
POLICY: Terms of Reference

POLICY NO: 003/2001

DATE: June 2001

AMENDMENTS: November 2003

REFERENCE:

CROSS REFERENCES: 1. OGTR 'Guidelines for the accreditation of organisations.' June 2001

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1. Overview

All organisations that conduct genetic manipulation work are required to abide by the *Gene Technology Act 2000* and *Gene Technology Regulations 2001*. The University IBC assists the University of Adelaide with these compliance matters.

2. Constitution of the IBC

The IBC reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

In accordance with the Gene Technology Act (2000), a properly constituted IBC shall have the following membership:

1. All members of the IBC shall have knowledge and expertise which is appropriate to the functions of the IBC.
2. The IBC shall include people with skills and experience in at least the following fields:
 - testing biological safety facilities and equipment (for example, a biocontainment engineer);
 - biological safety;
 - microbiology; and
 - molecular biology or genetics.

[While it is not a condition that the IBC must include a Biological Safety Officer, it is expected that one of the members of the IBC would take on the responsibilities of a Biological Safety Officer. The Biological Safety Officer should be adequately trained and be able to offer advice on, or participate in, training of new staff or laboratory personnel. The Biological Safety Officer could act as an adviser to the organisation in matters relating to containment, biological hazards, and the safety of staff.]
3. The IBC shall include at least one layperson.

[Role of the layperson - While scientists are not explicitly excluded from this role, it is expected that the layperson would be from outside the organisation. Further, it is expected that they would not be directly involved in gene technology.]
4. The IBC shall comprise members with expertise relevant to the work undertaken within the organisation.

[It is expected that the IBC will be comprised of people with expertise relevant to the types of dealings with GMOs undertaken by the organisation.
It is expected that if an IBC does not have the appropriate expertise to deal with a particular application, then the IBC will invite an expert member or members to assist with the assessment of the application.
Roles and responsibilities may be combined in the same person where appropriate.]

5. If the University (as an Accredited Organisation) is also undertaking work involving the intentional release of a GMO into the environment, then the IBC shall include a person with experience in an area or areas relevant to the intentional release of the GMO into the environment (eg agronomist, ecologist etc).
6. The IBC shall comprise a minimum of 6 people.
[The IBC may comprise as many members as the organisation considers necessary to enable proper examination of the types of dealings with GMOs undertaken within the organisation.
There is no upper limit on the number of members that may be appointed.]
7. A member of the IBC must be appointed as Chair of the IBC.
[The Chair of the IBC should be of sufficient standing within the organisation for the IBC's advice to be effectively implemented. The Chair of the IBC should have a close working relationship with the CEO/Head (or delegate) of the organisation, as it is the organisation that maintains ultimate legal responsibility for the safe conduct of dealings with a GMO within the organisation.]

3. Membership

Members are nominated by the relevant Head of School and appointed by the Vice-Chancellor upon the recommendation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research). The term of appointment is at the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor, but generally is for a 3 year period.

The IBC appoints members with relevant expertise to fulfil the following roles:

- Animal Scientist
- Biosafety Officer
- Geneticist
- Engineer
- Environmentalist
- Lay person (external)
- Medical Scientist
- Microbiologist
- Molecular Biologist
- Occupational Health and Safety Adviser
- Plant Scientist
- Postgraduate Student Representative
- Social Scientist/Lay person (internal)

The Secretary is an appointed member of the Committee.

4. Meetings

The IBC meets once each month between February and November.

No quorum is specified. Recommendations are carried by the approval of a majority of those members present at a meeting or by the approval of a majority of all members if the membership is screened out of meeting.

5. Scope

The IBC considers the following matters:

- genetically modified organisms as regulated by the Gene Technology Act (2000)

6. Terms of reference

Functions of the IBC as required by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator:

1. In relation to exempt dealings with GMOs, the IBC shall:
 - assist individuals within organisations to correctly identify the proposed dealing with the GMO as an exempt dealing with the GMO (in accordance with the GT Regulations).
2. In relation to notifiable low risk dealings (NLRDs) with GMOs the IBC shall:
 - assist proponents to correctly identify the proposed dealing with the GMO as a NLRD;
 - assist the applicant to understand the conditions applying to NLRDs;
 - consider proposals prepared by applicants, in accordance with the legislation;
 - notify the Regulator within 14 days of the IBC's assessment of the proposal. The notification to the Regulator must include a copy of the information provided by the applicant and the results of the IBC's consideration (supporting information); and
 - notify the applicant, and the project supervisor, that the IBC has provided the required information to the Regulator.
3. In relation to dealings with GMOs requiring licensing by the Regulator the IBC shall:
 - assist applicants to prepare applications for licence, in accordance with the Regulator's application requirements;
 - consider proposals prepared by proponents, in accordance with the legislation; and
 - provide advice to the Regulator on applications for licence (supporting information).
4. An appropriately qualified member of the IBC shall, on behalf of the Accredited Organisation, perform the following functions in relation to containment facilities:
 - inspect all of the organisation's containment facilities, against the Regulator's requirements for containment, at least once per year;
 - inspect new PC2 facilities (for which certification from the Regulator is sought).

As an Accredited Organisation, the University of Adelaide must meet the conditions for accreditation. The accreditation of an organisation is subject to the following classes of conditions:

- A. Conditions relating to maintaining an IBC or maintaining access to an IBC;
- B. Conditions relating to maintaining a register and documenting personnel;
- C. Conditions relating to reporting to the Regulator;
- D. Conditions relating to the development of internal operating procedures and appropriate staff training;
- E. Conditions relating to potential conflicts of interest;
- F. Conditions relating to the indemnification of IBC members;
- G. Conditions relating to the membership of an IBC;
- H. Conditions relating to the functions of an IBC; and
- I. Conditions relating to inspection of facilities.

Thus in addition, the IBC will assist the University to maintain its accreditation by undertaking the following activities as required by the requirements of the conditions listed A-I above:

- ensure that registers of all exempt dealings, notifiable low risk dealings and licensed dealings undertaken by the university and/or in the university's certified facilities are maintained;
- ensure that registers of all GMOs held in the university's certified facilities are maintained;

- maintain a register of certified facilities;
- ensure that records of personnel working in certified facilities and of personnel authorised to access certified facilities are maintained;
- ensure that registers of all staff and students who have undertaken training are maintained;
- prepare an annual report for submission to the OGTR;
- liaise with the OGTR regarding every aspect of accreditation, compliance and licensing;
- provide training for staff and students involved with gene technology research and teaching;
- provide advice to staff and students about the Act, Regulations and Guidelines;
- develop internal operating procedures in relation to the management of GMOs;
- implement appropriate procedures for dealing with accidents and incidents with GMOs;
- ensure appropriate mechanisms to address conflict of interest;
- ensure appropriate arrangements for the indemnification of IBC members.

6. Related Documents

- 6.1 OGTR 'Guidelines for the accreditation of organisations.' June 2001
- 6.2 IBC Policy 001/2001: Indemnity for members of the Institutional Biosafety Committee and for staff and students working with genetically modified organisms
- 6.3 IBC Policy 002/2001: Conflict of interest or potential conflict of interest