



## Coordinating Group on Alien Pest Species (CGAPS)

### Meeting Notes

*Hawai'i Department of Agriculture Plant Quarantine Conference Room  
1849 Auiki St., Honolulu, HI*

*9:00 am – 12:00 pm Tuesday, May 15, 2012*

*This CGAPS meeting focused on surveillance, detection, and response capacities using three recent incursion events, and discussion of existing capacity to detect and respond to similar pests.*

**9 – 9:10**      **Welcome, Introductions:** *Carol Okada, HDOA PQ & 2012 CGAPS Chair*  
This Carol's final meeting as Chair, now she moves to the Chair Emeritus seat on July 1 and Teya Penniman moves into the Chair seat. Mahalo, Carol!

**9:15 – 9:30**      **Bull Snake (AKA Gopher snake) on Nimitz:** *Keevin Minami, HDOA PQ*  
First report to 911, referred to HDOA. Landscape worker weed whacked the snake by accident (he did not see it). They did not know who to call. Due to the location, and the unlikely probability of it crossing roads from military housing, it could have arrived in containers at NEX which was nearby. Although they are also kept as pets, there is a nearby golf course and could have arrived in bags, etc. Not the first gopher snake found in containers, in 2005 one was found run over in a container yard, others found dead in hay bales. The incident went fairly well because it was referred quickly, it was mortally wounded. Worst case scenario for snakes: a snake is sighted but not contained, the snake is not reported or reported late, and response resulting in snake trapping would not have been productive.

### **9:30 – 9:45**      **Discussion**

Earl: The aversion to road-crossing was a study that was BTS specific, so I would not necessarily apply this study to this incident. Also, the traps we are using are fairly BTS-specific. We do not have trapping techniques developed for other types of snakes. The Kraus/Cravalho study and the recent snake interceptions are largely pet-trade species, so we need to look at our methods and try to address our needs.

Carol: If Domingo can get us the information on the recent sightings/interceptions, we can look at that. For today's meeting purpose, we need to know the response/communication needs of each agency, particularly if we are going to launch a rapid response.

Earl: We do have snake rapid response-trained people, we need to make sure these people are notified and mobilized. Also, with the description (venomous, etc), that needs to be known and discussed and responded to immediately.

Carol: I know that we had a snake response plan in the old days, but do we have one that is that current and usable?

Earl: I would take the BTS response protocol. Call James Stanford (BTS rapid response coordinator) to receive a copy and update it.

Carol: Since we have our inspectors back, I think we will have an ICS trainer to get us up to speed on snake response. If FWS can get us the current plan, we can work off that.

Earl: Before the ICS training, it would be good to have the ICS trainer contact James Stanford to discuss the snake response specifics. We also have the ability to pull people from Guam to help. We have BTS funding specifically, but we need to work on methods and response for

the most likely snake species, boas and pythons. We also need to work on tightening up the injurious species list on the federal end, adding the remaining high-risk pet trade species.

**9:45 – 10:00 Bat at HIA Interisland Terminal:** *Wil Leon-Guerro, HDOA PQ*

Airport Official (AO) called USFWS about a bat in lobby 2, the area outside interisland terminal. USFWS informed HDOA PQ about the bat. PQ contacted AO and TSA for information, but they didn't know any specifics other than that there is a bat flying around. PQ responded, found the bat secured under a bin. Securitas employee said a Japanese male was tossing the bat in the air. The Japanese man said he found the bat on a bench near the baggage claim, near the Hawaiian Airlines drive check in. Securitas took it to lobby 2 upstairs and contained it under a bin (it was already weak, it died overnight). HDOA AQ necropsied and ID'd it, had samples tested. 4/4 CDC emailed HDOH stating that a TSA Supervisor said there was a report of a colony of bats in Lobby 3 and 4 (turned out that this was a rumor passed along). HDOA ready to respond w/ additional staff, but PQ staff went to verify at around 11 a.m., none found, interviews revealed that none were seen by area staff. PQ chief notified all parties involved. Airport manager should have been notified, TSA should have been notified immediately. Possible introduction site could have come from shipping container at Post Office, or inside a plane.

**10:00 – 10:15 Discussion**

Carol: As we were finding out about the bat, the first assumption was incorrect, that it was a native bat, so many precautions were not taken (like for rabies). We did not know what the channel of communication should have been, I just had cell numbers for Ford (HDOT Airports). Normally,, when we find something contained in a container, or similar, it is straightforward. When it is in a public area, this needs to be discussed.

Earl: The bat colony survey should have been done differently, in the evening or night, but we need to make sure we have local taxonomic experts to consult with. There is a bat expert on the Big Island that has a bat sound detector (we may also have one in the office). Frank Bonacasso.

Ford: HDOT would want it PIO to PIO for notification of these issues.

Dorothy: Does USPS know who to call?

Wil: Yes, they have called us before.

Rachel: For the ISCs, if you could put us on the PIO notification list.

Rob: Our wildlife biologist would also like to be notified (Scott Fretz).

Earl: I was on the email route because of the whitenose syndrome.

Dorothy: We need to keep us a resource directory to make sure there is a prompt to contact different people.

Carol: Yes, but our first job will be to

Joshua A: The HISC is also interested in compiling a list of resources, I will help with this.

Joshua F: With Google Docs, we could have each agency/entity update, I will help.

**10:15 – 10:30 BREAK**

**10:30 – 10:45 Aedes Mosquito from HIA Trap:** *Peter Oshiro, HDOH Sanitation Branch*  
2009 Vector control lost 80% of the personnel, the remaining 5 people were placed under my supervision (2 people trap). Aegypti has not been found on Oahu in 50-60 years, although it is present in limited areas on the Big Island. They are very good vectors of dengue and yellow fever.

March 5, supervisor received a confirmation of 4 male and 4 female mosquitoes ID'd grown out from larvae collected from traps (only have 4 traps at HIA). Drs. Hasty and Yang concluded IDs. We do not have any active cases of people with dengue and yellow fever in HI (if bitten by aegypti, then transmission could start).

Mar 7, we have a positive dengue case stationed at Schofield. Had traveled in N Australia and reported multiple mosquito bites, had stayed in Chinatown in Hon.

Feb 25, case presented and diagnosed at TAMC ER with classic dengue fever, but not reported. Need at least 1500 mosquitoes to test for a disease like dengue, so could not test for disease.

Plan of action: When have a positive, trapping and eradication efforts in 200-meter vicinity of survey site. Standing water sources and containers are sought, identified, drained, larvicided. Found and treated an extensive breeding grounds at the garden area of HIA.

### **10:45 – 11:00 Discussion**

Rachel: There are always these pockets of dengue, is this the only carrier?

Peter: No, the *Aedes quinquefasciatus* can spread it, but it is a poor carrier. Aegypti prefers to live in our houses and yards and is also a very efficient vector. We do respond to all dengue cases by doing the 200 meter survey/eradication buffer. It is under their normal flight distance.

Cynthia: We have formed a mosquito working group to discuss response to the next thing. We have the people, but not the equipment, you have the equipment but not the people. Please let us know so that we can mobilize.

Peter: Sorry we did not notify anyone. We were scrambling to respond. We will see how we can work together. For the Pearl City area, we notified the military because it was near one of their facilities.

Rachel: The Invasive Species Committees, part of our mission is to provide the human resources to help agencies in these instances. We can help set, maintain traps when the need arises.

Peter: We used to survey with hundreds of traps at air and seaports and other areas island-wide. Now we have a handful of traps only at HIA.

Carol: We can probably help. We can't do 100 traps, but we can add capacity to some areas. Lance will help with Peter with prioritized locations at ports.

Neil: HDOH trapping (primarily light traps) used to be a good resource for us to monitor insects, it would be great to get some back out there.

Dorothy: As a student, I used to be the person to set up, pick up and deliver those traps. It wouldn't be hard to get this system going.

### **11:00 – 11:30 Next Steps: Carol Okada, HDOA PQ**

Carol: We will work together to plan locations for traps and divide duties. Would CBP notify us if you see mosquitoes?

Jim: If we find them in containers, we'll knock them down, let CDC know.

CDC: We let HDOH know. We have staff day, night, 24-7, a 10 minute turn-around for notification. PH: 586-4586. When someone comes in on a plane and they are sick, we don't call HDOH, we have a protocol and send an email notification.

Page: for mosquitoes, USGS has staff on the Big Island that could be resources. There was a study that found that mosquitoes are more likely when animals are present in the container.

Carol: So again, who wants to be notified?

Ford: if any media is going to be involved, our PIO needs to be involved. We will not comment (or will provide it to HDOA prior), we will refer it to you.

Dorothy: The big problem for mosquitoes, snakes, rodents, spiders, all those species that could harm people, I don't know of any agency that has regulatory authority and can act on it. This is a big regulatory gap.

Peter: from the state side, our regulatory authority only applies to species that can be vectors.

Dorothy: Since the state is not a federal border control agency, there is a big gap. Is there a federal agency that can work with

Carol: Prior to 2000 (fed preemption), we were notified and allowed to work even on international arriving cargo. Since then, notification has been infrequent.

Jim: We enforce other agencies' inspection and action needs. When stuff falls outside this (like spiders and pests that aren't on anyone's list), it falls under the trade secrets act. However, we tried to find any avenue for notifying our federal agencies when species of state concern are intercepted. When we see a snake, we have been trained to contain it and call USFWS in case it is a CITES species. We then expect USFWS to relay information to other agencies like HDOA. For mosquitoes, we notify CDC, but I don't think it was resolved who would go out and respond and treat.

Carol: I think that would be HDOA. Back when the Hokulea had the midges, it was us that had to respond.

Carol: We will be doing another ICS training (John Roberts) for our new inspectors this summer or fall this year. We will invite other agencies and ISCs to participate. We will send it out to the CGAPS list. We need to do an intro and advanced training. We also did a tabletop on RIFA, we may decide to repeat a tabletop training, but we need ICS first.

### **11:30 – 11:50 Agency/NGO Updates**

#### **Keren Gundersen, KISC**

Mongoose response: Roadkill in 1976, a lactating female. Over 160 credible reports, 44 in past 10 years (? Not sure I heard number of years correctly). One staff, temp full time, DLNR-funded. Responds to new sightings at known hotspots, conducts interviews, deploys/monitors traps. Traps, tracking tunnels, trail camera w/bait station. Have used a mongoose dog, but only tried in 2005.

Earl: Use some caution when layering data from so far back. I would look at recent data and focus in those areas, not dilute efforts with searching old locations. Density is the number of animals currently in an area. We are looking for funding, but we need to make sure we present an accurate current picture. We need to also ask what is being (or can be) done at ports to keep animals out of the system or to stop new arrivals. Is there functional biosecurity interisland? Also, could people have purposefully brought mongoose?

Ford: Take a look at your dates, there is a tremendous amount of work done to re-locate the nene in that area. HDOT is paying a lot of money to have the birds moved, even though it is not on HDOT property.

Earl: I think we should reconvene and review recent tool and lure developments to phase in.

#### **Sonia Gor, DLNR DAR**

Ballast and hull fouling coordination. Of all the aquatic invasives in HI, the majority have arrived via hull fouling. We have ballast procedures and rules, but not exist yet for hull fouling. CA, Australia and NZ are leading the way, but we hope to quickly follow. I've started looking at the issue here to start discussions. I've got a lot of data on types of vessels, their movements and

their risk levels for an analysis. Over the course of the next 6 months we should start to re-engage the ANS task force.

### **Legislative Updates**

Mark Fox, TNC

- DLNR Watershed protection funding bills. In the end, the legislature provided 2.5 million in bond funding for CIP projects to support this work. This is the first time the legislature has provided this type of funding for conservation fencing work. The other 2.5 million will come from S funds already in DLNR. The department must now look at the S funds that might be used for this (without impacting critical funding already used for conservation/invasive species work).

Carol Okada, HDOA PQ

- We received funding for 29 G-funded inspectors (moved from cargo fee to g funds), 9 of which will go to Kahului to support staff formerly federally funded via earmark.
- 1941 biosecurity facilities also died, but 2 million was added to our budget bill to start planning facilities at highest priority ports.
- 1943 G funds to match federal funds to reinstate the detector dog program. This should help with the influx of prohibited animals. They will be able to do BTS and other restricted/prohibited animals.
- 1942 electronic importer manifest development funded. Primarily used by produce importers.

Joshua Atwood, HISC

- Although not yet decided, the NARF is a likely source for that remaining 2.5 in s-funds. Last conveyance tax report indicates about 9.5 mil (previous years saw 11 mil). There is a branch manager meeting on Monday to discuss priority projects and these issues.
- Sen Kahele's bill to prevent the movement of feral animals interisland. The bill was changed in the process to apply only feral axis deer, and changed the definition of feral to mean that once a deer is captured, it is no longer feral. The good news is that DLNR is moving forward with rulemaking to make it illegal to move or release these species.
- The other bill that passed was an amendment to the emergency rules, to add the ability to adopt emergency rules for threats to the environment and natural resources (currently only lists poultry, livestock, human health and morals).

Earl: from USFWS funding, I will need to know if the HISC funding for existing priorities (not including watershed initiative work) will remain the same or be reduced, because federal match might also be affected.

### **11:50 – 12:00 New Business & Announcements**

**Rachel Neville, OISC:** I will be leaving OISC. Being the operations manager of OISC is the most rewarding job I've ever had. I think it is fantastic that we all can come together to try to solve our problems. Keith has taken a job in DC., but I will have time to recruit and train someone by the time we move (Oct?).

- Hawai'i Conservation Conference, July 31-August 2, 2012, Hawai'i Convention Center
- Hawai'i Agriculture Conference, September 20-September 21, 2012, Hawai'i Convention Center

**Next meeting: TBA**