

COST ACTION B28
“Array Technologies for BSL 3 and BSL 4 Pathogens”

MINUTES of the
3rd Management Committee Meeting

03 October 2006
Antalya
Turkey

1. Welcome

Patrick Butaye, the Chair of COST ACTION B28 welcomed the participants to the Third Management Committee Meeting.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Point 4 was changed into difficulties with presence of WG and MC members. Point 5 of the draft agenda was omitted since nobody from the COST office was present. The Draft Agenda was approved.

3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 2nd MC – Bratislava

The minutes were approved by all participants of the meeting.

4. Problems with the presence of MC and WG members.

The attendance rate of this meeting was not as high as last meeting and disappointed some partners of the COST action. Reasons for these low attendance rate were looked for and, the cost of the meeting, the combination with other meetings, and the recent bombing were possibly identified as causes.

Joachim Frey, who chaired a former COST Action had a similar experience, in which the second meeting was poorly attended. The action however evolved well and had a large attendance rate with many new participants during its evolution.

The discussion on attendances was ended with a positive note that the MC members and WG chairs will activate the WG members to participate to the meetings.

Patrick Butaye stressed on the fact that MC members should take their responsibilities and should attend the MC meetings as much as possible. If they are frequently unable, they can look for a replacing member for the MC (as there is for Belgium). Some countries should check with the website and their national representatives for their membership. Also, there is seemingly some degree of confusion cause by bad communication between COST and the national representatives. Also the website is not complete, compared to the list from the COST secretariat.

5. Report of the Chair of the Working Group 1

Jacques Schrenzel, the Chair of WG 1 expressed his satisfaction with research results within the working group. However, he still sees improvements in a deeper collaboration among

individual partners. Major problems are found in an insufficient financial support of the proposed collaborations on a national level.

6. Report of the Chair of the Working Group 2

There were only few WG 2 members present and Claude Muller the Chair of WG 2 Group was also absent. It was proposed that WG chairs should look for a replacement if they cannot attend the MC meeting.

7. Report of the Chair of the Working Group 3

Jiri Stulik, the Chair of WG 3 expressed his satisfaction with the research results obtained within the working group. At present, the most fruitful collaborations include those among the laboratories of Rudolf Toman in Bratislava, Slovakia, Anders Sjostedt in Umea, Sweden, and Jiri Stulik in Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic.

8. Report of the Chair of the Working Group 4

There were only few WG 4 participants present and Stefan Paniotov, the Chair of WG 4, called for improvements in collaboration among the member of this group. He will contact personally other members and ask them to provide a list of the prospective collaborations within the group.

Dr. Paniotov submitted with Dr. Pishkin (member of WG1) a project proposal in 6 FP but the project was not approved.

A bilateral project between Bulgaria (principal investigator Dr. Paniotov, WG 4) and Slovakia (principal investigator Dr. Toman, WG 3), focused on a rapid and unambiguous detection of *C. burnetii*, the etiological agent of Q fever, was submitted.

9. Report of the Chair of the Working Group 5

The Chair of WG 5 was absent and the session was chaired by Anders Sjosted. Likewise, with WG 4, and improvement in collaboration among WG members has been recommended. A new member of the group Iulina Apostol from Romania gave an overview on the organizational structure and activities of the government bodies involved in diagnosing monitoring and screening of BSL3 and BSL4 pathogens.

10. Annual report

At the beginning of December 2006, an Annual report on the COST ACTION B28 activities has to be prepared and sent to the COST OFFICE. Therefore, an input from WG chairs and all other WG members is required ASAP.

11. WEB site

There have been some administrative problems with web site creation, but it is expected that by the end of November the site must be operational. A new 2000 EUR was asked as contribution for the maintenance of the COST B28 site at the CODA-CERVA-VAR webserver. The contribution has been approved.

WG chairs will have access to modify the site. Web site should primarily serve for the exchange of information and for visibility towards the outside

12. Working plans for future

It was decided to write/publish a booklet focusing on microarrays and all COST B28 members are warmly welcome –and encouraged- to contribute to this booklet. The booklet will be printed and distributed through a COST financial support. Besides its visibility, the booklet will be an important deliverable to COST administration for assessing our ongoing collaborations (even if they are not yet that numerous) and pave the way for extending our action (through COST and/or EU FP7). The coordination of the submissions will be done by the WG1 chair.

More emphasis will be laid on creation of common research proposals within the individual working groups. New paths will be followed to gain financial support for this type of projects.

To make COST ACTION B28 meetings more attractive in future, discussions led to a conclusion that more people with attractive topics/presentations should be invited to participate in the meetings. This will expand current possibilities in the mutual collaboration that should be increasingly prosperous for all parties involved.

It has been proposed to develop a common strategy for the 7 FP in the near future.

Finally, it was proposed to develop networking in the participating countries (MC-responsible).

13. Miscellaneous

Dr. Macela gave some basic information on European Defence Agenda. He asked WG members to contribute with their information/knowledge to its database dealing with typing of biological warfare agents.

There have been noticed an ever increasing problems/difficulties with the exchange of infectious strains for research purposes. In this connection, a joint COST-NATO meeting is planned to overcome current restrictions on sending BSL3 and BSL4 pathogens for research purposes.

Portugal has asked to join COST ACTION B28. Approved by voting.

Ingmar Janse will be a member of WG 1. Approved by voting.

Additionally and not mentioned in the MC meeting

From the COST office: an additional call has been made to submit STSM. This tool allows young researchers to travel and work in laboratories of partners in this COST Action. This tool has not yet been used in COST Action B28. The money for this will be lost for the group is there is nobody using it. The success of COST Actions is also measured at this level and no STSMs is not a good point in a COST Action.

Therefore it is asked to the different partners, who have students or collaborators, for whom it is interesting to work for a limited time in another laboratory, to submit STSM demands to the STSM committee(Rudolf Toman is chairing this committee).

The rules for STSMs can be found on the COST website.

14. Place and date of the next meeting:

I has been decided that the next COST ACTION B28 meeting will be held in Sofia, Bulgaria in April-May 2007. Two alternatives as for the meeting date will be proposed and the final decision will be made by MC members by email round.

It has also been approved that the local organisers are attributed 3000€for the organisation of the meeting.

Recommendations for the next meeting:

It was advised to organize the meeting in a more economical way in order to allow especially young collaborators, who are not eligible to reimbursement, to attain the meeting.

To bring researchers/experts, as invited experts, from the Southern Asia, Africa to the meeting in order to get better acquainted with the real epidemiological situation with some virological BSL4 agents in those areas and to have a better access to the new strains/isolates. The local organiser has the possibility to invited people according to the COST rules.

It was proposed that 2-3 speakers can be invited through the COST Office and others, if wanted may be invited at the costs of local organizers.

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COST ACTION B28

RUDOLF TOMAN
VICE-CHAIRMAN
COST ACTION B28