
IR-4 TRAINING COMMITTEE NEWS

This is the third in a regular series of newsletter updates on IR-4 Training Committee (TC) activities. As always, the committee welcomes input from anyone in the IR-4 Project if at any time you feel there is something the committee should be addressing. The list of upcoming GLP training opportunities across the country continues to be available on the IR-4 website, where the list is updated as events are completed and when new opportunities are identified. As some of you have been doing, please keep sending to me information about any upcoming GLP training events that might be useful for IR-4, and I'll update the web site listing.

In the Winter 2002 issue of this newsletter, I provided a list of current TC members, and I'll take this opportunity to announce some upcoming changes. At the February 2003 Regional Laboratory Coordinator meeting in Washington, D.C., Jau Yoh from the IR-4 University of Florida lab volunteered for and was elected to serve a 2-year term as the chemistry representative on the TC upon the retirement of Dick Leavitt (MSU lab) before summer 2003 rolls around. The TC appreciates Dick's contributions to the committee's activities, and looks forward to Jau's involvement on the committee, starting when Dick officially moves on to greener pastures! On behalf of the TC, I'd also like to acknowledge the contributions of IR-4's National Outreach Specialist, Sandy Perry, who also is retiring from IR-4 and the TC, actually before Dick does. Her position on the TC will be filled with the new Communications Coordinator who will be hired at HQ in the near future. Thanks Dick and Sandy - we'll all miss you!!

The TC has met twice this year, and has moved a number of initiatives forward. These TC successes have been highlighted in meeting minutes and by e-mail communications, but it seems appropriate to make quick mention of a few items here.

- (1) **New FRD Training Recommendation from the FRD Committee** - Thanks to the insight of the FRD committee, this initiative (fully supported by the TC and RFC) was shepherded by the TC through approval by

the PMC on Feb. 25, and is now amended to the IR-4 Operational Handbook, and at the time of the next revision of the handbook, the recommendation will be incorporated into the text.

- (2) **IR-4 Advisories** - The TC developed the concept of IR-4 Training Advisories (from now on to be called "IR-4 Advisories"), somewhat analogous to the "GLP Advisory" system used at EPA to clarify questions raised regarding the GLP regulations. The TC agreed on the concept and its purpose (to communicate resolution of questions/issues raised by anyone in the Project, for which the resolution could be valuable for many within IR-4), and that this could be a valuable communication tool for IR-4. This initiative was also taken before the PMC on Feb. 25, and they unanimously approved this new issue resolution/communication tool and commended the TC for the initiative. Advisories approved through the review process established by the TC will be published in the Training Resources corner on the IR-4 website, and will be distributed throughout IR-4 by e-mail.
- (3) **TC Training Library** - At IR-4 HQ the TC is organizing a small "Training Library" to include a range of training materials, copies of exemplary Field Data Books (FDB) as identified by field data reviewers across IR-4, and other documents/information that may be useful for IR-4 training purposes. I will be organizing in the Training Resources corner of the IR-4 website a listing of all the information available in this HQ library. When anyone in IR-4 needs any of these training materials, they will simply need to call or send a simple request to me at HQ, and copies of the requested FDB or other material will be provided. The TC encourages all recommendations about FDB's that should be considered as good examples for our training library. These recommendations should be brought to my attention, and I will secure copies in the Training Library.

Article by Van Starner

IR-4 Comments on GLP Training in Reno, NV

On March 10-11, 2003, several researchers from the IR-4 project attended “commercial” training sessions conducted by Debi Garvin of the West Coast Quality Training Institute (WCQTI). Ben Fraelich, USDA/ARS Field Research Director in Tifton, GA, and a member of the IR-4 Training Committee, agreed to provide an assessment of that training experience. After speaking with the other IR-4 attendees in Reno, Ben compiled the review which follows. Comments received by e-mail from Brad Rauch at Cornell are also incorporated here.

I recently attended the GLP training seminars given by Debi Garvin of WCQTI. There were three sessions (I only attended the first two): “GLP Essentials for Technical Staff”, “SOPs 101,” and “QA Audits and Inspections.” Class size varied from 10 to 16, including participants from chemical companies, private industry, medical labs, university extension, and state and federal agencies. IR-4 colleagues at the training included Bill Klein, Janis Howard, and Jason Seward from Michigan State University, Trevor Nichols Research Complex; Michael Particka from Michigan State University; Brad Rauch from Cornell University; and Will Meeks and Michael Kemper from University of Idaho, Twin Falls R & E Center.

There were many strong points to this course, such as the content which was very well organized, thorough, and broad in scope. Ms. Garvin was very good at explaining the importance of good documentation, GLP compliance, strict adherence to SOPs and protocols and writing SOPs. GLP compliance issues were approached from the point of view of several disciplines including medical, toxicology, animal science, and residue studies. She also provided many example SOPs and equipment calibration and maintenance logs gath-

ered from various field and lab facilities. To me this was very helpful because each example gives researchers new ideas for improving their data recording. Finally, teaching was enhanced by workshop exercises and personal compliance violation examples that were dispersed throughout each session.

We all concurred that this training, and training outside IR-4 in general, is very helpful and is completely applicable to IR-4. Both internal and external training are useful, but it is always helpful to get an outside point of view to broaden our knowledge and understanding of issues through explanations of how GLPs are followed by other researchers and agencies. This course focused on the “why” questions and gave a more comprehensive outlook, whereas internal IR-4 training seems to focus on the “how to” issues specific to IR-4. Also IR-4 internal training usually involves several speakers with a discussion format whereas this training was more unified and focused, being taught by one person with a participation/question format. This training approached GLPs with a positive attitude and explained why we do what we do, not just because we have to.

I highly recommend that technical personnel supplement their IR-4 training with outside training such as with the WCQTI at least once every few years. Recently hired employees who receive this highly explanatory training would gain a good understanding of the whole picture, but would not have the practical working experience to pick up on all the specific information. On the other hand, a seasoned employee would find the broad scope and organization helpful, but would benefit most from all the detailed information.

Article by Ben Fraelich with input
from Brad Rauch and Van Starner