



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Bioterrorism: the scourge of the 21st century?



**Out of the blue ?
What is new ?
What to do about
it?**

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Task Force on health security

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BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

SUMMARY

- **A REMINDER**
- **WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT**
- **EVENTS FROM EXPERIENCE AND EXPERIMENT**
- **INCIDENTS AND SCENARIOS THAT HAVE TO BE FACED**
- **REACTION IN THE US AND IN EUROPE**
- **COMMISSION MOVES AND COUNCIL STEPS**
- **PERSPECTIVES**



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Looking back.....

- Postings of anthrax spores through the US mail September-October 2001
- 23 cases of anthrax disease - five deaths
- Perpetrators at large : risk high
- Impact : public health systems under strain - emergency plans reviewed/adapted
- Other events: biochemical warfare, Tokyo sarin attacks, deliberate salmonella poisoning, biotechnology research



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Definition

Biological and chemical terrorism is the illegal or covert use or the threat of use of biological agents or chemical agents or toxins to harm people, livestock or the environment, and damage produce, goods, water supplies, other resources and infrastructures



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Biological terrorism may involve

- diffusion of an agent in environmental compartments
- dissemination by human or animal vectors (disease outbreaks)
- contamination of water systems
- contamination of the food chain or products
- contamination of the pharmaceutical chain
- contamination of infrastructures (e.g. mail)
- bio or chemical insults against people, animals, or plants



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What is the Commission doing ?

Scenarios and incidents

- the discovery of an unusual or suspicious object
- the discovery of a biological or chemical agent in the wrong place or in the wrong product
- a threat or a terrorist attack with or without demands, before or after harm or damage is manifested
- an abnormal outbreak of disease or unusual clustering of cases without readily available indications or explanations related to natural causes or adventitious exposure
- an abnormal adverse event or suspected foul play in an incident which results in prompt (especially for chemicals) or delayed harm to the health of people, animals or plants



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Action prompts

- Ghent Council 19 October 2001
- Commission overall plan (civil protection)
- Health Sector response:
 - Member States
 - EU Health Ministers
 - G7+ Global Health Security plan, Ottawa
 - WHO
 - Pharmaceutical industry



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What is the Commission doing ?

Typical response following an event in a Member State:

- Event notification or reporting phase, early assessment and characterisation or classification of event by authorities - police
- Civil protection, health and other services required or authorised to intervene
- Call in other experts and commence deployment of treatment and disposal services and put into effect co-ordination arrangements among services



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Areas of preparation

- Equipment, including protection equipment, and procedures for conducting investigations, sampling and examination techniques and methods
- Exclusion of zones and premises, decontamination of premises, substances (including food, water and supplies) and equipment, removal of materials and victims
- Examination of substances and persons by designated service providers and laboratories
- Triage procedures and follow-up rules concerning the persons involved and the tracing of contacts



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Areas of preparation (continued)

- The criteria, methods, and procedures involved in the evaluation of agents in samples and specimens or in environmental compartments
- The selection, training, and command structures for teams of investigators
- The methods and procedures used in the evaluation of exposures or doses in persons that have or might have been affected
- The assessment methodology for risks of early and delayed effects



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What is the Commission doing ?

Areas of preparation (continued)

- The appraisal and modelling tools for the possibility or probability of spread of disease or contamination, the pattern of propagation, the consequences and the likely impact of counter-measures
- The techniques for evaluating which environmental compartments and pathways as well as man-made structures and routes of transmission of contamination may have been or might be involved in deliberate releases of harmful biological agents.



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Commission moves

- Health Security Committee
- Programme of co-operation on preparedness and response to biological and chemical agent threats(Health Security) - BICHAT
- Task Force Commission-Member States
- Task Force Commission-Pharmaceutical Industry
- Task Force Commission-Research chiefs



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

HEALTH SECURITY PROGRAMME

- Objectives
- Timetable
- Resources
- Structure
- Progress
- Perspectives



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What is the Commission doing ?

Objectives

- *Mechanism for information exchange*
- *Capability for detection and identification*
- *Medicines' stocks and health services database and stand-by facility for making medicines and health care specialists available*
- *Rules and guidance, co-ordination of the EU response and links with third countries*



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What is the Commission doing ?

1st objective: mechanism

- Health Security Committee
- 24h/7 days-a-week restricted access network
- Secure and effective links of the network with the networks for civil protection information exchange, radiological emergencies alert, and food alert



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

International alert systems

- The key factors for judging events and incidents as having an E.U. dimension or potentiality ;
- The criteria for using particular networks as entry points for notification and for alerts ;
- The steps to be taken for linking networks ;
- The process by which to determine what steps have to be followed at E.U. level in each category of events or incidents, i.e. the operational interface of specific networks included in the security and safety spectrum



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Alert systems and networks

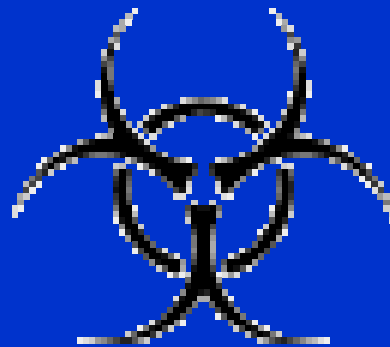
- Kind, purpose and role of networks ;
- Contact points, levels and details for access ;
- Communication platforms used ;
- Links to other networks and form or processing of information received ;
- Language support ;
- Protocols and databases used ;
- Procedures for checking and verification ;
- Decision process for alert and initiation of specific responses.



BIOTERRORISM
What is the Commission doing ?

Rapid Alert System

Biological and Chemical Attacks &
Threats



BACKGROUND

- * 11 September terrorist attack
- * Anthrax scare
- * G7 Ministerial Conference in Ottawa
- * Health Council-Presidency conclusions (15/11/2001)
- * Declaration by the Heads of State or Government of the EU (Ghent European Council 19 October 2001)
- * Commission Communication on Civil protection - State of preventive alert against possible emergencies (28.11.2001 COM(2001) 707 final)

LEGAL BASE

- * Article 4 of the Decision No 2119/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 1998 setting up a network for the epidemiological surveillance and control of communicable diseases in the Community
- * Article 2 of Council Decision of 23 October 2001 establishing a Community mechanism to facilitate reinforced cooperation in civil protection assistance interventions
- * Annex 1 of Commission Decision of 22 December 1999 on the early warning and response system for the prevention and control of communicable diseases under Decision No 2119/98/EC of the EP and of the Council

International context

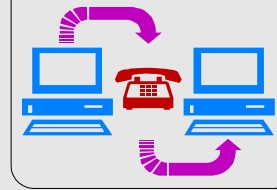
- * Health Security Committee
- * G7+ Mexico + EU Commission Ministerial Meetings
- * WHO



4 Objectives
25 Actions

- * DG Trade
- * DG Research
- * DG Transport
- * DG Environment
- * DG Health and consumer affairs
- * DG Joint Research Center
- * DG Enterprise & EMEA
- * DG External Relations
- * DG Justice and Home Affairs
- * DG Information Society
- * Interservice Group on Health

Rapid Alert System



- Ad hoc network

- List of agents
- Inventory of agents
- Classification of events
- Minimum requirements for resources
- Protocols for field and clinical investigation
- Directories of experts
- Procedure for setting-up investigation teams;
- Inventory of and minimum standards for laboratory facilities ;
- Models of cooperation agreements for links between laboratories;
- Guidelines for health professionals ;
- Procedure for public communications;
- Inventory of stocks of medicines ;
- Siting and availability of stand-by stocks (recommendation and/or cooperation agreement);
- Inventory of treatment services;
- Coordination of movement
- Possible amendments to Directives on the circulation of products and produce
- Guidelines on decontamination and restoration of services
- Guidelines on strengthening health-related systems
- Links with third countries and the WHO
- Training modules

CRITERIA
as defined in
document GG/
GT 700171

Event /Crisis relevant to the activities covered by BICHAT

Member State

**Security Office
Commission Brussels**

BICHAT Communication Centre

BICHAT On Duty Officer

**Emergency
team**

**Member
States**

*If not confidential:
Other Directorates
General*

**Proceed to BICHAT premises within one
hour**

**Automatic SMS generated
by e-mail arrival**

*Notification confirmation
by fax& e-mail*

Receipt confirmation byFax

Fax notification

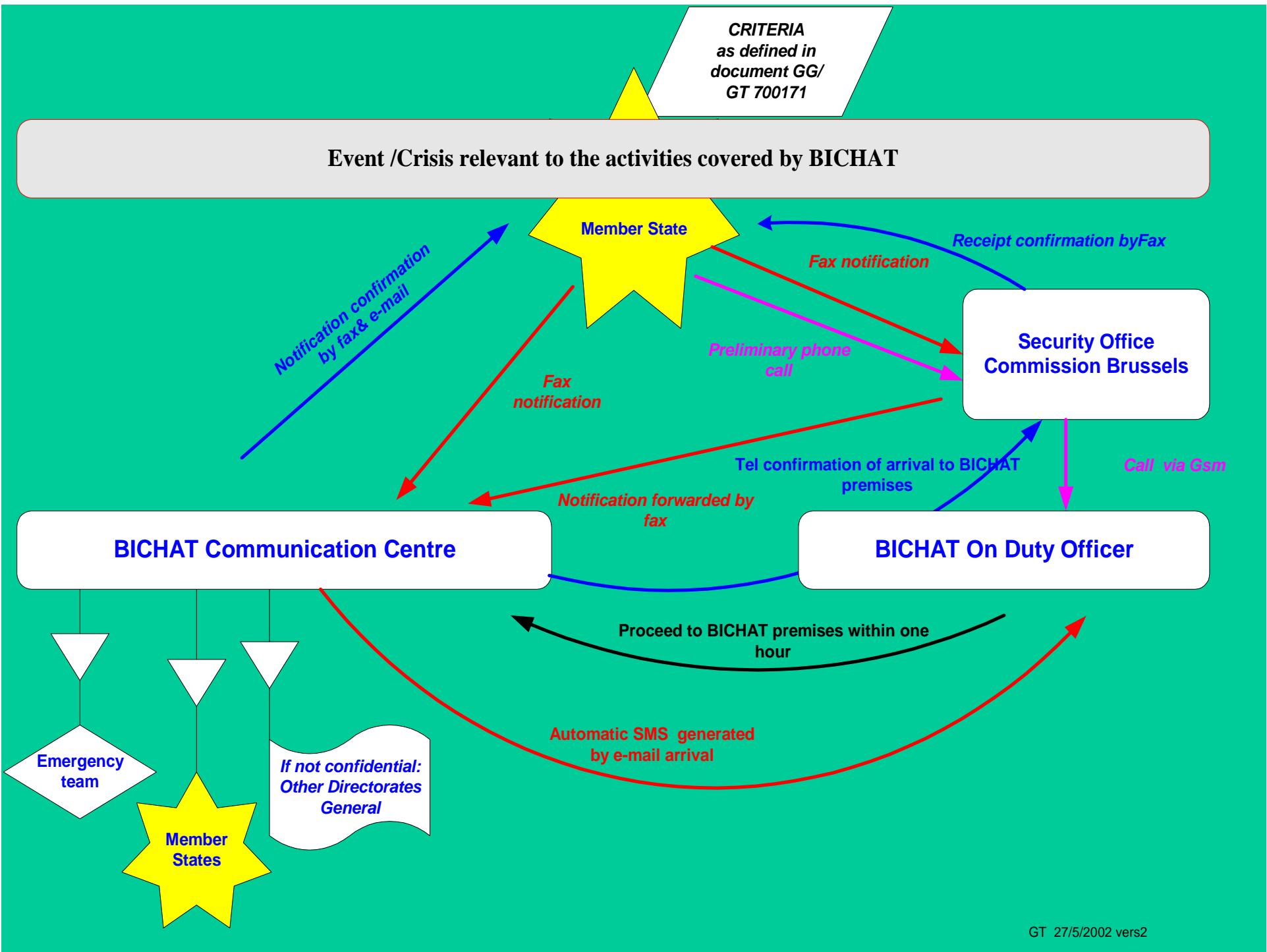
*Preliminary phone
call*

*Fax
notification*

*Tel confirmation of arrival to BICHAT
premises*

Call via Gsm

*Notification forwarded by
fax*





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What is the Commission doing ?

RAS - Bichat CRITERIA FOR NOTIFICATION

- Suspicion of danger
- internationally relevant events for which a complex response might be necessary, requiring co-ordination of investigative and control actions under responsibility of different departments/ministries.
- Suspected deliberate action of terrorist organisations.
- Possibility of transfrontier spread of the event (chemical/biological/radio-nuclear pollution or disease).
- Need of assistance from other countries.



Identification 9 RAS partners in Commission

- **EWRS** – the Early Warning System on Communicable diseases (DG SANCO/G/4)
- **MIC** - The Monitoring and Information Centre of the Civil Protection Network (DG ENV/B/4)
- **ECURIE** - The Radiological emergency preparedness network (DG ENV/C/4)
- **RASFF** - Protection of consumer health in relation to food and feed (DG SANCO/D/3)
- **ADNS** - Animal Disease notification system (DG SANCO/E/2)
- **EUROPHYT** - Phytosanitary network - organisms harmful to plants (DG SANCO/F/4)



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Identification 9 RAS partners in Commission

- **RELEX** -External Relations Crisis Management – Crisis room
- **RAPEX** - Protection of consumer health and safety (non-food aspects). Rapid information among MS and COM on measures by authorities and/or producers/ distributors. (DG SANCO B/3)
- **ANIMO / SHIFT** - Health controls of imports of veterinary concern (DG SANCO/E/3)



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

What is needed

- a mutual exchange of notifications between RAS systems (*when appropriate and with appropriate filters*)
- the precise coordinates of the systems
- regular exchange of information and updates of situation
- provide for proper security environment (clearance?)



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

RAS - Bichat

Member States - Assignment of duties

- MS deciding to take action shall:
 - Forthwith notify the Commission and those MS which have been or are likely to be effected, informing them of the measures taken and reasons for taking them.
 - During the emergency provide additional information on a regular basis.
- MS receiving information shall:
 - Promptly inform the Commission of the measures taken and recommendations issued.



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

RAS - Bichat

Commission - Assignment of duties

- The Commission shall after receiving the initial notification:
 - Verify identity of sender
 - Verify message content
 - Forward the information received to all Health Security Committee members and check reception
 - Forward the information received to other relevant Commission services subject to sender's agreement
 - Receive and forward additional information to all Member States
 - Ensure the reliability and availability of the information system (testing)



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

RAS - Bichat

Other tasks of the Commission

- Be prepared to respond to MS assistance requests for advice
- Be prepared to handle media inquiries
- Set up an Emergency Team to:
 - Inform the Commission Services
 - Assist in preparing media releases
 - Provide additional information to MS



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

2nd objective: detection

- List of biological and chemical agents
- Inventories of biological and chemical agents
- Classification of events-scenarios and modelling
- Minimum requirements for medical services
- resources
- Protocols for field and clinical investigations



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

2nd objective (contd.)

- Directory of experts for interventions- assistance
- Procedures for the setting-up of joint investigation teams
- Inventory of EU laboratory facilities
- Memorandum of understanding or co-operation agreement for labs
- Support among labs in case of emergency



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

3rd objective:stocks-services

- Evaluation of existing stocks and production capacities for medicines
- Elaboration of concerted stockpiling, siting, availability and recycling strategies
- Strategies and instruments to allow the development of medicines
- Evaluation of capacities for treatment and identification of capacity that can be made available to other Member States



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

4th objective: instruments/co-operation

- Co-ordination of special measures concerning the movement and residence
- Interdiction or restrictions on the circulation of products
- Guidelines, advice and references to sources or stand-by facilities for authoritative advice
- Rapid consultation and clearance procedure for communications with the public/media



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

4th objective (contd.)

- Guidelines for restoration of vital health functions and decontamination
- Guidelines for strengthening of distribution systems
- Establishment of appropriate links between the networks and facilities
- Training modules and transfer of duties



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What is the Commission doing ?

TIMETABLE

- 18 months from the date that Health Security Task Force becoming operational (1st May)



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Task force and other resources

- 5 Commission staff
- 10 seconded national experts
- Short-term consultancy work of senior experts and work in the Member States
- Contributions from other Commission services on key policies
- Financing through existing public health programmes and through the new PHP



BIOTERRORISM What is the Commission doing ?

STRUCTURE

- Leading service:
Health and Consumer
Protection Directorate
-General
- Task Force on Health
Security
- Inter-Service Group
on Health Security
- Health Security
Committee
- Working groups under
HSC:
 - laboratories
 - chemicals
 - clinical guidelines
 - emergency plans and
modelling
 - biologicals



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What is the Commission doing ?

Progress so far

- Health Security Committee and round-the-clock alert network
- Inventory of medicines and stockpile options : current status and review
- List of agents and addition to pathogen case definitions (Q-fever, tularaemia, smallpox)
- Scenarios and Modelling
- International co-operation (Ottawa plan etc)



BIOTERRORISM

What is the Commission doing ?

Perspectives

- Communication on health security
- Integration into new public health programme
- Links with other RAS
- Clinical guidelines
- Laboratories and rosters of experts and services
- Circulation of produce-products-persons