CENTRAL BLOOD LABORATORIES AUTHORITY

Minutes of the twenty seventh meeting of the Central Blood Laboratories Authority held on the 25 November 1986 at the Crest.

Present:	Mr R D Smart	(Chairman)
	Dr H H Gunson	
	Mr A S Jerwood	
	Mr W V S Seccombe	
	Mr G A Wilson	
	Mr R A Wing	
	Dr D P Thomas	
In Attendance:	Mr G M Bailey	(Administrator)
	Mr A G W Bailey	(Accountant)
	Dr G Bird	(Director BGRL)
	Dr R S Lane	(Director BPL/PFL)
	Dr R Moore	(DHSS)
	Dr A Smithies	(DHSS)

PART 1

78/86 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Mr C Walker and Mr W P N Armour.

79/86 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 1986 were approved, and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the following amendments: -

Item 65.3: First paragraph, fourth line, delete 'the' and substitute 'an' and delete the word 'which'.
Thirteenth line, insert the word 'products', between 'manufactured' and 'from'.

Item 75.1: First paragraph, second line, after the second 'the' insert 'need for'.

Item 75.2: Second paragraph, sixth line, after the word 'for' delete 2 and insert 'the second week of'

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80/86 Matters Arising from the Minutes

80.1 Commercialisation of Anti-D Reagent - Proposals of Celltech and Biotest

The Chairman reported that Celltech had now doubled their original offer after we had received a considerably better offer from Biotest. The Biotest offer based on licence of the Cell line ex factory finished product.

Celltech's new offer:	£25,000	initial payment
	£100,000	advance on royalties
	10%	on sales for 1 year
	5%	thereafter
	£15,000	per annum for exclusivity

with the contract running for 10 years.

It had therefore proved that the Authority was correct in considering the original offer inadequate. It was decided to proceed with Celltech on MAD 2 and Biotest on FOM 1.

80.2 Future of Central Committee for R & D in Blood Transfusion

Dr Moore submitted a report on the proposals for Restructuring the Central Committee on Research and Development, which was circulated to the members and the contents were noted. Dr Moore told the members that Dr Gunson was to be the Chairman of the Central Committee.

80.3 Untested Plasma

Dr Moore said that, as yet, no advisory committee had been established. Dr Smithies asked how urgent a matter this was and was assured it was of considerable urgency. The Director of BPL said that it was costing a lot of money to store untested plasma at -40°C and that he had a possible buyer. The Chairman asked if there was any chance of the products sold overseas returning to the UK. The Director assured him that this could not happen. The Chairman said it was for the Advisory Committee to decide whether or not the stored plasma can be used. If it cannot be used for UK distribution it becomes, by definition, surplus to requirements. The ethics of selling it untested were discussed and the Director assured the Authority that it would meet the criteria of the country to which it could be sold.

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80.4 Implications of Virus Inactivation in BPL Products

The Director BPL outlined the site requirements to implement the Authority's decision to progress validation procedures for virus inactivation of products. These included housing new experimental freeze driers in the high containment area now used for preparing hepatitis B tests: hepatitis testing would be resited and the Virology Laboratory be refurbished to the level of containment needed for virus work including hepatitis B and HIV. Building costs would be £100,000, equipment costs £81,200 and the revenue expendables in 1987/8 were estimated at £39,000. The financial requirements were included in budget proposals and the need for early completion and commissioning was stressed.
The Authority agreed to proceed with the project as soon as possible and this view was endorsed by Dr Thomas.

80.5 Monoclonal anti-D MAD 2 Trial

The Director BPL reported that the trial results received indicated a generally high level of satisfaction in transfusion centres and hospital laboratories. The results would be collated and a meeting of trialists held at Elstree. Dr Gunson concluded that MAD 2 was an excellent reagent. The use of MAD 2 reagent in grouping machines remained controversial and the Director BPL reported that two other cell lines, developed at Bristol in Dr Bradley's laboratory, were now under assessment at BPL Diagnostics. The products of these cell lines were most promising in scientific and commercial terms because they were ideally suited for use by machine methods.

Dr Gunson enquired whether BPL Diagnostics had the machinery necessary for evaluation of special reagents. It was agreed that this work was best pursued in selected RTC's and hospital transfusion laboratories. However, in future, BPL Diagnostics would approach machine manufacturers to propose favourable terms for machine evaluation in the Oxford laboratory using the new reagents.

80.6 Recombinant Factor IX

The Director BPL reported that a recent visit had been made to CAMR, Porton, to discuss with Dr Sutton the future of the recombinant DNA-cloned Factor IX from Professor Brownlee's laboratory in Oxford. Dr Sutton was in favour of a collaboration with BPL to evaluate the clone in its expression stages and wished to involve BPL in downstreamm technological applications.

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British Technology Group (BTG), who own the Intellectual Property Rights of the clone on behalf of Professor Brownlee, have been in discussion with CBLA for some time concerning interest in the Factor IX clone. Because of delays in response, BTG had now approached Porton International, the commercial associate with CAMR. As yet, no response from Porton International had been received, but it was possible that the interests of the three parties were not necessarily in conflict. Meanwhile, it was agreed that CBLA should quickly reaffirm their interest in the Factor IX clone with BTG and that further discussions should take place between CBLA's officers and CAMR and that this should include BTG.

81/86 Plasma Supply

Dr Moore had nothing to report.

82/86 Redevelopment of BPL

Reports (CBLA 86/42) on the development were received and noted.

The Chairman reported on a meeting at Alexander Fleming House, between MHE(S), the DHSS and the CBLA to try to resolve the question of MHE(S)'s costs and fees and to get agreement that extra supervision on the site was necessary.

Mr Jerwood reported on the PCC meeting held on 21 November and said that there had been no change in MHE(S)'s attitude since that meeting. The situation at the moment would have to be negotiated but for reimbursement costs only, not with additional profits. It was decided that Mr Armour should persuade MHE(S) to accept this offer. We are in a position that we cannot do without MHE(S) to finish the building and the commissioning. 'Hands on Management' was now required to take over the building as soon as possible.

Dr Lane reported from the Principals Meeting that dissatisfaction had been expressed over the contribution of the MHE(S) Project Manager on the client's behalf. MHE(S) had agreed that a replacement would be found to complete the project management of commissioning. Dr Lane also noted that there was a major management hiatus within CBLA's project team. The Chairman indicated that it was BDP's responsibility to resolve the problem and he would write to their Chairman to try to get an immediate resolution of the problem. The Official Opening should go ahead on April 29, 1987.

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83/86 Warehouse and Q.A. Building

After various discussions it had been agreed that BDP should be Project Managers and that tenders should be put out to appoint design consultants, as it is unacceptable to the DHSS for BDP to take on both operations. Mr Jerwood suggested not just restricting this to British Companies.

84/86 Pilot Process and Development Facilities

The Chairman indicated that there was still a lack of agreement between CBLA and DHSS as to the scale and priorities set by BPL's need for these facilities. DHSS disagreed that licensing of new products and processes in the new production facility was compromised by absence of separate pilot process and scale-up production areas. The Authority accepted that while this could be the case in some instances, there were others, e.g. with non-human source materials and with virus spiking of processes, which would not be appropriate activities in licensed production areas. It would need to be agreed whether, in the presence of a new high-specification production building, DHSS would accept the least margins of security in pilot process as set by the Orange Guide on Good Manufacturing Practice.

Mr Wing agreed that full pilot-process facilities were not essential to obtaining licences but were needed for full scale-up of production.

The Chairman concluded that the need remained for CBLA to convince DHSS of the need for full pilot process and research facilities at Elstree to support future production work and that further efforts to this end would be planned with urgency.

85/86 Master Plan

This was progressing and was needed to co-ordinate any future buildings. An extra £10,000 was approved for the cost of the surveys.

86/86 Finance

86.1 Budget Statement

A copy of a report on the budget (CBLA 86/43) was received and approved.

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86.2 Annual Accounts

A copy of the Annual Accounts (CBLA 86/44) was received and approved.

Mr Wilson asked what the position was regarding the audit of accounts; Mr A G W Bailey replied that the DHSS had rigorous standards and that an Audit Certificate was issued.

86.3 Forecast Estimates

A copy of the Report (CBLA 86/45) was received and noted. A sub-committee was set up to deal with the matter consisting of Mr G Wilson and Mr R Wing. The results to be reported to the next Authority meeting.

87/86 Production

The Director BPL noted that while his reports showed that production targets were being met, this was achieved against increasing difficulties in maintaining Building 25. The production staff deserved praise for their efforts.

The Director also indicated that stocks of albumin concentrate were now exhausted and to maintain supplies would require the elective fractionation of untested and outdated plasma to albumin only; Authority approval through DHSS would be required for this and there was a need for an early decision.
It was noted that a shortfall in BPL albumin supply to NHS Hospitals would have a serious effect on treatment of patients, since commercial alternatives were now both scarce and expensive.

Dr Thomas suggested that the use of outdated untested plasma for albumin production be referred to the DHSS Special Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the future of FFP, and suggested that political interests should be overcome by the scientific evidence of virus inactivation by albumin pasteurisation.

Dr Gunson agreed that albumin pasteurisation should guarantee a safe product from untested plasma.

88/86 Annual Report

A copy of CBLA 86/48 was received and noted. Several amendments were recommended. The Chairman undertook to deal with these.

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89/86 Commercial Review

The Director BPL reported that Armour "Factorate" had recently been withdrawn from the UK market following two reports of seroconversion against HIV in haemophiliacs. "Factorate" was no longer made and the batches concerned were prepared from plasma collected prior to HIV screening. Armour, recently acquired by Rorer, was now again on the market - among the contenders, Behringwerke were the favourites, although interest was shown by Beecham UK.

Screening by testing donors for liver enzymes (ALT) and hepatitis B core antibody (HBcAb) was now in practice in American Red Cross and American Association of Blood Banks Centres. Plasma screening by industry was still limited to ALT-testing; exclusion of donors with HBcAb was reducing donor levels of HBsAb in normal immunoglobulin pools below pharmacopoeial specification.

Current status of DNA-cloned blood products was reviewed. Albumin clones existed and were licenced with several companies; expression or rDNA albumin presented major problems which reduced the priority of this stage. Three anti-thrombin clones are reported, of which one is licenced and patented through Kabigen. Five factor IX clones are reported, two of which are expressed; there is only one licencee. Factor VII has been cloned by zymogenetics. At least five factor VIII clones exist, of which the leaders in expression stages are the licensees of clones from Genentech and Genetics Institute. Both the latter expressed rDNA cloned factor VIII products have been tested in dogs.

At future meetings, a short paper would be circulated ahead of the meeting.

90/86 Therapeutic Anti-D Purchase

Director BPL reported progress on attempt to meet the shortfall in therapeutic Anti-D caused by lack of incoming hyperimmune plasma from BTS.

Following assurances to CBLA by DHSS that financial and product liability settlements would be adequately covered, an order had been placed with Cutter Biologicals for 10,000 x 1500 iu vials of Anti-D immunoglobulin for intramuscular injection U.S.P. - price £155,000. Conditions of purchase included documentation showing this product to be issued on a release order meeting USA regulatory requirements for internal use in USA. The method of product distribution from BPL was described to members who accepted the proposals. No charging for product would be involved.

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In addition, some 80-100 litres of Anti-D plasma had been located in Dublin and Cork and was being purchased subject to agreement on price and conditions. A further supply of FDA-licensed hyperimmune plasma had been located in the USA which could be shipped, if NBTS plasma supplies failed to pick up in volume

Dr Thomas wished it to be recorded that the direct importation of unlicensed (in UK) blood products into the UK established an undesirable precedent of side-stepping product licensing procedures. Other members observed that other unlicensed blood products in UK had been imported for years e.g. FEIBA from Immuno A.G. so the precedent in this case was direct importation by a Crown agency.

91/86 Smoking Policy

The Director BPL reported that extensive consultation indicated that a future policy should prohibit smoking in all production buildings and their associated laboratories and laboratory offices. Equally, smoking in areas where food was consumed and in the library should not be allowed.

In other offices, administration buildings and the bar in the amenities area, smoking would be permitted. In public rooms and conference areas, smoking would be dependent upon the consensus of the meeting.

A policy would be drawn up in draft, circulated to managers and staff side at the JCC and brought back to the Authority for approval and implementation in January 1987.

92/86 Meeting with Common Policy Services Agency (Scotland)

The continuing legal difficulties entered into by the CSA and the Authority were being examined as to how they can be reconciled. The setting up of an informal group for research and development regarding duplicity of work by the two organisations would be a help.

It was suggested that a good plan would be a specific project on which they could 'cut their teeth'.

93/86 Sealing of Documents

One document has been sealed.

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94/86 Any Other Business

94.1 The Director BPL reported that an extension of the monoclonal antibody project with Birmingham University had been agreed at an additional cost of £12,000 per year for three years. The project was to develop monoclonal antiglobulin reagents for blood transfusion and remove reliance on experimental animals for this purpose. Members agreed that this project should proceed.

94.2 Experimental freeze driers supporting the production machines would be commissioned in 1987. To support their experimental function, a research programme had been agreed with Professor Franks of Cambridge to optimise freeze drying conditions. The estimated budget of £30,000 would be needed over a two year period. Members were reminded of the high value in each freeze dried batch of product. The Authority endorsed this project.

94.3 Dr Bird reported Dr Holburn and Mr M Moghaddam had set up a company called 'Medical Laboratories Services Limited'. A careful watch would be kept on its activities.

95/86 Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 27 January 1987 at 11 o'clock.

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

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PART 2

96/86 MATTERS IN CONFIDENCE

96.1 The Chairman reported that the Health Ministers had approved the appointment of Mr Bernard Crowley as Chief Executive of C.B.L.A, subject, of course, to his acceptance of the terms and conditions appropriate to th position. The Members endorsed the proposed appointment.

96.2 The Vice Chairman had received notice from DHSS that his term of appointment as a Member of the Authority was not to be extended and hence that this would be his last meeting. The Members present expressed unanimous dismay and it was agreed that appreciation of Mr Jerwood's unflagging efforts and substantial contributions to the success of C.B.L.A. should be recorded in the Minutes.

96.3 The Chairman read a letter from Mr Colin Walker regretting that the routine date for meetings of the Authority (the fourth Tuesday of the month) was no longe suitable for him. It was agreed that the Secretary should be asked to find out whether an alternative day, suiting the convenience of all Members, could be identified.

96.4 Dr Moore reported that a letter of resignation from Mr Michael Storey had been received earlier by DHSS and that he was no longer a Member of the Authority.

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