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Memorandum

Date

From Chair Pro Tempore
Agent Orange Working Group

Subject Functions, Operational Activities and Organization of the AOWG

To Members
Agent Orange Working Group

This represents my view of our discussions at the meeting on April 6. Please review and advise me of any changes by April 18.

FUNCTION

The primary function of the AOWG is to coordinate and evaluate the Federal Government's efforts to determine the health effects, if any, of exposure to Agent Orange of Vietnam Veterans. It is not to be prescriptive, but rather to develop the mechanisms to insure that a coordinated program is forthcoming with each department and agency accomplishing a part of the total effort according to its own mission. The functions of the AOWG are limited to Agent Orange and Vietnam Veterans, and will be concerned with dioxin, related chemicals and service in Vietnam only insofar as that involvement contributes directly to the primary mission.

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

To accomplish its priority mission, the AOWG must be concerned with the following:

- the development of policies;
- the setting of priorities; and
- the guidance of implementation.

Specifically, the AOWG, being concerned with the scientific risk assessment of Agent Orange, has the following principal activities:

- o Research
 - Defining the scientific needs and seeing that they are met.
 - Reviewing of research activities both as to design and results.

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o Resources

- Definition of resource needs to meet the defined research goals and methods for meeting them.
- Resources include funding, people and access to necessary information.

o Accountability

- Define policies for timely and complete information dissemination.

The above outline should permit the AOWG to achieve its mission and meet its coordination goals.

ORGANIZATION

o Advisory Committee on Special Studies Relating to the Possible Long-Term Health Effects of Phenoxy Herbicides and Contaminants

This Committee, composed of nongovernment scientists, will advise and recommend concerning its oversight and evaluation of ongoing or completed research projects.

o Science Panel

This panel, composed of government scientists, includes two sub-panels with the following purposes:

- Research Agenda - Exact functions to be discussed later.
- Research Review - This sub-panel will review all planned research for adequacy of design and conformance with the AOWG mission. It will: (1) give one of four conclusions after review: agree with or without suggestions, agree but with necessary modifications, disagree due to inadequacies of design, or disagree as inconsistent with the mission of AOWG; and (2) comment on likely resource requirements.

o Resources Panel

This panel will be chaired by the OMB representative. Its exact charge will be discussed at a subsequent meeting.

o Public and Congressional Affairs Panel

This panel will define the policies to be used in information dissemination to insure that such dissemination is timely, accurate and complete.

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To make this organization most effective, it will be necessary to have overlapping membership on the panels and sub-panels. Each agency should be represented on each panel if they choose to be so represented.

Edward N. Brandt, Jr., M.D.