

**AAPSE Executive Committee  
Conference Call Minutes  
November 1, 2007  
9:30 a.m.**

**In attendance:** Joanne Kick-Raack, Ples Spradley, Carol Ramsay, Dan Wixted, Jennifer Weber and Kevin Keaney.

President Ples Spradley called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m.

Ples began by introducing the AAPSE's new executive committee members to Kevin Keaney and mentioned that we were happy to work with EPA on any issues, concerns, programs, etc.

After the introduction, the committee moved into the first topic for discussion, which was the PRIA funding. Ples told Kevin that talking about the PRIA funding was the main focus of the call. Ples said that the EC was interested in gathering more information and clarification about the process for distribution of the funds. The EC also wanted to inquire about how AAPSE could assist or work directly with EPA on this issue.

Kevin began by explaining that while PRIA funding has passed, it had yet to be placed in the EPA budget, and therefore the EPA budget committee is still discussing the distribution process. Kevin did provide the EC with the following information about three categories of funding. They are as follows:

- 1.) Worker Safety funds = \$1 million a year for 5 years, which is \$500,000 more than what has been provided in the past. These contribute to Agricultural WPS effectiveness
- 2.) Pesticide Safety Education Program funds = \$500,000 a year for 5 years
- 3.) Partnership Grants = \$750,000 for the first year; \$500,000 for years 2-5

Jennifer asked Kevin if he would explain the difference between "general worker safety" and "safety education" funds as the titles of each seem similar. Kevin said that the general worker safety funds could focus on methods or projects that enhance worker safety. Past funding examples included incident monitoring that would have a positive impact on worker health and safety but not necessarily be considered an "educational" tool. This then separates it from the worker education funds, which do focus on a more direct educational component. Kevin provided study materials and exam development as examples, and added that a regional Pesticide Safety Education Center (PSEC) might be another option to consider.

While Kevin was providing examples, he emphasized "enhancing" funding for existing projects, such as the provision of additional funding for the "Rights-of-Way" study materials in Purdue University, or more data through additional National Agricultural Workers Surveys (NAWS).

During Kevin's explanation of the distribution of PRIA funds, he mentioned partnerships. Joanne asked him to elaborate on this more and Kevin said that it could be the Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Partnerships or Ag Initiative, as examples.

Ples asked Kevin about the original PRIA wording as this would create a better understanding of not only how the funds could be used, but also the outcomes that the funding source would expect. Kevin responded to Ples's question by stating that EPA will be writing the RFP and that the exact language will not speak to the outcome.

Carol asked Kevin if AAPSE members or the board could assist in guiding EPA on the wording, mentioning that \$500,000 will need to be spent within the first year, which could create additional challenges for both EPA and funding recipients.

Joanne said that the original intent of the funding was to support PSEP, not to create funds for which each state or region would have to compete. Joanne said that while the provision of additional funding is certainly appreciated, the concept that Pesticide Safety Education Programs (PSEP) may have to compete against each other or worse yet, against other groups not historically tied to PSEP was a big concern.

Kevin responded that he remembers that sentiment and the discussions surrounding the initial idea of competitive funding.

Ples added that another hurdle would be the overhead costs that are charged at the universities. In many cases, overhead costs exceed 33% of the funds, which greatly diminishes the amount received to fund the actual project. Ples mentioned that this is a tremendous loss to not only PSEP, but EPA as it limits what they can achieve through their funding. Ples said that the PRIA funding is critical and that the biggest goodwill on EPA's part would be to place those additional PRIA funds into the existing formula funding source that is currently sent to the state PSEPs. While Kevin did not latch onto this idea during the conference call, he did agree that Ples's suggestion would be an option that could result in a larger percentage of the funds reaching the recipient than would those in a "grant" recipient agreement provided through the university system.

While EPA may be able to state overhead cost limits within the RFP itself, Carol stated that some universities may decide that a PSEP would not be allowed to apply for such a grant as it wouldn't meet the university's minimum overhead requirements, thereby resulting once again in limiting funds for a successful and active pesticide safety education program.

Joanne mentioned that two years ago she had discussed these very concerns with Jim Jones. Joanne said that her conversations with Jim focused on industry's perception that AAPSE members and PSEP were expecting EPA to fully fund their programs rather than looking to industry to offer additional support, partnerships, and funding opportunities. She stated that somehow, this new plan is going against those original conversations. In conversations with industry they expressed their concerns to support the existing PSE

program. Industry relies on trained applicators to ensure label compliance and stewardship activities; this is underpinned by education.

Kevin responded that he would like a note from AAPSE that voices our concerns and ideas for this funding. He said that he will be meeting with the Certification and Training Assessment Group (CTAG) on Tuesday, November 6<sup>th</sup> and will be addressing their concerns with this topic as well. He requested that we draft a letter to him as soon as possible.

Both Kevin and Carol moved into the topic of accountability. Carol mentioned that AAPSE would need to have a full board meeting soon to look at accountability and how to effectively report the use and implementation of funds back to PRIA. Kevin echoed her concerns and said that EPA also has concerns about accountability as they distribute funds out to other entities they like to be fully accountable for those funds, which can be a burden on EPA as well.

Dan and Ples expanded on this theme and said that it would be nice to know the initial intent of the funding and to what recipients would be accountable. Ples said that PSEP has a new reporting system, which would hopefully assist in more transparency of how USDA funds are used. Should PRIA funds be placed into the existing formula funding system, this may help states to demonstrate how they used the PRIA funds.

Kevin reemphasized that at this point the language in PRIA is very general and doesn't contain specific outcomes.

PRIA2 is a five year commitment. AAPSE needs to be ready in years 3 and 4 to make a pitch to industry on how the funds were utilized and why they are still critical in a possible PRIA3. AAPSE would certainly like to show how PSEP successfully used the funds for their programs. Joanne agreed and said that industry's whole stewardship program focuses on education and that they would like to see how their dollars are spent in this area. Without stewardship they can not continue to register their products. It would therefore be imperative for funding recipients to be transparent and report how funds were used.

Unfortunately, Kevin had another commitment at 10:00 and therefore had to leave the call. However, he was interested in continuing the discussions with AAPSE members and requested that the AAPSE EC and Board send Kevin their concerns and additional suggestions about the process and distribution of PRIA funds in writing as quickly as possible. Kevin said that he would be happy to take the letter to Bill Diamond. He said that the EPA budget committee also wanted to get the \$ 1.5 million out of PRIA

The AAPSE Executive Committee agreed to call for an urgent conference call with the AAPSE Board and to draft a letter expressing our concerns as soon as possible so that we can have a strong voice on this matter.