

Survey of Institutional Biosafety Committees - 2007

Raymond W. Hackney, DrPH, CIH, CBSP
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Biological Safety Conference
October 8, 2007
Nashville, TN

2002 IBC Survey

Purpose

- Shed light on how IBCs were functioning
- Assist institutions in administering their IBCs
- Identified ways that IBCs could be strengthened

Conclusions from 2002 IBC Survey

- Many IBCs were doing an excellent job
- IBCs had limited resources
- IBCs operated with a low degree of involvement from institutional leadership

Conclusions from 2002 IBC Survey

- IBCs were operating with a high degree of informality resulting in less than strict adherence to the Guidelines
- IBCs need to provide training programs for IBC administrators and members
- IBCs should implement procedures and policies that ensure openness of their meetings and minutes

Institutional Biosafety Committees

2002 to 2007

- Numerous trainings/conferences sponsored by OBA
- Site visits by OBA
- Criticism of IBCs by the Sunshine Project
- Increased awareness of IBC responsibilities

2007 Survey

- Web based survey instrument used
- Odum Institute for Research in Social Sciences assisted with programming web survey instrument
- Participants recruited from NIH database of registered IBCs
 - IBC contacts
 - BSOs
- If both the IBC Contact and BSO responded, IBC contact response was used

IBC Survey 2007

- Advance letter asking for participation in the Survey
- One week later email inviting participation, providing link and password
- Three emails reminders were sent
- Participation was voluntary
- This study was reviewed and approved by UNC Institutional Review Board

IBC Survey - 2007

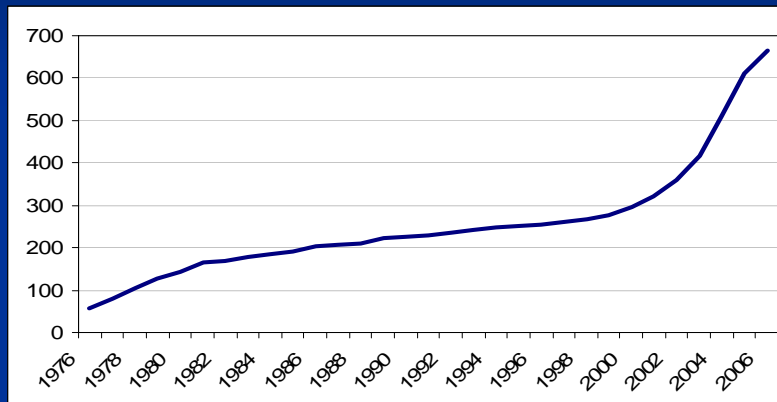
- 691 institutions/IBCs were sent the survey
- 274 completed the questionnaire
- 78 emails came back as “undeliverable”
- 9 of the “undeliverables” took survey
- 22 chose not to participate
- 39 did not have email addresses
- 51% response rate (adjusted)

2002 Survey Response

- 397 IBC contacts
- 168 completed questionnaires
- 45 % response rate (adjusted for never received and declinations)

Growing Prevalence of IBCs

Number of IBCs registered with OBA

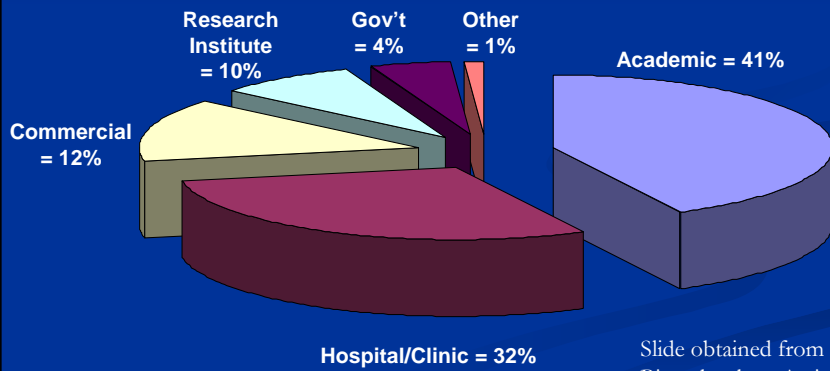


Year

Slide obtained from Office of
Biotechnology Activities, NIH

IBC's Registered with the NIH OBA August 2007

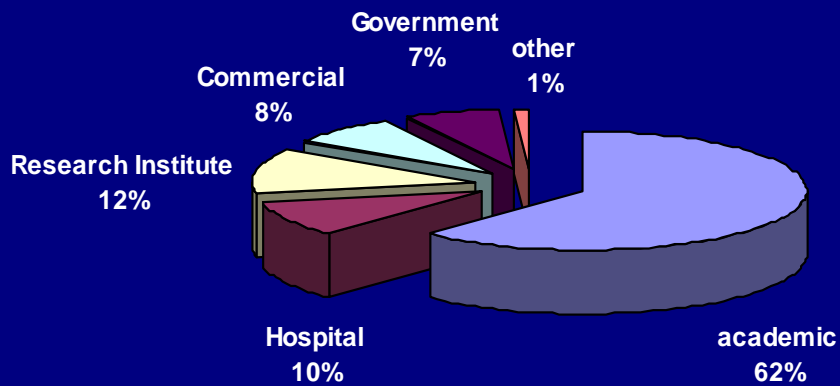
N = 720









Slide obtained from Office of
Biotechnology Activities, NIH

IBCs Participating in 2007 Survey




N = 274










Institutional Department Responsible for IBC

Answer		2007	2002
Academic department		5%	2%
Environmental/occupational health and safety		33%	45%
Office of research subjects protection/IRB		4%	--
Research compliance office		33%	23%
Vice chancellor for Research		14%	13%
Other (Please specify.)		15%	15%





Types of Research Reviewed by the IBC

Answer		2007	2002
Recombinant DNA research only		25%	18%
Recombinant DNA and other biological hazards		60%	65%
Recombinant DNA, other biological hazards, chemical and other laboratory hazards.		16%	17%

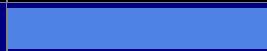





Frequency of IBC Meetings

Answer		2007	2002
Twice a month		1%	0.6%
Monthly		28%	18%
Quarterly		20%	23%
Semi-annually		11%	16%
Annually		8%	12%
As needed, more frequently than annually		14%	32%
As needed, less frequently than annually		7%	--
Other (Please specify.)		10%	--








Full Time Equivalent Employees (FTE) Devoted to IBC Responsibilities?

Answer		2007	2002
Less than one FTE		56%	64%
One FTE		24%	21%
Two FTEs		8%	11%
More than two FTEs		11%	4%

By What Mechanisms are Official Committee Business Conducted

Answer		2007	2002
Face-to-face meetings		88%	95%
Telephone conference calls		22%	8%
Email		40%	33%
Email for follow-up after meetings		34%	--
Video conference		2%	1%
Other (Please specify.)		6%	2%

Measures to Ensure that Required rDNA Experiments are Reviewed

Answer		2007	2002
Grants are not processed without IBC approval		53%	57%
IAOJC requires IBC approval.		63%	67%
IRB requires IBC approval.		33%	--
Lab audits		40%	--
PI is responsible		75%	70%
No formal mechanism		5%	7%
Other (Please specify.)		17%	14%



To What Extent Has Your IBC Addressed “Dual-Use” Concerns?

Answer		2007
IBC charged to review experiments for “dual-use”		8%
IBC considers “dual-use” concerns in their review		44%
IBC considering whether to assume responsibility for “dual-use” review.		15%
The IBC does not address “dual-use” concerns.		33%



Report of Problems, Research Related Accidents or Illnesses, or Violations of the Guidelines

Answer		2007	2002
Yes		15%	15%
No		85%	85%



Is the IBC required to make formal reports to an institutional official to whom it is accountable?

Answer		2007	2002
Yes		54%	59%
No		46%	41%






Is training provided for the IBC members?

Answer		2007	2002
Yes		63%	21%
No		37%	79%

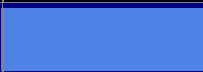

Is training required for IBC committee members?

Answer		2007
Yes		63%
No		37%

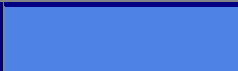

Format for Training IBC Committee Members

Answer		2007
On line self-instructional training		31%
Classroom training		40%
Hard copy information provided to committee members		85%
There are questions at the end of the training to test comprehension		11%
Training received is documented in hardcopy file or electronic database		27%







Is training provided for Principal Investigators (PIs)?

Answer		2007
Yes		53%
No		47%


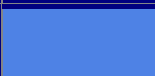
Is Training Required for PIs?

Answer		%
Yes		62%
No		38%



In what format is the training for principal investigators?

Answer		%
On line self-instructional training		42%
Classroom training		44%
Hard copy information provided to PI		60%
Information provided on website		64%
Questions to test comprehension		19%
Training is documented		36%



Attended a Conference, Workshop, or Training Sponsored by OBA?

Answer		2007
Yes		59%
No		41%



Would interested members of the public be permitted to attend an IBC meeting?

Answer		2007	2002
Yes		77%	52%
No		23%	48%





Have individuals from the community or public ever attended an IBC meeting?

Answer		2007	2002
Yes		12%	22%
No		88%	78%



Are the IBC minutes available to the public upon request?

Answer		2007	2002
Yes		93%	49%
No		7%	51%







What factors guide disclosure of the minutes to the public?

Answer		2007
State public disclosure laws		60%
Redaction of private or proprietary information		70%
Redaction of information required by state laws		36%
Other		24%

Are there procedures for expedited review?

Answer		2007	2002
Yes		48%	63%
No		52%	37%

Under what conditions is expedited review done?

Answer		2007	2002
Only for experiments exempt from the NIH Guidelines		20%	--
BSL 1 Experiments		24%	41%
BSL 2 Experiments		11%	13%
BSL 3 & 4 Experiments		1%	--
In order to meet grant deadline		13%	24%
Other (Please specify.)		31%	16%

Conclusions

- Significant progress has been made in making IBCs more aware of their responsibilities
- There are still many informalities that lead to violations of the Guidelines
- More progress needs to be made in providing and documenting training
- IBCs should be more aware of their responsibility to report significant problems, violations, accidents and illnesses to NIH/OBA
- Institutional leadership should take a more active role in ensuring adherence to the Guidelines and providing necessary resources

Acknowledgements

- Odum Institute for Research in Social Science
 - Lynn Hamilton
- Biosafety Staff at UNC
 - Donii Fox
 - Deb Howard
 - Darren Tremi
- IBC Professionals who participated in the Survey