

# BIORISKS AND HEALTH SECURITY at WHO

Matthew L. Lim



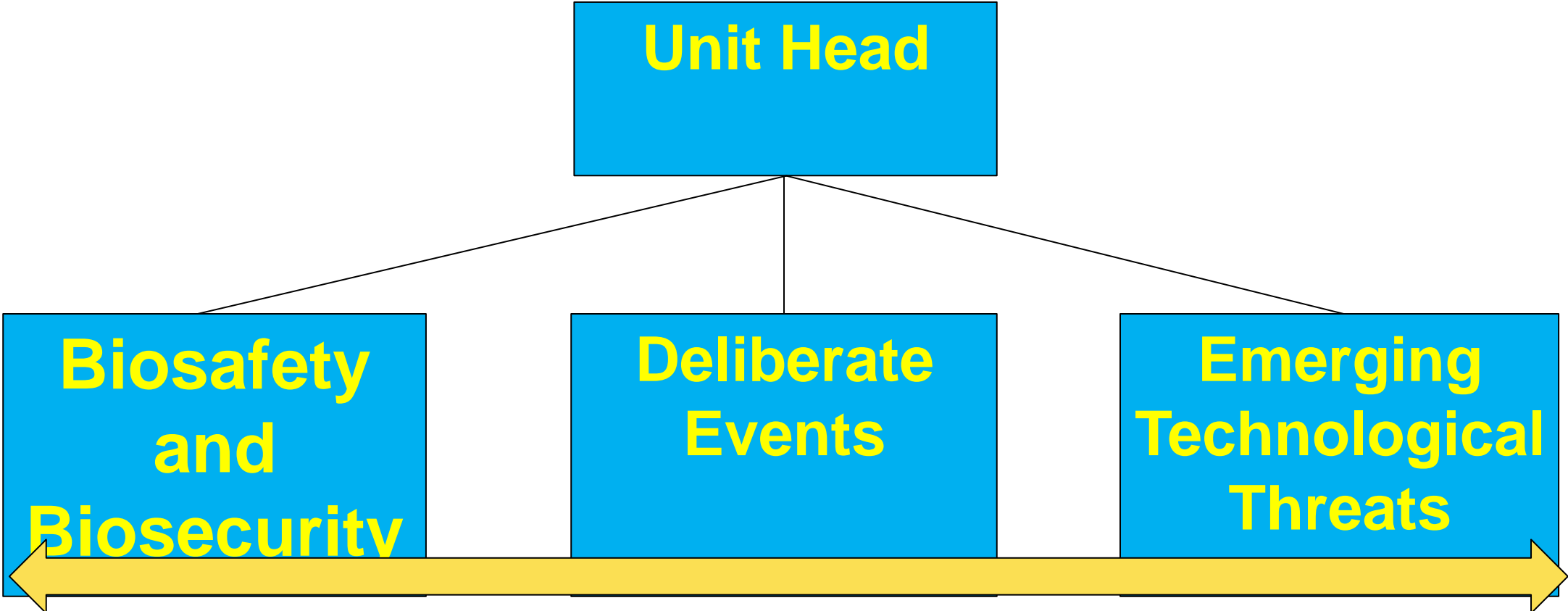
**World Health  
Organization**

# UNIT OVERVIEW

- Biorisks and Health Security Protection Unit located within Global Infectious Hazards Preparedness Department, within the Health Emergencies Programme
  - Integrates Deliberate Events (including CBRN) awareness and preparedness into existing WHO systems for surveillance, analysis, detection and response
  - Discerns and manage emerging health security risks before they are fully manifest
  - Provides technical support for health and security cooperation for colleagues within WHO as well as external partners



# The BSP Unit and Health Security: Technical Interface



# Biosafety and Biosecurity

- Goal: reduce exposure risk to high consequence pathogens
- Historically focuses on BS/S in high containment laboratories
  - Smallpox repository assessments
  - Laboratory Biosafety Manual (4<sup>th</sup> edition just released)
- Capacity building efforts
- Future directions
  - Biosecurity guidance document (in development)
  - Technical assistance to WHO Biohub (ensuring biosafety and biosecurity)
  - Innovations in “point-of-sampling” PPE (lightweight, reusable, all-hazard appropriate protective gear for field use)



# Deliberate Events Preparedness and Response

- Goal: WHO ready for accidental or deliberate events of any origin
- Preparedness, detection, assessment and response to all events that are potentially deliberate (including accidental or “uncategorized” events)
  - Revision and updating of internal WHO protocols to make them “fit for purpose”
  - Development of online, in person, and hybrid training program for WHO staff
  - Simulation Exercise program for deliberate events
  - Strengthening of WHO regional offices through training, support, joint capacity building activities
- Future directions
  - Guidance document development
  - Improved analysis capabilities



# Emerging Technological Threats

- Goal: anticipate threats arising in the near future
- A “Whole of Team” approach, closely coordinated with Science Division (WHO HQ), and Science and Technical Advisory Group on Infectious Hazards (STAG-IH)
- Focuses on emerging technological risk (hazard : vulnerability : likelihood)
  - Dual Use Research of Concern (focusing on high threat pathogens)
- Future Directions
  - Supporting cybersecurity, misinformation and disinformation work as relevant to health security
  - Infectious Hazard Anticipation (analysis of emerging hazards against the background of wider social, economic, and political trends)



# Future directions

- Continued support to the goal of the 13<sup>th</sup> Global Program Work: “one billion made safer”
  - Increased focus on emerging technological and other threats (including pathogen work)
  - Increased harmonization of work to prepare for deliberate biological events, with overall work to reduce biorisk in general
  - Fostering a greater culture of preparedness and resilience in the face of biorisk, within WHO
  - Continuing to expand and strengthen our multisectoral collaborations in light of above trends