

BSOH-BBP Joint study day on biological agents: Biological risk: how to assess, contain and protect oneself.

On September 29, 2017, BBP and BSOH organized a workshop on biological agents. It was the first time that Occupational Hygienists and Biosafety Professionals interacted at such large scale, and we are proud to say the day was a true success!

Pictures and presentations from the day can be found at the BSOH website, in the Members section, [via this link](#). Please note that you will need to be logged in to have access to the presentations.

For those that were not able to attend, we would like to share some conclusions.

- The discipline of Occupational Hygiene related to biological agents is often somewhere in between Prevention (aka Health and Safety) and Biosafety
- In absence of Occupational Hygiene expertise available within a company or an institution, the topic is often addressed by the Prevention Advisor, the Biosafety Professional and/or the Occupational Doctor.
- Often, the same type of information is needed for both Biosafety and Occupational Hygiene purposes e.g.
 - Biological characteristics of the biological agents (symptoms, source and sink, infectivity, exposure routes, survival time and strategies, ...)
 - Detailed descriptions of planned activity and location
- There are also marked differences between both disciplines:

Topic	Occupational Hygiene	Biosafety (and biosecurity)
Materials in scope	Human pathogens and zoonoses	All types of bio-materials: human, animal and plant pathogens, proteins, nucleic acids, extracts...
Activities in scope	Non-deliberate exposure (+ deliberate use)	Deliberate use (+ non-deliberate exposure) Environmental effects
Sectors	Very broad, including funeral services, abattoirs, prisons, waste companies, hospitals etc.	Laboratories, animal facilities, greenhouses, hospitals

- Nice demonstrations were given on selection of personal protective equipment such as gloves, respiratory protection, and protective clothing.

BBP and BSOH could also identify topics for future and strengthened collaborations:

- Risk assessment methodologies – interested members of BSOH are invited to take part in the Task Force Risk Assessment from BBP – contact: [Patrick Rudelsheim](#)
- Classification of Biological Agents, taking into account the different lists we are confronted with, e.g. annex III of dir. 2000/54, federal and regional classification lists.

Tom Geens and Delphine Beeckman, presidents of BSOH and BBP.