



CONFERENCE OF RADIATION CONTROL PROGRAM DIRECTORS, INC.

POSITION

Relating to: NextGen Radiochemists Training Program

It is the position of the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors, Inc. (CRCPD) to endorse the Association of Public Health Laboratories' (APHL) proposed NextGen Radiochemists Training Program.

The proposed training program will be comprehensive and sustainable in support of governmental radiochemistry laboratories. It will provide initial and ongoing training for chemists and radiochemists to ensure that decision makers receive accurate, precise, and timely data during routine (e.g., environmental monitoring) and emergency (e.g., response to a radiological dispersal device (RDD)) operations.

The NextGen Radiochemists Training Program will be comprised of four components:

- An online radiochemistry academy that will maintain over 200 hours of digital training modules and videos; and
- Hands-on (in-person) radiochemistry training that will be divided into two, one-week training modules; and
- Continuing support for radiochemists through an online forum of experts and peers; and
- Knowledge retention activities to share information between radiochemists of varying experience.

The nation's radiochemistry laboratory capacity has been a concern for the CRCPD for more than a decade. Top Officials IV was a national counterterrorism exercise mandated by Congress that took place in 2007, and focused on National Planning Scenario 11, which envisions the detonation of an RDD. During Top Officials IV, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimated that 350,000 samples would need to be collected and analyzed in the 12 months after an RDD. Given the nation's radiochemistry laboratory infrastructure that existed at that time, it was estimated that it would take six years to analyze those samples.

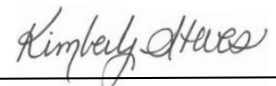
The nation's radiochemistry laboratory capacity has not significantly improved since Top Officials IV. To address this concern, the CRCPD established a Task Force for Radiochemistry Laboratory Assets to study the nation's radiochemistry laboratory infrastructure and capabilities. The task force is charged with creating mechanisms to ensure timely surge capacity to support states potentially impacted by a radiation emergency. The task force is also focused on coordination of state and federal radiochemistry laboratory training opportunities and exercises.

With few radiochemistry training opportunities available, it is the position of the CRCPD that the APHL's proposed NextGen Radiochemists Training Program will significantly assist State Radiation Control Programs and Laboratories in training the next generation of radiochemists. Accordingly, the proposed program will enhance the nation's radiochemistry laboratory capabilities and capacity.

This position is supported by the following:

- State Radiation Control Programs and Laboratories are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit radiochemists. With attrition looming and fewer colleges and universities offering radiochemistry-focused programs, the shortage of radiochemists will become more impactful in coming years.
- State Radiation Control Programs and Laboratories can readily recruit chemists to operate in radiochemistry laboratories. These chemists need radiochemistry training to effectively perform radiochemical analyses.
- There are a small number of radiochemistry training programs available today. These programs are limited in scope and do not include hands-on training as part of the curriculum.
- The APHL's proposed NextGen Radiochemists Training Program will address the nation's shortage of radiochemists. It will be federally funded, comprehensive, and consist of online and hands-on training that will benefit all governmental radiochemistry laboratories.

Approved by the CRCPD Membership on May 20, 2021



Kimberly Steves
CRCPD Chairperson