International Committee on Nomenclature of Bacteria

Subcommittee on the Phage-Typing of Staphylococci

Minutes of Meeting, 6 August 1970

Hotel Maria Isabel, Mexico City, Mexico

Minute 1. Call to order. The fifth meeting of the Subcommittee was called to order on 6 August 1970.

Minute 2. Record of attendance. Members present were: P. M. Rountree (Chairman), M. T. Parker (Secretary), H. Brandis, E. T. Bynoe, E. T. Çetin, I. Davidson, J. M. Fouace, L. O. Kallings, H. J. Koornhof, A. M. Marquez, M. Moreira-Jacob, H. Rische (also representing W. Meyer), K. Rosendal, L. E. Sanchez-Torres, and R. Skalova.

The meeting was open and three visitors were present.

Minute 3. Minutes of previous meeting. The minutes of the previous meeting of the Subcommittee (Int. J. Syst. Bacteriol. 17:113) were tabled.

Minute 4. Membership and officers. Amendments to the list of members were noted and the necessary corrections appear in the revised report of the Subcommittee. M. T. Parker resigned as Secretary and E. H. Asheshov was elected in his place.

Those present expressed the unanimous opinion that the present form of organization, in which each national representative has a place on the Subcommittee, is the appropriate one for the efficient carrying out of the responsibilities of the Subcommittee.

Minute 5. Use of standard phage preparations. In general, the standard preparations appeared to be of acceptable potency when received by the national laboratories.

Minute 6. Report on 5th comparative typing test. After discussion of this report, the Subcommittee recommended that the next test should be held in about 3 years' time and urged collaborating laboratories to use their current batches of phage when taking part in it.

Minute 7. Composition of medium for staphylococcus phage-typing. The Subcommittee noted that standardization of typing medium within individual countries was desirable. More would have to be learned about the uniformity of constituents of media before international standardization is feasible.

Minute 8. Strength of phage to be used for typing. Skalova presented her report on the collaborative study of the optimum strength of phages for typing, and the Subcommittee agreed with her main conclusions. It resolved unanimously that in the future cultures untypable with the basic-set phages at RTD should be typed with the same phages (except phages 83A, 84 and 85) at RTD $\times$ 100 and not at RTD $\times$ 1,000 as previously. (These recommendations apply only to the use of the basic set of phages for typing human strains of *Staphylococcus aureus*.)

Minute 9. Interpretation of typing results. Kallings opened a discussion on how to analyze computerized data on staphylococcus phage-typing in studies of hospital infection. It was generally agreed that the problem would have to be investigated by those faced with it. Collaborative investigations might become feasible later.

Minute 10. Report of the Working Group on the phage-typing of bovine staphylococci. This Working Group met on 5 August 1970 and prepared a report in which a basic set of phages for typing bovine strains of *S. aureus* was recommended. This report was accepted unanimously by the Subcommittee.

In the future the term "basic set" of typing phages should not be used without qualification. The original basic set may be described as "for typing human *S. aureus* strains" to distinguish it from the phages used for typing bovine strains.

It was agreed that a common numbering system should be used for the phages in both sets. The Subcommittee therefore instructed the International Center to allot official numbers to those of the "bovine" phages that had not previously been so numbered. This has since been done (see 1966-70 Report this issue).

Minute 11. Constitution of the basic set of phages for typing human strains of *Staphylococcus aureus*. The Secretary reported that phage 88 had proved to be of value in only a

few countries. After discussion it was agreed there was not yet evidence that any of the phages reported on in the two documents distributed were useful over a sufficiently wide geographical area to warrant their inclusion in the "human" basic set. Some members thought that phages 83A, 84, and 85 might not have been included had the same strict criteria been applied, but this view was not generally accepted. Most of the untypable strains that had appeared since 1966 appeared to be local in distribution.

In some cases it might be necessary to use additional phages to characterize these local strains. The International Center would on request make available to national laboratories phages that might be of value in particular circumstances. When asking for such phages, however, representatives of the prevalent untypable cultures should always be sent to the International Center. National laboratories were urged also to send to the International Center samples of useful new phages and their propagating strains.

If additional phages are used for routine typing, it is important that all strains untypable with the basic-set phages at RTD should be tested at RTD X 100 even if they are lysed by

one or more additional phages. Failure to do this would make it impossible to compare the results obtained in laboratories in which different additional phages are used.

Minute 12. *Taxonomic implications of staphylococcus phage-typing.* The Subcommittee affirmed that its main function was to supervise the standardization and further development of the present system for the phage-typing of human strains of *S. aureus*. It might act as a focus of activity during the earlier stages of the development of other phage-typing systems, and it agreed to act temporarily as a center for the collection of information about the phage-typing of coagulase-negative staphylococci and micrococci. In the end, however, independent working groups or subcommittees would probably take over these activities. Contact between the various groups would probably best be maintained through the Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of Staphylococci and Micrococci, which should be asked to assume this responsibility.

The meeting was adjourned.

M. T. Parker, Secretary
Phyllis M. Rountree, Chairman