

Blue Ribbon Bed Bug Task Force  
Public Policy Subcommittee  
Meeting Minutes  
November 30, 2010

In Attendance

Matt Beal  
Donnie Blake  
Norman Goldenberg  
Dr. Susan Jones  
Mike Katz  
Mark Sheperdigian  
Richard Stevenson Jr.  
Gene Harrington

The meeting started at 3:02 PM (EST)

The timetable for the group was discussed. The group will meet via conference call two to three times over the next several weeks to develop a draft white paper outlining proposed industry positions on a variety of bed bug related public policy issues. The group will have a draft document for the full Blue Ribbon Bed Bug Task Force (BRBBTF) to review on January 5 in Denver. The group will resume meeting via conference call after the Denver meeting to incorporate comments received from the full BRBBTF. The group will have a revised and, hopefully, final document ready for the BRBBTF to review at a March 12 meeting in Washington, DC in conjunction with NPMA Legislative Day. The group agreed that the end product should be written broadly not prescriptively so as to allow for some flexibility in its use and interpretation.

The group agreed to walk through bed bug related policy issues that either have already been taken up by local, state or federal government agencies or legislative bodies as well as those that can reasonably be expected to arise in the

near future. In going through the issues the group tackled two objectives: (a) deciding if the issue is one on which the industry should take a position on and (b) initiating preliminary consideration of the issue. The individual issues and the group's thoughts are listed below:

**Product registration (new chemistry, existing chemistry, legacy chemistry)** – The group agreed that this matter was one on which the industry should stake out a position, although members of the group urged caution when weighing in on whether to bring back old or legacy chemistry. Members of the group noted that the Section 18 process needed to be expedited and that 25b products labeled for bed bugs should be subject to traditional registration requirements. The group also agreed that efficacy data is important when registering a product for bed bugs or bringing back older chemistry.

**Incentives for the development of new technologies** – The group felt that the awarding or providing of incentives for the development of new technologies to manage or prevent bed bug infestations such as tax credits was unnecessary and inappropriate because the developer of the product/technology would reap rewards through the marketplace.

**Landlord/tenant relations** – The group felt that there were many aspects of landlord/tenant bed bug related issues that impacted PMPs and their ability to manage and prevent bed bug infestations. The group also discussed the delicate nature of many of these types of issues. The group generally agreed to work on language outlining an industry position on a number of landlord/tenant bed bug related issues but urged caution in the writing of the language because of the many sensitive issue involved. The group agreed that this issue warranted much more discussion and agreed to move on to other issues for the time being.

**Bed bug “right to know” initiatives** – The group agreed that the industry should take a position on bed bug “right to know” initiatives and that the position should favor such initiatives. Members of the group discussed instances where rental units with bed bug infestations had knowingly been rented to tenants and felt that it was important the industry support empowering consumers with additional information regarding bed bug infestations. The group discussed the types of information that should be provided by landlords including bed bug information sheets. While the group generally favored disclosure, there were

concerns raised by members of the group about the idea of WDI type infestations for bed bugs and the havoc that would reap. The group also discussed the possibility of bed bug infestations being added to real estate disclosure forms.

**Research** – The group agreed that the industry should support additional government funding for bed bug research.

**Funding for affordable housing** – The group agreed that the government should help fund or subsidize the treatment of low or fixed income housing for bed bugs. Members of the group said the issue was more complicated than just paying for the treatment and that some tenants were being forced to discard their beds, sofas and other belongings because of bed bug infestations. Other members of the group noted that not only is such a step often unnecessary but that it actually exacerbated the overall bed bug problem by spreading bed bug infested material more broadly.

**Coordination/collaboration among government agencies/levels/sectors** – The group agreed that the industry should support better and more effective coordination and collaboration among and between the various agencies and levels of government.

**Certification and training for applicators, inspectors and canines** – The group discussed whether the industry should take a position on state and federal proposals expanding or establishing new certification and training requirements for applicators, inspectors, canines and canine handlers. Some members of the group felt that this issue intruded into the purview of the Best Management Practices, Credentialing, Certifications and Training subcommittee. Other members felt that the Best Management Practices, Credentialing, Certifications and Training subcommittee was not developing an industry position regarding additional mandatory certification and licensing requirements. The group agreed that the subcommittee should recommend to the full Task Force to oppose proposals mandating additional and new certification requirements for certified/licensed applicators or new licensing requirements for inspectors, canines and canine handlers since the industry is developing Best Management Practices and a credentialing program and that those initiatives should be given an opportunity to gain a foothold.

**Protect consumers from fraudulent products or services** – The group agreed that the industry should support Federal Trade Commission and state attorneys general actions to protect consumers from fraudulent bed bug related products and services.

**Additional requirements for EPA Section 25b exempt products** – The group agreed that the industry should support additional registration and efficacy requirements for 25b or minimum risk pesticides that are labeled for treating bed bugs.

**Defining bed bugs as "vermin"** – The group agreed that the inclusion of bed bug in the legal definition of vermin was a matter the industry should weigh in on and felt it was an initiative the industry should support.

**Mandatory guarantees for bed bug treatments** – The group recommended that the industry oppose proposals requiring professional pest management companies to guarantee their bed bug treatments.

**Limiting bed bug treatments in multi-family housing and lodging facilities to certified applicators** – The group felt the industry should support proposals limiting bed bug treatment performed at multi-family housing and lodging facilities to licensed/certified applicators.

**Creation of Bed Bug Task Forces** – The group recommended that the industry back legislative and other proposals establishing Bed Bug Task Forces, provided that such proposed bodies include adequate industry representation.

The group decided that NPMA staff would write a rough/discussion draft based on the points made during the conference call and distribute the document to the group by the end of the week. The group would take a week to week and a half to review and discuss via e-mail before reconvening via conference call to amend the discussion/rough draft.

The group adjourned at 3:58 pm (EST).

