

# NTSP Pandemic Committee Pandemic Planning Update

September 20, 2007

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# NTSP Pandemic Committee

- Formed in 2006 / Meets quarterly
- Purpose
  - To monitor bird flu impacts worldwide
  - To share pandemic planning strategies and efforts within the telecommunications industry from the health and safety perspective
  - To be positioned to create industry best practices
- Companies Represented

Cincinnati Bell – Art Farmer

Sprint Nextel - Chuck Slagle

Qwest – Chris McCune

Verizon – Mary Beam

Verizon Wireless – Denny Bloom

T-Mobile – Doug Dickinson

Windstream Communications – Jay Bassett

Embarq – Grif Bond

Alcatel-Lucent – Laslo Varadi

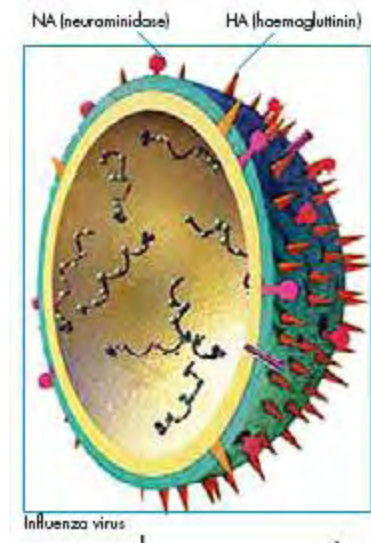
AT&T - Tony Sipich

- Marie Robinson

- Marshall Berry

# Facts about Influenza

- Infectious disease caused by a virus that attacks the upper respiratory tract
- Most people recover within one to two weeks
- Rapidly spreads around the world each year in seasonable epidemics
- Transmitted through the air by droplets and small particulates by coughing and sneezing
- Often times can be prevented through vaccinations



# Facts about Influenza Pandemics

- Worldwide event that occurs when a new flu virus emerges and starts spreading as easily as normal flu
- Pandemics are rare, but recurrent events
- Unpredictable, but can be expected to occur three to four times each century



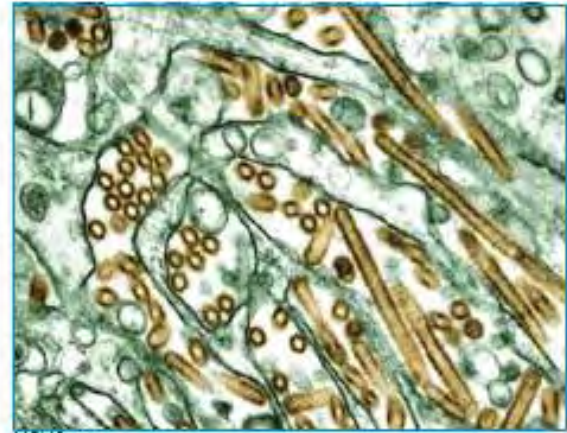
Iowa State gymnasium, converted into hospital, 1918 flu epidemic

# Facts about Influenza Pandemics

- Three times in the last century, the influenza A virus has caused global pandemics.
  - Spanish Flu in 1918
  - Asian Flu in 1957
  - Hong Kong Flu in 1968
- In 1976, a perceived pandemic threat, Swine Flu, resulted in 13 actual illnesses from the flu. No actual pandemic ever occurred.
- Another pandemic is inevitable, but no one knows when or what type, or how severe.

## Facts about Avian Flu

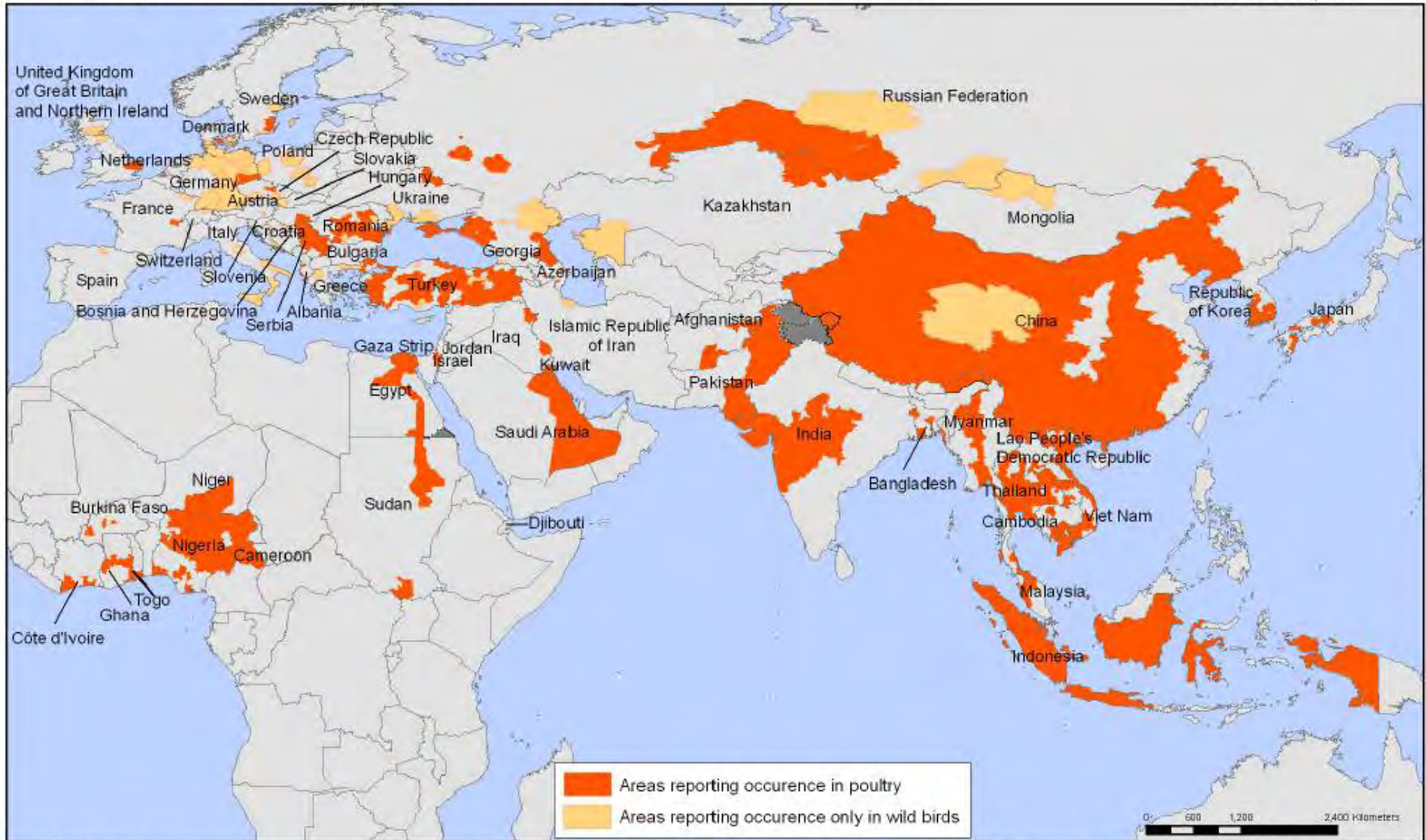
- Avian flu is an infectious disease of birds.
- First discovered in Italy over 100 years ago.
- Does not normally infect other species other than birds and pigs.
- Caused the deaths of many birds and bird species.



H5N1 virus

Areas reporting confirmed occurrence of H5N1 avian influenza in poultry and wild birds since 2003

Status as of 6 August 2007  
Latest available update



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The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Data Source: World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and national governments

Map Production: Public Health Mapping and GIS

Communicable Diseases (CDS) World Health Organization



# Facts about Avian Flu

- Reason for current concern.
  - Has the ability to acquire characteristics to infect other species (like man)
  - Highly pathogenic
  - Never before have so many birds been infected, so seriously and so quickly
- Since 2003, **328** human cases of Bird Flu have occurred, with **200** deaths.
- Vaccines are being developed and progress is being made.

## Current WHO Phase of Pandemic Alert

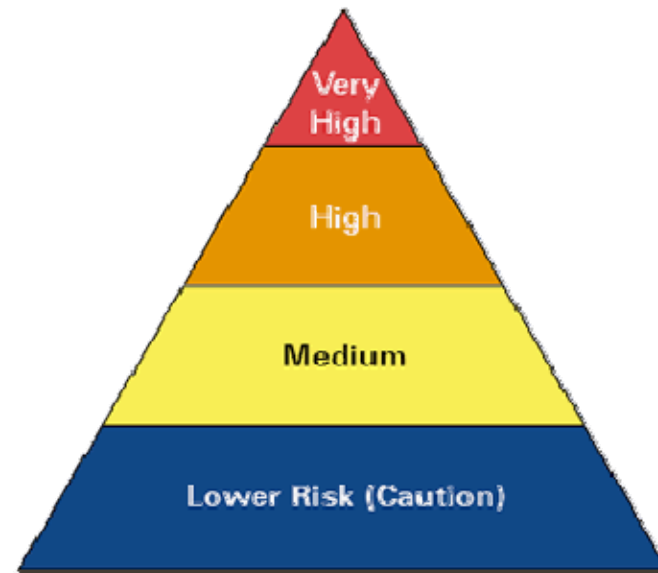
Inter-pandemic phase New virus in animals, no human cases	Low risk of human cases	1
	Higher risk of human cases	2
Pandemic alert New virus causes human cases	No or very limited human-to-human transmission	3
	Evidence of increased human-to-human transmission	4
	Evidence of significant human-to-human transmission	5
Pandemic	Efficient and sustained human-to-human transmission	6

- WHO uses a series of six phases of pandemic alert.
- Each phase of alert coincides with a series of recommended activities to be undertaken by WHO, the international community, governments, and industry.
- The world is presently in phase 3.

# Pandemic Activities: OSHA Guidance

- OSHA issued “Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for an Influenza Pandemic” OSHA 3327-02N 2007. Among topics:
  - How a Severe Pandemic Influenza Could Affect Workplaces.
  - Classifying Employee Exposure to Pandemic Influenza at Work.
  - How to Maintain Operations During a Pandemic.
  - How Organizations Can Protect Their Employees.
  - Steps Every Employer Can Take to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Pandemic Influenza in Their Workplace.

Occupational Risk Pyramid for Pandemic Influenza



Provides guidance for each workplace classification  
“What to Do to Protect Employees”

# OSHA Guidance – Occupational Risk Categories

## Very High Exposure Risk:

- Healthcare employees performing aerosol-generating procedures on known or suspected pandemic patients.
- Healthcare or laboratory personnel collecting or handling specimens from known or suspected pandemic patients.

## High Exposure Risk:

- Healthcare delivery and support staff exposed to known or suspected pandemic patients, or those performing autopsies.
- Medical transport of known or suspected pandemic patients in enclosed vehicles.

## Medium Exposure Risk:

- Employees with high-frequency contact with the general population.

## Lower Exposure Risk (Caution):

- Employees who have minimal occupational contact with the general public and other coworkers.

# Pandemic Activities: Vaccines

## Vaccine – Feb, 2007

- Sixteen manufacturers from 10 countries are developing prototype pandemic influenza vaccines against H5N1 avian influenza virus.
- Newly developed avian influenza vaccines can bring about a potentially protective immune response against strains of H5N1 virus found in a variety of geographical locations.
- WHO stresses that the world still lacks the manufacturing capacity to meet potential global pandemic influenza vaccine demand.
- WHO launched the Global pandemic influenza action plan (GAP) to increase vaccine supply.



# Business Planning for a Pandemic (General)

- Plan for pandemic business continuity like you would for any potential disaster.
- Know how a pandemic will affect your business (workforce, financials, travel, suppliers, quarantines, etc.)
- Identify alternatives for workforce, like methods for less face to face encounters

# Business Planning for a Pandemic (General – cont'd)

- Verify policies for sick leave, flexible worksites, hygiene at work, return to work, etc.
- Identify and evaluate medical services and vaccinations available.
- Communicate basic flu symptoms, personal hygiene methods and basic contingency planning to employees
- Finally - make a plan, communicate and then drill!

# Simple Guidance to Avoid Influenza

- Use proper hygiene practices (washing hands, etc)
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and those that show symptoms of respiratory illness (e.g., coughing, sneezing)
- Avoid crowds
- Know when you are at risk and take steps to protect yourself



# Status of Pandemic Planning in Telecommunications

- 8 Companies
- Designated as Company #1 through #8
- Information provided by representatives on NTSP Pandemic Committee, as of August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007

# Planning

Company #1	Company #2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High level pandemic plan with roles and responsibilities sent out to Company.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Efforts are being driven by customer requests for the Company's pandemic plan. A pandemic coordinator has been named.</li><li>• Started corporate planning, identifying critical functions with 40% absence rate.</li><li>• Putting together general guidelines for the Company, and asked each department to apply these general guidelines to their operations.</li><li>• Using the recently released OSHA workplace influenza pandemic planning document as a guide.</li><li>• Discussing quantities of hand sanitizers and surface sanitizers needed, and criteria when to send ill employees home.</li><li>• VP of HR aware of what Company needs to complete our planning, but things are presently on hold.</li></ul>

# Planning

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## Company #3

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- A cross-functional planning team has been established that includes Human Resources, Real Estate, EHS, IT, PR, and Health Services.
- Plans have been developed to mitigate the risks of a pandemic event. Plans also cover how to handle competing customer demands in the case of an event.
- Essential employees were identified who would lead the effort in a pandemic event, and critical functions have been identified and prioritized through the business continuity planning effort.
- A pandemic readiness questionnaire was developed to measure our suppliers' levels of preparedness for a pandemic event. Questionnaire was distributed to identified critical suppliers, and the majority of these have been completed and returned as requested.
- Currently identifying and addressing essential materials, suppliers, logistics, and shifts in customer demand that would be required should a pandemic event occur.
- Seasonal flu shots are planned for employees at major locations.

# Planning

Company #4	Company #5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BC Team is taking the lead.</li><li>• Enterprise response and guidance plan will be out for review by the end of July '07.</li><li>• Business units are working on business unit specific plans to be rolled into the enterprise level plan.</li><li>• Focus for business units is on identifying key roles and processes and determining tolerances for reduced workforce. From this survey, units will look at options for cross training and other support for key processes.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BC Team in the lead. EHS on the Team. A pandemic budget has been provided.</li></ul>

# Planning

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## Company #6

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- Company has completed a Pandemic Preparedness Assessment based on the premise of "What company needs should be considered to ensure continuing operations if there is an employee illness rate of 25%-50%."
- Initiative concentrated on identification of critical employees/groups, Travel Considerations, HR/employee Relations Issues, Security, Identification of Alternative Vendors in case of supply chain disruption, Shortage Issues (fuel, transportation, electricity & Currency) also Enhancement of existing business continuity plans and IT functionality to allow off-site work capability.
- Another factor identified was to enhance call routing capability between call centers.

# Planning

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## Company #7

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- Classified employees by work functions (inside; outside; retail stores – high, medium and low risk).
- Used the OSHA guidance document to categorize risk, risk / hazard was then equated to needed PPE.
- Identified PPE for each classification, numbers of employees impacted, and the costs associated for a couple of scenarios.
- Numbers were provided to Supply Chain for acquisition and distribution planning.
- Team's PPE recommendations have been accepted by management
- Supply Chain group has entered into a tentative agreement with our supplies' vendor to stock and supply identified PPE within 2 days of request anywhere in the U.S.
- Identified PPE for our International locations which will be purchased and shipped directly to those facilities for storage.
- Awaiting approval of Business Case by senior leadership team.
- Have sent questionnaires to vendors to determine their readiness.

# Planning

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## Company #8

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- The Business Continuity (BC) group is heading planning efforts for this company. Have an overall pandemic plan completed. The committee includes HR, Business Continuity, EHS, Real Estate, Law, and other business units participating in ongoing meetings.
- HR policies, EHS hygiene guidance, building cleaning protocols, travel & meeting guidelines all have been developed.
- A Pandemic Impact Analysis (PIA) went out to the first 50 Directors, with a deadline of 7/1/07. Remaining Directors (750) will be staggered.
- Assuming 40% absenteeism, each Director group will determine their top 5 priorities. BC group is managing the overall process. With the PIA and the Corporate Plan template, will provide the Business Unit a tool for them to tailor the plan to their organization.
- Business Unit pandemic plans will be integrated into the overall Corporate plan.
- Have sent questionnaires to vendors to determine their readiness.
- Will provide seminars for cleaning vendors to ensure they know what protocols to follow.

# Personal Protection Equipment

Company #1	Company #3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stockpiled 60,000 N95 masks and wipes. Also, 30,000 – 40,000 bottles of hand washing supplies. Integrating into stock.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Limited supply of Tamiflu was purchased in 2006 for critical personnel identified by Human Resources.</li><li>• Some N95 respirators have been purchased.</li><li>• Currently reviewing option of purchasing Flu Prevention Kits for field deployment personnel (i.e., customer-facing).</li></ul>

# Personal Protection Equipment, continued

Company #4	Company #5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After evaluating the effectiveness of masks it was decided not to stockpile at this time.</li> <li>• Focus on education of basic preventive measures (hand-washing, etc.) as outlined in CDC and WHO guidelines.</li> <li>• Sanitizing wipes are already in stock. May increase the numbers.</li> <li>• Based on recommendations from health care partners it was determined that stockpiling Tamiflu was not the best course of action at this time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First purchase of pandemic supplies, based on 40% employee occupation.</li> <li>• Trials using products conducted to determine types and numbers dispensed, and how long supplies last.</li> <li>• Trials indicated not much impact wearing a mask and talking to customers.</li> <li>• Will provide N95s and gloves (for protection when touching money and phones) in all call centers and retail stores, and HR handle any pushback.</li> <li>• A safety "short" will be created on the intranet, CD, printed, etc... to instruct employees on how to don the masks and put on gloves.</li> <li>• Identified certain areas to house supplies (temperature controlled with lock and key).</li> <li>• All departments are aware of what doing in the U.S., to seek out information and where to store PPE/equipment.</li> <li>• Will keep one week of supplies on hand in case lose transport ability.</li> <li>• Everyone is responsible for refills.</li> </ul>

# Personal Protection Equipment, continued

Company #6	Company #7	Company #8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of sanitizing wipes are available.</li> <li>• Procurement group to develop pandemic protection kit, including wipes, gels, N95s with valves, etc...</li> <li>• Kits cost \$87.65/kit. Not many orders because of timing/expiration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low risk - small quantity of surgical and N95 masks, hand sanitizer, surface wipes, and tissue paper.</li> <li>• Median risk - surgical masks, disposable gloves, tissue paper, antibacterial wipes and solution.</li> <li>• High risk exposure – monthly kits with hand and surface sanitizers, N95 masks, gloves, coveralls boot covers, tissue.</li> <li>• Retail employees - Touch less antibacterial solution dispensers, tissue paper, surface wipes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have spent a significant sum of money on masks, hygiene supplies and has a vendor on standby for distribution of kits of supplies.</li> <li>• Will deploy masks, thermometers, hand sanitizers and hard surface wipes.</li> <li>• Performed beta test in a Supply Chain Management department to validate the mask and sanitizing supply assumptions. No training was provided; the supervisor briefly covered the procedures at a high level. Supervisor figured out what to do with little guidance. A guidance document was prepared for PPE and hygiene supplies.</li> </ul>

# Outreach / Communications

Company #1	Company #8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• State Department of Public Health using Company facilities as “push” locations to vaccinate employees and families</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Created a pandemic website for the Corporation that employees can view now. The web site includes, a pandemic brochure, and links to World Health Organization and U.S. government pandemic websites. Educational information will placed on the web as appropriate.</li><li>• Two pandemic articles have been published to the employee body on the company internet to alert employees and inform them that the company has a committee working on the issue.</li><li>• BC group is working with an external vendor to develop a high level on-line CBT awareness course. This course, offered through the training group and will be mandatory for all employees.</li></ul>

# NTSP Pandemic Committee

Committee path going forward

- Monitor bird flu outbreaks
- Share planning developments
- Position to potentially create industry best practices

# NTSP Pandemic Committee

## Keeping Tabs on Pandemics

- United States Government <http://www.pandemicflu.gov/>
- World Health Organization  
[http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/en/](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/en/)
- Centers for Disease Control  
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic/>

# NTSP Pandemic Committee

Questions?

# NTSP Pandemic Committee



**Thanks!!!**