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Issue No. 645, 14 August 2008

**Articles & Other Documents:**

[Army Team To Probe Security At Detrick](#)

[Doubts Persist Among Anthrax Suspect's Colleagues](#)

[Anthrax Case Prompts Congressional Investigation Of Biodefense Labs](#)

[Weapons Expert's Killing A Blow To Al-Qaida](#)

[The Case Still Isn't Closed](#)

[Doubts About Nuclear Verification Keep N. Korea on List of Terrorist States](#)

[The Killers In The Lab](#)

[Initial assessment of Defense nuclear review nearing completion](#)

[U.S. Imposes Sanctions On Iranian Companies](#)

[U.S. Official: Euro GMD Can Be Ratified Before End Of Administration](#)

[Strengthening Our Strategy Against WMD](#)

[Hair Samples in Anthrax Case Don't Match](#)

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Baltimore Sun  
August 9, 2008

## **Army Team To Probe Security At Detrick**

*Review is response to anthrax mailings, scientist's suicide*

By Associated Press

WASHINGTON - The Army has created a team of medical and other military experts to review security measures at the research laboratory where the scientist linked to the anthrax mailings worked.

Army Secretary Pete Geren has asked at least a dozen military and civilian officials to scrutinize safety procedures, quality controls and other policies and practices at the biodefense lab at Fort Detrick, Md., Army spokesman Paul Boyce said Friday.

The Army has offered no explanation for how its biosecurity system, which is set up to catch mentally troubled workers, failed to flag scientist Bruce Ivins for years. Ivins, the microbiologist accused of sending anthrax-laced letters in 2001 that killed five people, committed suicide last week as the FBI began closing in on him.

Boyce said yesterday that Geren met with military officials on Thursday night, then traveled to the high-security Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, known as USAMRIID, at Fort Detrick yesterday morning to talk with leaders there.

Boyce said the team, which is only now being formed, is not targeting individuals but instead will be reviewing documents, procedures and other safety measures to ensure security at the military biodefense lab. He added that there are no deadlines as yet for reports from the team.

The facility has come under intense public scrutiny as more details have spilled out about therapists' concerns that in recent years Ivins had become paranoid, delusional and bent on violence.

Investigators said that between 2000 and 2006, Ivins had been prescribed antidepressants, antipsychotics and anti-anxiety drugs. By 2005, the government had matched anthrax in his lab to the strain that killed five people.

It wasn't until November 2007, after the FBI raided his home, that Fort Detrick revoked Ivins' laboratory access.

Army officials have declined to discuss any other efforts to either watch Ivins more closely or put other restriction on him prior to the November action.

Instead, they have stressed that safety procedures at the lab have included ongoing personnel evaluations, which rely largely on employee self-reporting medical or criminal problems and observations by other workers and supervisors.

Boyce said the impending review will be headed by a two-star general, and will include representatives from the medical research command, the Army's surgeon general, and Army operations.

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nation/bal-te.anthrax09aug09,0,886595.story>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times

August 9, 2008

Pg. 13

## **Doubts Persist Among Anthrax Suspect's Colleagues**

By Eric Lipton

WASHINGTON — Military personnel, under the threat of court-martial, were refusing inoculations of an anthrax vaccine. The vaccine's sole manufacturing plant was ordered to shut down. Researchers were turning up evidence possibly linking the vaccine to illnesses of soldiers during the Persian Gulf war of 1991.

It was hardly the thank you that Dr. Bruce E. Ivins expected for his years of labor to produce a vaccine that would protect military personnel from an anthrax attack by the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein or some other adversary.

The criticism, which reached its peak in 2000 and early 2001, was clearly starting to get on Dr. Ivins's nerves. "I think the \*\*\*\* is about to hit the fan ... big time," he wrote in a July 2000 e-mail message about the inoculation program, according to a government affidavit. "It's just a fine mess."

This turmoil has now been cited by federal investigators as a key part of the reason they believe that Dr. Ivins sent out anthrax-laced letters in the fall of 2001 — as such an attack would, in a single stroke, have eliminated the skepticism and second guessing about the need for an anthrax vaccine.

The investigators suggest that Dr. Ivins had been struggling with psychological problems, and was on medication and undergoing counseling after being overcome by what he described as paranoid, delusional thoughts. The trouble with the vaccine, they argue, may have been enough to set him off.

But Dr. Ivins's former colleagues reject that two-part theory, saying it is just one of many flaws in the evidence presented by the government in an unconvincing case.

There was a real threat, the former colleagues acknowledged, that the anthrax vaccine Dr. Ivins had worked on during that period, known as Anthrax Vaccine Adsorbed or AVA, might be pulled from the market

Most troubling were problems at the Michigan manufacturing plant, which had been shut down in 1998 after the Food and Drug Administration uncovered serious flaws.

Dr. Ivins and other researchers, however, had been working on a more advanced alternative vaccine — considered safer and more effective — so there was no reason for such a rash act, his former colleagues say.

"There was a lot of consternation, a lot of pressure to rescue this thing," said Jeffrey Adamovicz, one of Dr. Ivins's fellow researchers at the time. "But if AVA failed, he had his next vaccine candidate. It was well on its way to what looked to be a very bright future."

The vaccine controversy erupted in the late 1990s, after the Defense Department ordered the inoculation of all 2.4 million active duty and reserve troops, starting with those most likely to confront biological attacks in war zones, partly because Iraq had confirmed that it once had a large stockpile of anthrax that was destroyed after the first Persian Gulf war.

By 2000, more than 570,000 military personnel had complied with the order, and hundreds had filed an “adverse event report” after receiving the shots, citing reactions that included fatigue, dizziness and muscle pain, and more serious conditions like thyroid disorders and rhabdomyolysis, a muscle ailment.

Congressional hearings were held, and dozens of House members signed a letter to the Pentagon calling the mandatory vaccination program “a flawed policy that should be immediately stopped.”

Protests were also organized.

“What the government is doing is wrong, and it is time to wake up America from its comfortable stupor and say ‘no more,’” said a Pennsylvania woman, Gloria Graham, at a 2000 protest over the vaccine, which Ms. Graham said had sickened her son.

The Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, at Fort Detrick, Md., where Dr. Ivins worked, had been assigned by the Defense Department to help BioPort, the company that owned the Michigan manufacturing plant, to fix any problems so production could resume.

“Unfortunately, since the BioPort people aren’t scientists, the task of solving their problem has fallen on us,” Dr. Ivins wrote in a June 2000 e-mail message.

The situation became dire as the vaccine supply dwindled, leading Dr. Ivins to speculate openly that the program might be halted. “That would be bad for everyone concerned, including us,” he wrote. “I’m sure that blame will be spread around.”

The pressure was intense for the team at Fort Detrick that had been working on the effort, a group of about half a dozen scientists and technicians, said Dr. Adamovicz, Dr. Ivins’s former colleague.

“It was a big concern for us,” Dr. Adamovicz said in an interview this week. “We wanted obviously to see this vaccine succeed.”

The stakes were particularly high for Dr. Ivins, who, for nearly a decade, had been leading experiments in which laboratory animals — rabbits, monkeys and mice — were injected with vaccines that each had slightly different additives in an effort to increase their effectiveness.

Critics of the program were accusing the Defense Department of using one of the experimental formulas, which featured an oil-based additive called squalene, in vaccines given to military personnel in the gulf war, a decision, they contended, that may have caused autoimmune diseases among returning soldiers.

“It is well documented that the U.S. military has a history of administering experimental vaccines to the troops,” said Gary Matsumoto, who was doing research on a book on the anthrax program and who had submitted Freedom of Information requests to the Army requesting access to Dr. Ivins’s laboratory notebooks.

The Defense Department denied conducting such experiments on troops and defended the vaccine, saying it was both safe and effective, and necessary to protect the military from a possible attack. Dr. Ivins’s notebooks, which were released to the public, suggested, however, that he had found that the vaccine might be making some of the test animals sick.

“Although all vaccinated monkeys survived, they appeared to be sick over the course of two weeks,” Dr. Ivins’s laboratory report said.

In his e-mail messages, Dr. Ivins expressed particular contempt for Mr. Matsumoto and his requests for copies of internal Army test results.

“We’ve got better things to do than shine his shoes and pee on command,” Dr. Ivins wrote, in August 2001, about Mr. Matsumoto. “He’s gotten everything from me he will get.”

What the Justice Department has not produced is evidence documenting that Dr. Ivins’s frustrations motivated him to retaliate with the anthrax letters.

Gerard P. Andrews, another of Dr. Ivins’s former colleagues, said he knew that Dr. Ivins was frustrated, but that he doubted that Dr. Ivins would consider such a step.

“Nothing is unimaginable,” Dr. Andrews said. “But I would definitely say it is doubtful.”

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/09/washington/09vaccine.html?\\_r=1&scp=1&sq=Doubts%20Persist%20Among%20Anthrax%20Suspect's%20Colleagues&st=cse&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/09/washington/09vaccine.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=Doubts%20Persist%20Among%20Anthrax%20Suspect's%20Colleagues&st=cse&oref=slogin)

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Los Angeles Times

August 9, 2008

## **Anthrax Case Prompts Congressional Investigation Of Biodefense Labs**

*Reps. John Dingell and Bart Stupak want to know: If a mentally unstable scientist like Bruce Ivins could remain in a federal lab for so long, how safe are other labs?*

By Josh Meyer, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — Calling it "a most urgent public health and national security issue," two ranking lawmakers said Friday that they were expanding their congressional investigation into the risks associated with the nation's biodefense labs to focus on how someone as mentally unstable as accused anthrax killer Bruce E. Ivins could have worked unsupervised with deadly biological agents for so long.

Reps. John D. Dingell (D-Mich.), chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce, and Bart Stupak (D-Mich.), head of the panel's subcommittee on oversight and investigations, said they would investigate personnel security at Ft. Detrick, Md., where Ivins worked with anthrax cultures for at least seven years after he began showing signs of paranoia and mental instability.

Ivins, who was 62 when he died July 29, remained with the lab long after the FBI determined that he was probably the culprit in the 2001 attacks that killed five people and sickened 17 who had handled tainted mail. He ingested a lethal dose of acetaminophen as authorities were preparing to charge him with murder.

On Friday the government cleared Dr. Steven J. Hatfill, another researcher, of any complicity in the attacks -- something it did not do in June when it paid him a \$5.8-million settlement or this week when authorities said publicly they believed Ivins was the sole culprit.

Hatfill didn't get the apology that he was looking for. But the U.S. attorney for the District of Columbia, Jeffrey A. Taylor, sent a letter to one of Hatfill's lawyers saying the existing evidence "excluded your client as a subject or target of the investigation."

Taylor said that scientific techniques ultimately used to trace the specific batch of spores to Ivins did not exist in 2002, when the FBI was focusing mostly on Hatfill.

Hatfill had no comment. His lawyers said that Taylor's letter was appreciated but that it did not go far enough in explaining why their client was not ruled out as a suspect years ago, once the new technologies apparently cleared him.

Dingell and Stupak said recent disclosures about Ivins' mental state heightened their security concerns. The Justice Department and the FBI released reams of investigative material in the Ivins case this week to make public their case for his guilt.

The documents, including e-mail messages from Ivins, portrayed the microbiologist as increasingly troubled and potentially homicidal at least as far back as 2000 and most likely earlier.

"I get incredible paranoid, delusional thoughts at times, and there's nothing I can do until they go away, either by themselves or with drugs," Ivins wrote in one 2000 e-mail message to a friend.

In another message that year, Ivins wrote: "The thinking now by the psychiatrist and counselor is that my symptoms . . . may be that of a 'Paranoid Personality Disorder.'"

Over the next six years, he was prescribed antidepressants, antipsychotics and anti-anxiety drugs. One colleague said that Ivins was a "manic basket case," and another said he would weep openly at his desk, according to documents in the case. But he continued to work with anthrax and other dangerous pathogens until at least last November.

Officials at Ft. Detrick have said they have stringent security measures in place to weed out troubled scientists.

But Dingell and Stupak said they were increasingly concerned about all of the nation's so-called Biosafety Level 3 and 4 labs, which research highly infectious viruses and other biological agents that can cause serious injury or death.

To date, their committee's investigation has identified serious shortcomings in the security at other labs, which are run by universities and civilian government agencies. The problems include poor training, sloppy security, lack of oversight, and releases of dangerous pathogens.

In a letter the lawmakers sent Friday to President Bush, they asked the White House to launch its own inquiry of biodefense labs.

Dingell questioned whether the estimated 14,000 scientists working with deadly substances were being scrutinized properly for the kind of mental illness Ivins exhibited.

"I'm deeply troubled by the allegations raised about security at one of our nation's premier labs handling some of the deadliest germs in the world," Dingell said in a statement. "Our nation is at serious risk if one of our government's most prominent scientists could have a decade-long battle with mental illness without anyone noticing."

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/la-na-anthrax9-2008aug09,0,1155702.story>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Arizona Daily Star (Tucson)

August 10, 2008

## **Weapons Expert's Killing A Blow To Al-Qaida**

By Kathy Gannon, Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — The killing of an al-Qaida chemical weapons expert in a missile strike two weeks ago on a Pakistani border village has dealt a heavy blow to the terrorist group's ambitions to build weapons of mass destruction, a former CIA case officer says.

Abu Khabab al-Masri was dubbed by terrorism analysts as al-Qaida's "mad scientist." His most notorious work, recorded on videotape, showed dogs being killed in poison-gas experiments in Afghanistan when the Taliban ruled there.

"If he is out of the picture, al-Qaida's weapons-of-mass- destruction capability has been set back, which would make this one of the more effective strikes in recent years," Arthur Keller, an ex-CIA case officer in Pakistan, told The Associated Press. Keller led the hunt for al-Masri in 2006.

The United States offered a \$5 million bounty for the 55-year old Egyptian, and the CIA had been hunting him for years. Al-Qaida confirmed his death days after the July 28 attack by unmanned drones on a tribesman's compound in the village of Azam Warsak in South Waziristan.

Al-Masri, whose real name was Midhat Mursi al-Sayid Umar, got his chemical weapons training in the Egyptian army before defecting to the Islamic Jihad group, founded by al-Qaida's No. 2 leader, Ayman al-Zawahri.

The U.S. government says that since 1999, al-Masri had been distributing manuals for making chemical and biological weapons.

"I believe that al-Qaida has no shortage of people adept with explosives, and I know that al-Masri promulgated training manuals for poisons," Keller said, "but I'm not sure how skilled any of Al-Masri's protégés may be at synthesizing chemical weapons or toxins."

It's not easy, he said.

"You need both education and hands-on experience to produce decent-quality chemical weapons or toxins."

Chlorine has been used in bombings by militants in Iraq, but these were locally inspired, a U.S. counterterrorism official said.

Also, no evidence has surfaced that al-Masri continued the chemical research after moving to Pakistan, although the U.S. government said he was likely carrying out training.

U.S. intelligence agencies tracking al-Masri viewed him as "frightening," said Brian Glyn Williams, an associate professor of Islamic history at the University of Massachusetts, who has just completed research for the U.S. government on weapons of mass destruction.

"From the U.S. government perspective, he was seen as a major threat. His potential to develop primitive weapons of mass destruction was not taken lightly by U.S. law-enforcement and intelligence agencies," said Williams.

Al-Masri was also suspected of helping to train the suicide bombers who attacked the destroyer USS Cole in Yemen in 2000, killing 17 American sailors. More recently, he trained militants fighting Western troops in Afghanistan. His death had already been wrongly reported in a 2006 strike. This time, it was confirmed in an al-Qaida statement that said he and three other senior al-Qaida figures were killed, along with some of their children.

Al-Masri was the second senior al-Qaida leader to die in missile strikes in Pakistan this year. In January, Abu Laith al-Libi, a top strategist for the group in Afghanistan, was killed in North Waziristan.

A senior Taliban militant from Afghanistan, Qari Mohammed Yusuf, said al-Masri had returned to South Waziristan from fighting in Afghanistan's eastern Paktika province just hours before he was killed.

Al-Masri had spent 40 days in Paktika, which borders South Waziristan, leading a company of non-Afghans in assaults against Afghan and coalition forces, Yusuf said.

He said the Egyptian took his instructions directly from al-Zawahri, his countryman, by e-mail or handwritten letters delivered by messenger.

Yusuf has family ties to al-Qaida and says his two eldest brothers died fighting with al-Zawahri against Northern Alliance soldiers during Taliban rule. Afghan authorities confirm Yusuf is a senior Taliban from northern Afghanistan — not the Taliban spokesman who goes by the same name.

A report by counterterrorism consultant Dan Darling said al-Masri was a scientist in the Egyptian military chemical weapons program but turned against his government for making peace with Israel in 1979.

He joined al-Zawahri's Islamic Jihad group, and when it merged with al-Qaida, became head of Project al-Zabadi, its WMD program, Darling wrote in a report posted in the Long War Journal, a Web site on terrorism.

Only after the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan did evidence of al-Masri's chemical experiments emerge, at al-Qaida's Darunta complex 70 miles east of Kabul.

<http://www.azstarnet.com/allheadlines/252035.php>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

## Periscope

# The Case Still Isn't Closed

By Michael Isikoff

When the FBI publicly branded the late Dr. Bruce Ivins as the anthrax killer, it unsealed court affidavits suggesting a possible motive for the mailing to one target: NBC anchor Tom Brokaw. According to the affidavits, Ivins was angry about repeated Freedom of Information Act requests from Gary Matsumoto, identified as "an investigative journalist who worked for NBC News" who was looking into Ivins's work on an anthrax vaccine. "Tell Matsumoto to kiss my ass," the affidavit says Ivins wrote in an Aug. 28, 2001, e-mail, noting that was "weeks" before the Sept. 18, 2001, anthrax mailing addressed to Brokaw. But Matsumoto told NEWSWEEK the FBI never interviewed him as part of its investigation. If it had, he says, he could have told them he'd actually left NBC News five years earlier. At the time he was bombarding Ivins's lab with FOIA requests, he was employed by ABC. "They're trying to connect dots that don't connect," he said.

Justice Department official Dean Boyd said "there was no mistake in the affidavit" because Matsumoto had been employed by NBC in the past and Ivins told investigators he "believed" he still worked there. Still, the reference is one of a number of seemingly misleading passages, gaps and omissions that are raising questions about just how airtight the government's case against Ivins actually is. At a press conference last week, U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeffrey Taylor said Justice officials were "confident" that Ivins, who committed suicide last month, was "the only person responsible for these attacks." Among the FBI's evidence: new scientific tests that officials said traced the genetic material from the anthrax used in the deadly mailings to a flask in Ivins's lab at the U.S. Army's research facility at Fort Detrick, Md. But many of Ivins's former colleagues are unconvinced, noting unanswered questions about the FBI's scientific tests, most of which have not been peer-reviewed, as well as the lack of direct evidence showing Ivins actually mailed the fatal letters. Despite repeated searches, for instance, the FBI could not find any trace of the deadly anthrax in Ivins's home, cars or clothing. "I'd say the vast majority of people [at Fort Detrick] think he had nothing to do with it," said Jeffrey Adamovicz, who served as one of Ivins's supervisors in the facility's bacteriology division.

Paul Kemp, Ivins's lawyer, said some of what's presented in the unsealed affidavits are "speculative" theories that would never be admissible in court. An example: that Ivins might have sent anthrax letters to pro-choice Sens. Patrick Leahy and Tom Daschle, because Ivins and his wife were anti-abortion. "I don't know what that has to do with anything," Kemp said. What's more, Kemp said, the FBI omitted evidence that might have been exculpatory, including that Ivins kept his security clearance after passing a polygraph in which he was questioned about the anthrax investigation. "He was told he had passed [the polygraph] because we thought he did," said Justice official Boyd. But after the FBI learned of Ivins's history of psychological problems, it had experts re-examine the results, and they concluded he'd used "countermeasures" such as controlled breathing to fool the examiners. All that and more is now likely to be reviewed by Congress. "There are clearly a lot of unanswered questions," said Iowa GOP Sen. Charles Grassley, who asked for a full probe.

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/151784>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post

August 12, 2008

Pg. 9

## **Doubts About Nuclear Verification Keep N. Korea on List of Terrorist States**

By Dan Eggen, Washington Post Staff Writer

North Korea missed its first chance yesterday to be removed from the State Department's list of terrorist states, U.S. officials said, because it has not provided a way for international inspectors to verify claims about its nuclear program.

President Bush said in June that the United States would begin the process of taking North Korea off its terrorism blacklist, and yesterday was the earliest that Pyongyang could have been removed. But U.S. officials said that North Korea has not followed through on allowing outside verification of its nuclear program, which the Bush administration has set as a condition for action.

"We need to have a strong verification regime in order to remove North Korea from the list," said State Department spokesman Kelley Osterthaler. "They know what they need to do on a verification package, and we're continuing to work with them."

The possible removal is part of ongoing six-party talks -- made up of China, Japan, Russia, the United States, and North and South Korea -- aimed at persuading Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons program in return for aid and the end to sanctions, including those that come with being listed as a state sponsor of terrorism.

North Korea is listed alongside Cuba, Iran, Sudan and Syria as state sponsors of terrorism, and thus faces bans on defense sales and other restrictions on trade, foreign aid and financial transactions. The last incident tying its government to an act of terrorism came in 1987, when its agents planted a bomb on a South Korean commercial jet. Pyongyang turned over a 60-page declaration in June that included details of plutonium production in its nuclear program. It also dynamited a cooling tower at its deactivated Yongbyon nuclear facility in an attempt to convince the world that it is serious about abandoning its nuclear weapons program.

But the declaration contained less detail than the Bush administration had sought, and negotiations continue over how to verify North Korea's claims. Pyongyang has yet to disclose how many weapons it has or to provide details about its involvement in the construction of a Syrian reactor that was destroyed by Israel last year.

Dennis Wilder, the Asia director on the National Security Council, told reporters traveling with Bush in China over the weekend that the administration was "in discussions with the North" over the issue.

"We continue to try to work with them on this question of a robust verification regime," Wilder said. "But we aren't at the point where we are satisfied with what they have put on the table thus far."

Michael J. Green, who handled Asia issues for Bush on the National Security Council from 2001 to 2005, said the administration is correct to demand more before removing North Korea from the terrorism list or eliminating sanctions. "If the administration lifted sanctions anyway, without verification, it would have just shot our credibility in the whole region," he said.

Green said it is likely Pyongyang decided to "run out the clock" on the Bush administration, in order to wait for a new president in January.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/11/AR2008081102232.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

New York Times

August 12, 2008

Pg. 21

## **The Killers In The Lab**

By Elisa D. Harris

College Park, Md. -- The government's charge that Dr. Bruce Ivins, a top Army biodefense scientist, was responsible for the 2001 anthrax mailings has focused renewed attention on the important question of whether we are adequately prepared to protect against a future bioweapons attack. More than \$20 billion has been spent on biodefense research since 2001. But the genetic analysis demonstrating that the anthrax powder used in the 2001 letters was a formulation first made at the Army biodefense research center at Fort Detrick, Md., suggests that our biodefense program risks creating the very threat it is meant to fight.

Spending on biodefense research began to edge up after the Japanese cult Aum Shinrikyo's failed attempts to develop and use bioweapons in Tokyo in the 1990s. After the anthrax letters killed five and injured 17 others, some argued that it was not a question of if, but of when terrorists would again use bioweapons against Americans, and biodefense spending exploded. At the National Institutes of Health, research on bioweapons agents has increased from \$53 million in 2001 to more than \$1.6 billion in 2008. During the same time, the Department of Defense has more than doubled its investment in biodefense, to more than \$1 billion.

An unprecedented expansion of research facilities is also under way. Once these laboratories are completed, we will have 10 times as much lab space as we had in 2001 for working on the most dangerous agents — Ebola and Marburg viruses, for example — and 13 new regional labs for working on moderate and high-risk agents like tularemia and plague. Thousands of scientists are now working with bioweapons agents, many for the first time. More than 14,000 scientists have been approved to work with so-called select agents like anthrax that usually pose little threat to public health unless they are used as bioweapons.

Experienced anthrax researchers now speak of a community that has grown so large, so rapidly — more than 7,200 researchers are now approved to work with this deadly agent — they no longer know everyone else in the field. Since the boom began, bioweapons agents have been mishandled in a number of incidents. In 2004, live anthrax was accidentally shipped to a children's hospital research lab in Oakland, Calif., and three lab researchers at Boston University developed tularemia after being exposed to the bacteria that causes it. In 2006, researchers at Texas A&M were exposed to brucellosis and Q fever. As an investigator for the Government Accountability Office reported to Congress last fall, the greater number of researchers handling bioweapons agents has increased the risk of such accidents.

Even more worrying are the security risks. The United States' own biodefense program has now been tied directly to the deadliest biological attack ever in the country. That alone demonstrates that we need a rigorous, fact-driven assessment of bioweapons threats, both from other countries and from terrorists, domestic and foreign. The first step is to ensure that we have a full public examination of all the government's evidence in the 2001 anthrax mailings, so that we can find out what went wrong and how to keep it from happening again.

Then we must re-examine our overall biodefense research strategy, set clear priorities and strengthen the safety, security and oversight of laboratories working with dangerous agents. Rather than add more laboratories and create more research projects, we need to focus on key efforts in fewer facilities. This should include pursuing diagnostic techniques, vaccines and treatments that can be applied to more than one biological agent. Most of this research does not require working with actual deadly agents until the very final stages.

Our excess biodefense research capacity could then be used for research on everyday public health threats like tuberculosis and antibiotic-resistant bacteria, many of which have not received sufficient attention since 9/11.

To defend against bioweapons, we need not more but better research efforts. The probability that biological weapons will be used against Americans is low, but the consequences of such an attack could be devastating. We cannot meet the threat safely or effectively with a strategy that puts bioweapons agents in more and more people's hands.

*Elisa D. Harris is a senior research scholar at the Center for International and Security Studies at the University of Maryland.*

[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/12/opinion/12harris.html?\\_r=1&ref=opinion&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/12/opinion/12harris.html?_r=1&ref=opinion&oref=slogin)

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

GovExec.com

## **Initial assessment of Defense nuclear review nearing completion**

By Katherine McIntire Peters [kpeters@govexec.com](mailto:kpeters@govexec.com)

August 12, 2008

A panel of former Defense Department executives and national security specialists reviewing nuclear weapons management will make recommendations soon to Defense Secretary Robert Gates regarding Air Force failures in nuclear stewardship.

The panel's full report covering all the military services is expected later this fall.

In June, Gates tapped former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger, who served in the Nixon and Ford administrations, to lead the Task Force on Nuclear Weapons Management, following an internal investigation into Air Force lapses that led pilots to fly nuclear weapons unknowingly from North Dakota to Louisiana last August and accidentally ship ballistic missile fuses to Taiwan in 2006, a mistake that was discovered only earlier this year.

As a result of that initial Defense Department investigation, Gates fired the Air Force's top civilian and military leaders, Air Force Secretary Michael Wynne and Air Force Chief of Staff Michael Mosley, explaining in a June 5 press briefing that "the focus of the Air Force leadership has drifted with respect to perhaps its most sensitive mission."

The investigation that led to the firings was conducted by Adm. Kirkland Donald, director of Naval Nuclear Propulsion and the senior military official responsible for nuclear weapons safety. According to Gates, Donald identified "a substantial number of Air Force general officers and colonels potentially subject to disciplinary measures, ranging from removal from command to letters of reprimand."

One senior Air Force official told *Government Executive* that as many as 20 officers could be disciplined as a result of the lapses.

"Individuals in command and leadership positions not only fell short in terms of specific actions, they failed to recognize systemic problems, to address those problems, or where, beyond their authority to act, to call the attention of superiors to those problems. Each had the leadership responsibility to identify and correct or flag for others the structural, procedural and performance deficiencies identified in just a few weeks by Adm. Donald," Gates said.

Gates said he would ask the Schlesinger task force, the members of which he named on June 12, to consider the findings and recommendations of the Donald investigation and to suggest changes in Air Force policies, procedures and organization within 60 days. A broader Defense-wide review by the task force was to be completed in 120 days.

On Monday, Defense spokesman Air Force Lt. Col. Todd Vician said the task force still was working on the first stage of its review regarding service matters. The 60-day time frame did not specify work days or calendar days, he said. The assessment and recommendations will be released at Gates' discretion after he is briefed, Vician said.

Gates made clear that the roots of Air Force stewardship failures have been in the making for more than a decade.

"Years ago the career path for Air Force personnel in the nuclear field was well-established and prestigious.

However, the overall mission focus of the Air Force has shifted away from this nuclear mission, making it difficult



to retain sufficient expertise," he said, noting that the service has not compensated for the diminished expertise through training and active career management.

Action was required on two fronts, Gates said: "First, fixing the structural, procedural and cultural problems; and second, ensuring accountability." He has made accountability a central theme of his leadership.

Gates said he would ask the new Air Force secretary and chief of staff, once confirmed, "to evaluate each of the individuals identified by Adm. Donald as bearing responsibility in the recent incidents and systemic problems, to determine whether and what disciplinary measures are warranted, and whether or not they can be part of the solution to the problems identified by the investigation."

The Senate confirmed Gen. Norton Schwartz as chief of staff on July 31, but Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., put a hold on the nomination of Michael Donley to become Air Force secretary. Cantwell told Gates in a letter she was doing this in part because she was frustrated with the Air Force's handling of a \$35 billion contract to buy new refueling tankers. Boeing Co., based in Washington state, lost a bid for the deal earlier this year when the Air Force awarded the contract to a team led by Northrop Grumman Corp. and the European aerospace firm EADS. After a critical review of the contracting process by the Government Accountability Office, the contract was reopened and Gates put Defense in charge of the new bidding process instead of the Air Force.

[http://govexec.com/story\\_page.cfm?articleid=40708&dcn=todaysnews](http://govexec.com/story_page.cfm?articleid=40708&dcn=todaysnews)

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post

## **U.S. Imposes Sanctions On Iranian Companies**

Aid to Nation's Nuclear Ambitions Alleged

*By Martin Crutsinger*

Associated Press

Wednesday, August 13, 2008; Page A12

The Bush administration has imposed economic sanctions on five Iranian companies that it has accused of helping the country pursue its ambitions to develop a nuclear weapon.

The Treasury Department announced yesterday that it is freezing any assets the five companies might have in the United States and prohibiting American individuals and companies from dealing with the firms.

The five companies are the Nuclear Research Center for Agriculture and Medicine, the Esfahan Nuclear Fuel Research and Production Center, Jabber Ibn Hayan, Safety Equipment Procurement, and Joza Industrial.

"These five nuclear and missile entities have been used by Iran to hide its illicit conduct and further its dangerous nuclear ambitions," Stuart Levey, Treasury's undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, said in a statement.

The new sanctions represent the latest effort by the administration and its allies to increase pressure on Iran to halt its nuclear program.

The European Union on Friday tightened trade restrictions on Iran, and the West has threatened a fourth round of sanctions over Tehran's refusal to stop uranium enrichment, a process that can produce fuel for a nuclear reactor or a weapon.

Tehran insists that its nuclear program is aimed only at generating electricity.

The administration's actions were under an executive order President Bush signed to target entities accused of aiding in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/12/AR2008081202877.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

INSIDE THE PENTAGON - *www.InsideDefense.com*

August 14, 2008

## **U.S. Official: Euro GMD Can Be Ratified Before End Of Administration**

HUNTSVILLE, AL -- The top U.S. official in charge of negotiations to base portions of the Ground-based Midcourse Defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic remains cautiously optimistic that the agreements can be ratified by those two governments by the end of the Bush administration.

"I think we're on track to hopefully put these pieces in place later this year," acting Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security John Rood told attendees of the Space and Missile Defense Conference here Aug. 12. "There are no sure things in life, except for death I guess, but I feel optimistic about our course."

However, the administration's efforts to reach an agreement to base 10 dual-stage GMD interceptors in Poland and an early warning radar in the Czech Republic have been stymied by parliamentary opposition in both the United States as well as those two countries. In addition, Polish voters recently threw out the government that had negotiated the interceptors agreement.

In May, the Senate Armed Services Committee fully funded the White House's request for \$132.6 million to establish the interceptor site in Poland in fiscal year 2009 and \$528.8 million slated for FY-10. For the midcourse radar site to be based in the Czech Republic, the panel approved \$108.6 million for FY-09 and \$67.5 million in FY-10. All that funding, though, was contingent on the Czech and Polish governments' ratification of the pacts.

In contrast, the House Armed Services Committee slashed \$232 million in research, development and testing funding and \$140 million for military construction for the European site.

More recently, The Associated Press reported this week that Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk had fired his country's top missile-defense negotiator.

"The way [Deputy Foreign Minister Witold] Waszczykowski negotiated, his hard, unequivocal view on the issue did not fully reflect my own views," the AP quoted Tusk as saying on Aug. 11.

Rood, who left Huntsville on Aug. 12 for Warsaw for further talks with the Poles, sought to maintain an optimistic tone.

"You have to be a little bit of an optimist in this business, so take it with a grain of salt, but that being said, I do think that the number of issues in the negotiations with the Poles [is] a small number, but they are finite at this stage," he said. "We need to do some hard work and be patient over the next days and weeks, but I'm hopeful that we can complete the deal with the Poles still."

"These have been very challenging negotiations with a host of tough issues; as you can expect that took some time and there are still some differences we have to iron out," Rood added.

However, "when I start to complain too much about that, I have to remind myself that we're lucky we're having this problem, because it means there's a democracy in Poland," he said. "They're having elections, they're having a vigorous national debate, and I'd much rather have that and experience a few difficulties in missile defense negotiations than the alternative, but we do have a complex domestic political scene there in Poland.

"So these are challenging negotiations but I remain optimistic we're going to be successful," Rood continued.

As for the early warning radar system proposed for the Czech Republic, while senior U.S. and Czech officials signed an agreement last month, that pact has yet to be ratified by the Czech parliament, which Rood said could take place this fall. The two countries are also putting the final touches on a status-of-forces agreement that also requires parliamentary ratification.

**"That will be a close vote, but we're reasonably confident . . . that the [Czech] parliament will ultimately approve the agreements we've negotiated,"** Rood said.

While U.S. government officials remain somewhat confident of the agreements' ratification, at least one nongovernmental observer is not so sure.

Kingston Reif, an analyst with the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, wrote in a July 30 issue brief that that Poles' reluctance to quickly ratify the agreement has virtually guaranteed that the Bush administration's 2013 target completion date will not be met, "and that it will fall to the next president to determine the future of the European deployment."

As for the Czech Republic, "according to Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek, the widespread unpopularity of the plan could bring down the government this fall," Reif's issue brief warns. "Topolanek's three-party governing coalition controls just 100 of the 200 seats in the Czech parliament's lower chamber, which is not enough to ratify the agreement."

Even if the Czech governing coalition were to survive, "parliamentary approval does not appear to be likely anytime soon, as the government currently has no plans to submit the agreement to parliament before the next general elections scheduled for 2010," Reif writes.

Assuming Congress continues the conditions and restrictions on constructing the third site contained in the FY-08 Defense Authorization Act in the 2009 bill, "it is unlikely that the United States will be able to begin construction on the third site in the near future," according to Reif. "Final approval from the Czech and Polish governments is a long way off, and important politicians in both Prague and Warsaw are urging that no action be taken on the agreements until a new administration arrives in Washington."

Such a delay could be a "beneficial development," Reif's issue brief states.

"The third site is likely to be no more capable than the U.S.-based system, for which there are serious doubts about its effectiveness. In addition, the system threatens to disrupt U.S. relations with some of our key European allies and Russia," Reif writes. "While Russia should not have a veto over U.S. policy, it does not make sense to field a flawed system to defend against a potential threat from Iran that may never materialize. The United States needs Russia's cooperation to address the threat posed by Iran's nuclear program, negotiate deeper, binding, and verifiable

reductions of nuclear warheads and delivery vehicle systems, and buttress programs that are helping to secure and safeguard Russian nuclear materials. Pursuing a system that antagonizes Moscow will make it all the more difficult to achieve these vital national security objectives.” -- *John Liang*  
<http://insidedefense.com/secure/print/PENTAGON.pdf>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Boston Globe  
August 14, 2008

## **Strengthening Our Strategy Against WMD**

By Ashton B. Carter and Robert G. Joseph

Even in the highly charged political environment of the presidential campaign, one national security priority has gained strong bipartisan support: the urgent requirement to combat weapons of mass destruction from hostile states and terrorists. That priority must be put into immediate and sustained practice.

One guide for action is the independent, bipartisan review that we led for the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the principal arm of the Defense Department for combating WMD threats. Our 14-member Review Panel represented a range of political views, but above all a recognition that meeting the proliferation challenge requires an approach that transcends partisanship. The report's findings were not only unanimous, but readily so. The next president must act with decisiveness to correct the deficiencies we identified in our review.

As we began our work, the Review Panel quickly discovered that we needed to broaden our focus from the agency to the government as a whole.

In 2002, President Bush issued a comprehensive National Strategy to Combat WMD. We found the guidance to be sound, but its implementation to be incomplete. While much progress has been made, performance has fallen short in all three pillars of the National Strategy: prevention, protection, and response.

Those three pillars levy three broad requirements on the Defense Department: It must be able to prevail in all WMD threat environments, from war to terrorist attack; it must maintain a credible nuclear force to deter WMD use by hostile states; and it must make a strong contribution to government-wide efforts to prevent, protect against, and respond to WMD proliferation and terrorism.

Within the Defense Department, these activities are spread across a large number of civilian and military offices and commands. With so many factions, no one is truly in charge. While there is awareness within the Defense Department leadership of the importance of combating WMD, it is not given sufficient priority in practice or in budgeting.

Although the Defense Threat Reduction Agency has performed well, it has not been given the resources necessary to meet its full potential in contributing to a growing set of urgent tasks. These range from developing new protections against bioterrorism to responding to a potential nuclear attack on a US city, from developing detectors that could find a nuclear weapon entering this country to supporting the Proliferation Security Initiative and other international arrangements to curb WMD. Since Sept. 11, 2001, the Defense Department's overall budget has grown significantly, but the Threat Reduction Agency's funding levels have been only slightly over the inflation rate, and legislative and regulatory restrictions continue to hinder optimal allocation of its limited resources.

The agency's funding limitations reflect a broader issue of insufficient clarity, priority, and purpose in efforts to combat WMD. Powerful military and civilian advocates are needed in the Defense Department to recognize the importance of these missions and the agency's unique potential to support them.

The Review Panel also identified areas where the agency's contribution should be expanded, such as conducting more inspections of nuclear weapons deployments to ensure their safety and security, and extending the Nunn-Lugar threat reduction program, which has been successful in the former Soviet Union, to a global program that might apply to Pakistan and other countries.

The Review Panel did not arrive at its conclusion to have the agency take on new tasks like these lightly, given the existing strains on the agency's budget. However, we were unable to identify other parts of the Defense Department or government that were as capable or willing to perform these missions as well as the Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

With its unique capabilities and exemplary dedication, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency has done much - within available resources - to advance national and international missions to counter WMD. However, it requires substantially more resources and senior-level support to realize its full potential in helping to confront the WMD threats of today and tomorrow. The new administration must not just say that combating WMD proliferation and terrorism is its highest national security priority; it must act accordingly.

*Ashton B. Carter was assistant secretary of defense in the Clinton administration. Robert G. Joseph was undersecretary of state in the Bush administration.*

[http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/oped/articles/2008/08/14/strengthening\\_our\\_strategy\\_against\\_wmd/](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/oped/articles/2008/08/14/strengthening_our_strategy_against_wmd/)

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)

Washington Post

## Hair Samples in Anthrax Case Don't Match

Strands From Mailbox in Princeton Are Not From Ivins, Investigators Say

By *Carrie Johnson*

Washington Post Staff Writer

Thursday, August 14, 2008; Page A02

Federal investigators probing the deadly 2001 anthrax attacks recovered samples of human hair from a mailbox in Princeton, N.J., but the strands did not match the lead suspect in the case, according to sources briefed on the probe. FBI agents and U.S. Postal Service inspectors analyzed the data in an effort to place Fort Detrick, Md., scientist Bruce E. Ivins at the mailbox from which bacteria-laden letters were sent to Senate offices and media organizations, the sources said.

The hair sample is one of many pieces of evidence over which researchers continue to puzzle in the case, which ended after Ivins committed suicide July 29 as prosecutors prepared to seek his indictment.

Authorities released sworn statements and search warrants last week at a news conference in which they asserted that Ivins was their sole suspect. But the materials have not dampened speculation about the merits of the investigative findings and the government's aggressive pursuit of Ivins, a 62-year-old anthrax vaccine researcher. Conspiracy theories have flourished since the 2001 attacks, which killed five people and sickened 17 others.

Yesterday, the Senate Judiciary Committee announced it will call FBI Director Robert S. Mueller III to appear at an oversight hearing Sept. 17, when he is likely to be asked about the strength of the government's case against Ivins. A spokeswoman for Sen. Charles E. Grassley (R-Iowa), a vocal FBI critic, said he would demand more information about how authorities narrowed their search.

The House Judiciary panel, meanwhile, is negotiating to hold a separate oversight hearing in September with bureau officials, in a session that could mark the first public occasion in which Mueller faces questions about the FBI's handling of the anthrax case.

Friends and former colleagues of Ivins, who died before he could see the full array of evidence prosecutors had gathered, continue to demand information about the DNA advances that authorities say led them to a flask in Ivins's lab.

Defense lawyer Paul F. Kemp yesterday said he wonders "where Ivins could have possibly stored this anthrax without any employees seeing it, or if he took it home, why there was no trace" of the deadly spores, despite repeated FBI searches over the past two years of Ivins's car, his work locker, a safe-deposit box and his house. Meanwhile, government sources offered more detail about Ivins's movements on a critical day in the case: when letters were dropped into the postal box on Princeton's Nassau Street, across the street from the university campus. Investigators now believe that Ivins waited until evening to make the drive to Princeton on Sept. 17, 2001. He showed up at work that day and stayed briefly, then took several hours of administrative leave from the lab, according to partial work logs. Based on information from receipts and interviews, authorities say Ivins filled up his car's gas tank, attended a meeting outside of the office in the late afternoon, and returned to the lab for a few minutes that evening before moving off the radar screen and presumably driving overnight to Princeton. The letters were postmarked Sept. 18.

Nearly seven years after the incidents, however, investigators have come up dry in their efforts to find direct evidence to place Ivins at the Nassau Street mailbox in September and October 2001.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/08/13/AR2008081303731.html>

[\(Return to Articles and Documents List\)](#)