1. Provide a short description of your programs that are addressing Healthy Border 2010 objectives.

During the first quarter of the 2004-05 fiscal year, the California Outreach Office (COO) of the USMBHC focused on establishing an application process for reviewing COO office subcontract funding requests for Healthy Borders 2010 projects. The COO hired the services of Sonia Contreras, President, C&G Consulting Services. The California Delegation participated in four conference call meetings on 9/1/04, 10/8/04, 11/12/04, and on 12/2/04. During these conference calls, the Delegation reviewed the work of Ms. Contreras, and worked on improving the COO office procedures for distributing Healthy Border 2010 funds, and for assessing and evaluating funded projects. As a result of this work, the COO office has produced an application form for FY 04-05 Healthy Borders funding to be provided to subcontract agencies. A copy of this application form is provided in the Appendix (narrative and budget forms). Applications are due to be submitted to the COO by February 18, 2005. The applications will be reviewed by a small panel including Delegation members, and funding decisions will be announced by March 11, 2005. Funding will be provided for a one-year period for each project.

The COO 04-05 workplan focuses most attention on these Healthy Borders objectives:

1. Access to Health Care - ensure access to primary care or basic health care services
2. Immunizations - expand immunization coverage for young children
3. Infectious Diseases - reduce the incidence of tuberculosis
4. Injury Prevention - reduce mortality from motor vehicle crashes as well as childhood mortality rates.
5. Respiratory Diseases: reduce the rate of hospitalization for asthma.

The California Delegation decided to focus upon these objectives during the current fiscal year in order to provide continuity of services for projects previously funded by the COO. Elizabeth Santillanez, Director, COO, held meetings with applicant agency representatives in order to inform them about the opportunity to apply for project funding support from the COO, and distributed application forms to the agencies.

2. What progress, that is quantifiable, have your programs made in reaching Healthy Border 2010 Objectives?

- Access to Health Care: During October 11-17, the COO worked with local agency partners including the California Mexico Health Initiative, the California Office of Binational Border Health, the County of San Diego, the County of Imperial, the San
Diego Border HETC, the San Diego HETC, and with partner federal agencies including HRSA, PAHO and the CDC to organize **Border Binational Health Week** events in the San Diego/Baja California and Imperial County/Mexicali regions.

An initial assessment of the 2004 Border Binational Health Week has been conducted, and a wrap-up meeting was held in the USMBHC Central Office in El Paso on November 16th. Elizabeth Santillanez, Director, COO, and Liliana Osorio of the California-Mexico Health Initiative attended the meeting. At the meeting, it was reported that in the California/Baja California Border Region (including San Diego and Imperial Counties), 41 events took place, with 160 agencies and 6,188 individuals participating. More detailed information about all BBHW activities is available on the USMBHC website. On a border-wide basis, approximately 61,510 individuals participated in BBHW events. Work has commenced for the planning of the 2005 BBHW, and the first planning meeting is scheduled to take place in El Paso on January 12th.

During the BBHW, people had opportunities to attend health fairs to receive basic health services including diabetes and blood pressure screenings. Furthermore they were provided with information about healthcare services provided by community clinics, hospitals, NGO’s and governmental agencies. Training sessions were also held for promotoras, including a training program on “TB and Immunizations at the Border Region”, which commemorated the **Immunization Week of the Americas**.

In San Diego, a “Oaxacan Community Workshop” was organized to provide Oaxacan migrants with an opportunity to talk about their healthcare needs, including their physical and mental well-being needs and challenges. Additionally, several community health clinics including Vista Community Clinic, the Logan Heights Family Health Center, the Lla Maestra Family Clinic, the Logan Heights Family Health Center, and the San Ysidro Health Center set-up BBHW health booths or organized health fairs at their clinics for their patients and communities. Two BBHW closing events were held in San Marcos and San Ysidro, drawing the participating of hundreds of individuals.

In Imperial Valley, BBHW events included a press conference and inauguration, a children’s fair, healthcare workshops, a Women’s Health Fair, and a Farmworker Health Fair held at 2:30 a.m. for predominantly male migrant farmworkers. Some of these events provided direct health care services including HIV tests and mammograms.

- **Ventanillas de Salud**: The COO has been a principal supporter of the establishment of the Ventanillas de Salud (VDS) program since its inception. The VDS is an information booth that is set-up in the Mexican Consulate in San Diego (a booth is also established in the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles), to provide information about healthcare services for individuals who visit the Consulate. The VDS helps to improve access to care by responding to questions about healthcare needs, and by providing individuals with information about how to obtain access to healthcare. The VDS refers eligible individuals to agencies that provide assistance with applications

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for healthcare services, such as the Healthy Families program. The VDS also provides health education services through informational presentations and the distribution of information materials at the Consulate. During the first quarter of FY05, Ms. Sonia Contreras was contracted to work on securing the sustainability of the VDS program. She worked with the Mexican Consulate in San Diego to identify a new administrative agency for the program, and also presented information about the VDS to the Mexican Secretariat of Health, and assisted with developing a fundraising strategy for the VDS.

3. What have been your efforts and progress in Bioterrorism and public health Planning?

The USMBHC COO has partnered with the California Office of Binational Border Health (COBBH) to develop the California/Baja California EWIDS strategy and program as follows:

Binational BT Planning Meetings
Binational BT planning meetings were held in Tijuana with the Mexico Section of the USMBHC and ISESALUD (State Health Department of Baja California) that were facilitated by ISESALUD’s Under-Secretary of Health during April and May 2004.

Binational BT Forum in San Diego
On June 3-4, 2004, COBBH in partnership with the USMBHC hosted a binational forum attended by over 120 participants representing 43 different agencies at the federal, state, and local levels from both sides of the border. The agenda included presentations on the BT response plans at the federal, state, and local levels in each country; worktables to discuss issues related to response, training, public communication, laboratory, and epidemiological surveillance; and a binational tabletop exercise that was facilitated by the County of San Diego. Dr. Lawrence Kline, USMBHC California Delegation Member participated in the event.

Binational Conference on Public Health Emergencies (Imperial Valley)
A similar binational event was held in the Imperial Valley town of Holtville on August 30-31, 2004. COBBH worked with the Imperial County Public Health Department to organize a binational discussion of response plans and implemented a tabletop exercise involving an “All Hazards” response to a fictitious incident at the Mexicali port of entry. This event was complementary to the June forum in San Diego because it involved the first responder community and it focused primarily on local response. Dr. Lawrence Kline, USMBHC California Delegation Member, and Richard Rodriguez, representing CDHS Director Sandra Shewry, participated in the event.

Epidemiological Surveillance Capacity Enhancement
COBBH worked with ISESALUD to enhance their surveillance and communication capacity. Federal BT funds (Focus Area B) were transferred from COBBH to ISESALUD via the USMBHC, and used primarily for two purposes: (1) to assist ISESALUD to cover meeting costs and staff travel to the two binational meetings/conferences described
above; and (2) to hire two epidemiologists. The epidemiologists will serve as California’s counterparts on border BT surveillance issues, participate in BT-related trainings in California and Baja California, and collaborate in developing protocols for cross-border communication on epidemiological surveillance. Also, the federal funds were used to provide the epidemiologists with computer equipment, and telephone and Internet lines to communicate with their colleagues in Baja California and California.

**EWIDS Funding Proposal**

In close collaboration with ISESALUD, COBBH prepared an application for the use of federal Early Warning Infectious Disease Surveillance Project (EWIDS) funds. The application describes proposed activities to enhance epidemiological surveillance and laboratory capacity, improve cross-border communication, and build the infectious disease response capacity of the public health workforce in the California-Baja California border region. CDHS is represented on the US-Mexico Border Health Commission (USMBHC) EWIDS committees. Advisory Committee and the EWIDS Technical Committee.

These two committees will provide guidance and technical assistance to the USMBHC and Mexico’s Secretariat of Health as they prepare spending plans for $5.4 million in federal EWIDS funds earmarked for Mexico’s BT preparedness projects in the U.S.-Mexico border region.

4. **Has your office implemented any new programs or procedures in regards to Bioterrorism and public health planning?**

(See answer to point 3 above).

5. **Describe the binational efforts that your office has been engaged in?**

During October 1, 2004 – December 31, 2004, the USMBHC COO actively organized and participated in the following border-wide initiatives:

- **Border Binational Health Week:** The COO office coordinated its work on the Border Binational Health Week events with the California-Mexico Health Initiative, the Imperial County Public Health Department, the County of San Diego, the COBBH, the San Diego Border HETC, and also with the Baja California USMBHC Outreach Office. Additionally, the COO worked on a regional basis with outreach offices throughout the U.S.-Mexico border region to organize Border Binational Health Week events in collaboration with the USMBHC Border Binational Health Week Steering Committee. Elizabeth Santillanez, Director, COO represented the four U.S. OROs offices on the BBHW Steering Committee. (See item 2 for a report on outcomes of the BBHW events held in California/Baja California.)

- **Immunization Week of the Americas:**
  - In a joint collaboration with the County of San Diego, Immunizations Department, the San Diego HETC and several other community partners, an **Immunization**
Week of the Americas (IWA) binational training program on “TB and Immunizations at the Border Region” was held in San Diego on Monday, October 11th. This training program was organized as a follow-up to the IWA event that was held in San Diego during August featuring the U.S. Surgeon General, Dr. Richard Carmona. During that event, the promotoras spent much time asking questions about the application of the TB vaccine in Mexico, and TB prevention and treatment services in California. Because of the level of interest about this topic that was evident, the IWA partners decided that it would be important to conduct a promotoras training program focusing on that topic during the third Immunization Week of the Americas in October. Evaluations from the event were very positive, particularly with regard to the quality of the curriculum and presentations. A wrap-up assessment meeting was held subsequent to the event, and the participants in that meeting agreed that the event would have been more successful if more promotoras would have participated from both sides of the border. The IWA planning committee is working on determining ways to make sure that IWA events in the future generate as much participation as possible. The next California/Baja California IWA planning meeting will be held in Tijuana on January 25th at the USMBHC Baja California Outreach Office.

- **5th Annual Meeting – Rio Rico, Arizona:** The California Delegation of the Commission participated in the 5th Annual Meeting of the USMBHC, including Dr. Rosemarie M. Johnson, Dr. Lawrence Kline, and Richard Rodriguez (Alternate for Director Sandra Shewry). Elizabeth Santillan and Maura Mack, Chief, COBBH also participated. During the meeting, the Delegation participated in the border-wide inauguration of the BBHW in Nogales, Arizona. During the Annual Meeting, Dr. Johnson presented the USMBHC’s “2004 Recommendations to the Governments”, and the USMBHC’s 2004 Annual Report and Executive Summary were presented at the meeting.

- **Border Binational Health Week Border-Wide Inauguration and Closure Events:** Delegation Member Director Sandra Shewry participated in the Inauguration of the Binational Health Week organized by the California-Mexico Border Health Initiative on October 13th. Dr. Lawrence Kline, Dr. Rosemarie Johnson, and Maura Mack, Chief, COBBH, participated in the BBHW Border-Wide closure events held in the Paso Del Norte Region on October 14th and 15th. They also participated in a Policy Forum on Access to Health Care in the U.S.-Mexico Border Region: Models, Research, Policy and Action”. Dr. Johnson also attended the Binational Health Week closing event held in Washington D.C. at the Mexican Embassy on October 18th. Dr. Kline participated in the Binational Health Week closing event in San Diego (in San Marcos) on October 16th.

- **Dr. David Warner Event:** On December 16th, USMBHC, Scripps Health and COBBH hosted an event featuring Dr. David Warner, Professor of Public Affairs, Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas, Austin, hosted by Commission Delegation Member Dr. Lawrence Kline. Dr. Warner spoke on the topic, “Cross-Border Health Insurance and Other Initiatives to Integrate the Delivery of Health Services between the U.S. and Mexico.” Approximately 50 individuals attended from the border region including San Diego, Tijuana,
6. Has your office seen any specific governmental actions, funding increases or progress that has resulted from the Commission’s recommendations to the governments?

In regards to:

- **Increase and improve access to quality and preventive care:** Federal funding provided to the USMBHC by HRSA, other DHS agencies, and the CDC for the Border Binational Health Week activities in the border region allowed our COO office to assist with the planning of many access to care outreach programs that took place during the Border Binational Health Week (October 11-17, 2004). In total, $40,000 in funds were provided by the Commission for BBHW activities in the California/Baja California region, and these funds helped local groups to leverage additional funds from private and public sources.

- **Improve disease prevention efforts, health education delivery and disease control procedures:** The Border Health Initiative of Project Concern, which has managed a COO office subcontract for a Directly Observed Therapy TB project in Tijuana has received $2 million in funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for a TB project grant in Baja California.

- **Improves health workforce development, training, placement and retention:** The COO office is partnering with the HETC and AHEC programs in the San Diego border (funded by HRSA) to improve workforce development, training and retention of healthcare professionals throughout the California/Baja California border region, thereby creating synergy and enhanced benefits for the region.

- **Improve public health infrastructure:** The COO office is partnering with the California Office of Binational Border Health to develop an Early Warning Infectious Diseases Surveillance program strategy in the California/Baja California border region, through application for EWIDS funds provided by the CDC and the Commission’s $5.4 million fund for the Mexican border states provided by the U.S. Department of Health Services, in collaboration with Mexican counterpart agencies.