

Dr RS Lane

See 81.2
5th Summary
1st minute

IN CONFIDENCE

CENTRAL BLOOD LABORATORIES AUTHORITY

Minutes of the twentieth meeting of the Central Blood Laboratories Authority held on 18 September, 1985 at the Blood Group Reference Laboratory, Oxford.

Present: Mr R D Smart (Chairman)
Mr A S Jerwood
Mr M G Storey
Mr C Walker
Mr G A Wilson
Mr R A Wing

In Attendance Mr W P N Armour (Secretary)
Dr A M Holburn (Director, BGRL)
Dr R S Lane (Director, BPL)
Mr A J Williams (DHSS)

Part 1

77/85 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Dr H H Gunson, Mr W V S Seccombe, Dr A Smithies and Dr D P Thomas.

78/85 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 1985 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

79/85 Matters Arising from the Minutes

79.1. Charging for BGRL Products

The Secretary reported the receipt of five responses so far from RHA's in reply to the letter outlining proposals for central purchasing of monoclonal products. It was noted that of the five, only Oxford RTC had found the proposals unacceptable. The Secretary confirmed that he would endeavour to obtain responses from the other Regions as soon as possible. He would also speak to the Director, Oxford RTC about his views in finding the Authority's proposals unacceptable.

64/209.

There followed discussion on Test Kits for the presence of HTLV 3 virus. The Chairman said that tests produced by Organon and Wellcome were nearing approval for use in the UK. Mr Williams confirmed that DHSS were currently discussing the tests with RTC's, whom it was noted were ready to place short term contracts for the tests with the two pharmaceutical Companies mentioned. He expressed the view that short term contracts would be appropriate in the first instance in the likelihood that further tests, as time passed, would improve and be more convenient to use.

The Director BPL agreed to keep the Authority informed about progress in regard to HTLV3 tests developed in the UK.

79.2 DTI Biotechnology Unit - Downstream Processing

Amaitini case
Mr Williams agreed to report back to the Authority on this matter at its November meeting.

79.3 Bioscot - Supply of anti-thrombin III to PFC

The Secretary agreed to send further details on this matter to Mr A Williams at DHSS, who would report back to the Authority at its November meeting.

79.4 Rapid anti-D

The Director BGRL reported upon his discussions with Dr Gunson and the RTD's Committee, and said that a revised specification for new targets was to be prepared.

The lack of interest from the commercial side in anti-D was commented upon and it was agreed that the Chairman would follow this matter up with the commercial sector through the ABPI who it was noted were due to hold their next meeting the following month.

79.5 Overseas Marketing - Proposed Collaboration with Biotest

The Director BPL reported that, since the last meeting, further negotiations had taken place with Biotest in regard to blood packs and he confirmed that agreement had been made for the supply of plasma packs to BPL's requirements. He referred also to the possible collaboration between Biotest and Haemonetics in blood pack design.

It was noted that a draft secrecy agreement for the collaboration on Factor VIIIY, vetted by Messrs Coward Chance, the CBLA's legal advisers, had been returned from Biotest in West Germany with an agreement to proceed.

A difficulty, however, in the Factor VIII process which could possibly infringe upon patenting the product would need to be cleared.

The Director BPL confirmed that a sample of Fraction 3 had been sent to Biotest whom it was noted wished to purchase the waste product, if satisfactory.

In answer to a question raised by the Chairman about the approximate cost of the collaboration, the Director BPL said that he would, hopefully, be in a position to report to the Authority at its next meeting, on this issue.

80/85 Plasma Supply

Mr Williams reported that DHSS were still pursuing RHA's on the subject of plasma supply and had written again to Regional General Managers of those Regions who had not agreed to meet target requirements. It was subsequently noted that if the Regions concerned had not produced satisfactory explanations for their position in the near future, the matter would be the subject for parliamentary debate in October. Mr Williams agreed to inform the Authority of events at its November meeting.

amend
In regard to the 'World in Action' TV programme in July, Mr Williams reported upon his discussions with the DHSS press office and it was noted that, legally, the TV Company would be within its rights to show the Secretary's interview, if it wished. It was therefore agreed, that the Secretary would write to Granada TV with a request that the interview should not be used in another context. He would take the advice of Messrs Coward Chance, the Authority's legal advisers on a suitable presentation.

81/85 Redevelopment of BPL

81.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Project Control Committee held on 13 September 1985 (CBLA 85/41) were received and noted.

Mr Jerwood outlined the background to the appointment of Messrs BDP Project Management Limited, to strengthen the current CBLA Project Management team, who would concentrate upon controlling the cost and time for the remainder of the project.

Mr Walker stressed the urgency of now completing the project as quickly as possible. Mr Storey welcomed the move to employ BDP Project Management Ltd and underlined his disappointment that personnel with quantity surveying skills had not been associated with the contract at an earlier stage. It was noted that the Managing Director of MHNE had recently made it clear that the project would be completed by March 1986.

Mr Jerwood confirmed that in order to make sure that the contract did not overrun unnecessarily, MHNE fees had been closed down at a final sum of £6.6 million.

The Secretary reported the receipt of a letter from DHSS in reply to the Authority's request for additional finance, which confirmed an increase in the total cash limit for the redevelopment to £38 million, including £0.4 million for heat treatment.

81.2 HN (Hazard) (85)6 Legionnaires Disease : Drainage System for Air Conditioning Plants

The Director referred to the latest information received from DHSS contained in HN (Hazard) (85)6 which advised NHS Authorities to check drainage connections from air conditioning plants. He said that as a result of the Notice he had taken action to make sure that its requirements were implemented for the new building, especially in regard to aspects of design.

82/85 Finance

82.1 Budget Statement

Copies of the budget statement and Secretary's report (CBLA 85/42) were received and noted.

The Secretary said that the overspending position of BGRL was giving rise to some concern but it was hoped that central re-charging for monoclonal reagents would alleviate matters. It was agreed as policy that BGRL should continue to provide monoclonal reagents rather than leaving this provision purely to the commercial sector. The Director BGRL therefore would prepare a case for presentation to DHSS to justify this decision which would take into account both the NHS and overseas markets.

The Director BGRL referred to his current low stocks of monoclonal reagents. It was subsequently agreed that the Director BGRL should place an order for 100 litres of reagent at an approximate cost of £24,000 plus VAT.

The Secretary referred to a letter dated 6 September 1985 received from DHSS on CBLA finance for the current financial year and subsequent three years. He said that whilst the figures contained in the letter were due to be discussed further at a meeting to be held at Elstree on 25 September, he was particularly concerned at the level of revenue figures set for the next three financial years bearing in mind the running costs of the new BPL plant.

The Chairman emphasised the need to look closely at the requirements for Research and Development in a new facility such as the new BPL. It was subsequently agreed that the Director BPL should prepare a report for submission to the CBLA on this matter including cost implications. The Director BGRL would carry out a similar exercise for BGRL. Mr A Williams stressed the need for DHSS to have the figure for R & D as early as possible.

Mr Jerwood referred to the sum of £0.5 million set aside for miscellaneous capital items and commented that the sum planned was much less than would actually be required. A more realistic figure would be of the order of £5 million.

82.2 Final Accounts 1984/85

A copy of the final accounts for the Authority for the year ended 31 March 1985 (CBLA 85/43) were approved for signature by the Chairman.

83/85 Production

83.1 Report on BPL Products

A copy of the report on the production and issue of BPL products (CBLA 85/44) was received and noted.

The Director BPL commented upon the significant issue, in August, of Factor VIIIX and the emergence of the new heat-treated Factor IXA

83.2 Report on BGRL Products

A copy of the report on BGRL production (CBLA 85/45) was received and noted.

84/85 New Salary Scales and Terms and Conditions

The Director BPL reported upon the gradual implementation of the new salary structure for BPL staff.

The Secretary expressed continuing concern about the situation concerning process workers and craftsmen. It was noted that the Chairman had, after the last CBLA meeting, presented a detailed case on behalf of the Authority, to the Deputy Secretary at DHSS. A meeting had been arranged between the Chairman and the Deputy Secretary on 3 October to discuss the position of both process workers and craftsmen at BPL.

(Mr M G Storey left the meeting at this point).

Mr Walker expressed particular concern at the staffing situation and the current turnover of staff at BPL. He subsequently raised a question of when the possible increase in staff would take place. The Chairman expressed the view that if a satisfactory solution was reached by the time of his meeting at DHSS, matters could be acted upon. A further delay however, in reaching agreement would make matters extremely difficult for the successful early commissioning of BPL.

The Director BPL enlarged upon the increased training/education facilities planned to be made available for process staff at BPL which could result in possible promotions in the future providing appropriate agreement could be reached with DHSS.

85/85 Annual Report (December 1983-March 1985)

The draft Annual Report (December 1983 - March 1985) (CBLA 85/46) was approved subject to minor amendment.

The Director BGRL raised a question about the Annual Report being circulated to staff. The Chairman said that an occasional report could be prepared which would be better suited for staff's information. RTD's could also receive such a document.

86/85 Management Development

A Management Development Policy Statement for Managers (CBLA 85/47) was approved.

In answer to a question raised by Mr Jerwood, the Secretary said that member input would be welcomed at Steering Group meetings. It was subsequently agreed that Mr Jerwood should be included in the Senior Management Group, currently consisting of the Secretary, the Director BPL, and the Deputy Director (Manufacturing), as and when appropriate.

87/85 Nationwide AIDS Counselling Service

Mr A Williams enlarged upon the Government's action in asking Health Authorities to draw up plans for a nationwide AIDS Counselling Service.

88/85 Authority Meeting Dates 1986

A schedule of dates for Authority meetings in 1986 (fourth Tuesday in alternate months) (CBLA 85/48) was received and approved.

89/85 Any Other Business

89.1 Mr Wing reported that Labaz-Sanofi Pharmaceutical Company, of which he was Chairman, had been invited to supply certain diagnostics in the treatment of AIDS.

89.2 Mr Wilson raised the question of identification for CBLA members. The Secretary agreed to arrange for identity badges to be prepared for members.

90/85 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting would be held on 20 November 1985 at Elstree at 11.00 a.m.

The Directors having completed their contributions, received the thanks of the members for their attendance and withdrew.