMA\\_Copyright\\_Notice.htm](http://www.homelandsecurity.org/bulletin/Draft_ANSER_DCMA_Copyright_Notice.htm)

Use of these news articles does not reflect official endorsement.

In accordance with Title 17 (USC), Section 107, this material is distributed without profit or payment and is intended for nonprofit research and educational purposes only.

Reproduction for private use or gain is subject to original copyright restrictions.

#### **PRIVACY POLICY**

Content provided in the *CB Daily Report* does not reflect the viewpoint(s) of Analytic Services Inc. Analytic Services Inc. does not share, publish, or in any way redistribute subscriber email addresses or any other personal information.