

Appendix 12
Draft Release Letter for Hart Senate Office Building from Review Working Group

APPENDIX 12
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
RELEASE RECOMMENDATION
Tuesday January 15, 2002

Charge to the Group

At the request of the Capitol Police Board (CPB), the Review Working Group (RWG) was formed from representatives of the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventative Medicine (CHPPM), and contractors supporting the U.S. Capitol Hill Anthrax Incident to develop recommendations to the Incident Commander (IC), Dr. Douglas Stutz, for release of the remediated areas within the Hart Senate Office Building (HSOB) to the Architect of the Capitol (AOC). The RWG was tasked to review building and room characterization, sampling methods, remediation strategies, and analytical results.

EPA designated On-Scene Coordinators for HSOB briefed the RWG on the rationale, strategies, procedures, and results of characterization sampling, extent-of-contamination sampling, remediation activities, and post-remediation verification sampling for the HSOB. The RWG agreed, each within their own areas of expertise, that the overall approach was appropriate for the HSOB.

Review Process for HSOB Release

Release of the HSOB is based on a review process with two major milestones:

- A) Room/area clearance; and
- B) Heating ventilating and air conditioning [REDACTED] (HVAC [REDACTED] system clearance.

The sequential steps required for each of these milestones are described below.

A. Room and Area Clearance:

- 1) Each *B. anthracis* contaminated area and room must test negative for the presence of *B. anthracis*, based on post-remediation surface sampling;
- 2) Room contamination, involving factors other than secondary mail contamination alone, must test negative for the presence of *B. anthracis* by additional air sampling (Since all analytical results for these air samples were negative for *B. anthracis* additional air sampling was not recommended in other rooms); and,
- 3) A detailed review of the data must be completed for each room and area.

The RWG required that several specific areas undergo additional surface sampling or air sampling prior to restarting the HVAC [REDACTED]. This was accomplished.

B. HVAC Clearance

- 1) All rooms and areas must first be cleared by the previous steps prior to HVAC [REDACTED] startup;
- 2) The remediation of HVAC [REDACTED] serving the southeast stack must demonstrate sufficient kill on spore strip tests to confirm effectiveness of fumigation;

- 3) Basic engineering isolation must be established prior to HVAC [REDACTED] start-up; and
- 4) The HVAC [REDACTED] must have negative analytical results from startup air and surface (HVAC [REDACTED] filters) sampling.

Release Process Details

Room and Area Clearance criteria were met on Thursday, January 10, 2002 as all surface and air samples tested negative for the presence of *B. anthracis*. HVAC [REDACTED] was re-started in consultation with the AOC. Concurrent with the startup, air samples were collected from all suites, a representative sample of rooms and common areas served by HVAC [REDACTED], and surface samples from HVAC [REDACTED] filters.

The RWG determined that the following criteria for release of the HSOB were met:

- All pending surface and air sampling analytical results tested negative for the presence of *B. anthracis*;
- Removal of furniture, carpet, and other items in the rooms [REDACTED] was accomplished;
- Analysis report of the spore strip data for HVAC [REDACTED] collected during the fumigation remediation confirmed a minimum 10^6 spore kill in all areas previously tested positive for the presence of *B. anthracis* and cleared the HVAC system for re-start;
- HVAC [REDACTED] repairs were completed; and
- Analytical results of air and surface sampling conducted during the restart of HVAC [REDACTED] tested negative for the presence of *B. anthracis*.

The above activities were completed on schedule and all analytical results were negative for the presence of *B. anthracis*. Final analytical results from HVAC [REDACTED] startup were negative and were reviewed on Saturday January 12, 2002.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Given that the minimum limit for detecting *B. anthracis* in environmental samples has yet to be firmly established, the RWG worked from the premise that surfaces, air spaces and areas are acceptably clean when all sample results are negative for the presence of *B. anthracis* using a combination of rigorous environmental sampling and laboratory analyses. This provides an objective basis for the release of the HSOB. Based upon the review of the data as outlined above, as well as the negative results of the verification air and surface samples for *B. anthracis*, the RWG concludes that the HSOB has been successfully remediated for the *B. anthracis* contamination. Therefore, the RWG recommends to CDC, EPA, and the IC that the HSOB be released to the AOC.

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