



The University of Western Ontario
Biohazards Subcommittee Meeting

Minutes of July 8th, 2011
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., SSB 4220

Present: Dr. J. Millar (Chair), Dr. S. Barr, Dr. G. Dekaban, Dr. S. Koval, Dr. S. Siu,
Dr. I. Welch, J. Stanley, S. Xhiku (OH&S Intern)

Regrets: Dr. T. deLangley

1.0 Introductions

The committee introduced themselves.

2.0 Approval of Minutes – June 12th, 2011

Motioned: Dr. S. Siu

Seconded: Dr. S. Koval

3.0 Biological Agents Registry Forms

3.1 Tirona, R.

(Modification only)

Approved: The approved personnel section does not correspond to the previous Biological Agents Registry Form, so it needs to be updated. The previous form is for both Drs. Tirona and Kim.

3.2 Konnerman, L.

Approved: The Committee wonders if a permit is needed to ship the samples for the experiment from Alberta. In 14.2, disinfectant soap (not bleach) should be used.

3.3 Possmayer, F.

Tabled: The form mentions that biological safety cabinets will only be used if available. Ethanol is flammable (not inflammable). The part about “transiently transfecting plasmids” needs to be reworded so it can be clearer to the Committee. Section 8 should also be redone. The Committee also noted that the researcher is still working under an LHRI permit even though the work is done in the Dental Sciences Building at The University of Western Ontario.

3.4 Reid, G.

(Revisit, March 2011)

Approved: The Committee wonders as to who will be handling the samples, whether it will be a nurse or one of the students/lab personnel.

3.5 Singh, S.

Approved: Level 2 is recommended.

3.6 Hodgetts, L.

Approved: Universal precautions should be used.

3.7 Ma, S.

Approved: Pending review by Agriculture Canada. The Committee suggested deferring the review of the form to Agriculture Canada as it is unsure about the containment standards for transgenic plants. In addition “Agrobacterium” should be written in Section 1.2 as well as 4.2.

3.8 Kohalmi, S.

Approved: Pending review by Agriculture Canada.

3.9 Zhang, J.

(Revisit, June 2011)

Tabled: The Committee suggests the researcher consult with a bacteriologist to complete this Biological Agents Registry Form and then let the Committee know which researcher she contacted. In Section 14.1 it notes that the Hazard Communication Form serves as a risk reduction mechanism when that is not the purpose of the form. Dr. Millar may wish to contact the Chair of the department to discuss the problems encountered with this form.

3.10 Daley, M.

(Revisit, April 2011)

Approved: The Committee is unsure whether Room 124 in WSC is a laboratory facility or not. In Section 1.2 the names of the agents should be written out in full. In Section 14.2, disinfectant soap should be used to wash the infected area.

3.11 Midgley, M.

Tabled: Table 3.2 should be level 2 as there is a possibility of exposure to infectious diseases prior to embalming. J. Stanley let the Committee know that the SOPs will be received by the Committee as soon as the lab manager or previous lab manager forwards them. The form is tabled pending SOPs being received.

Last Minute Additions

3.12 Koval, S.

Approved: No issues.

3.13 Kim, R.

(Modification only)

Approved: No issues.

3.14 Drysdale, T.

Tabled: Work with *Xenopus* requires an AUS protocol. In Section 2.2 this type of primary cell should be marked as "Other". Section 6.0 should be completed to reflect the use of *Xenopus*. Section 4.4 should reflect the use of E1A oncogene.

3.15 Others?

None.

4. Biological Agents Registry Form – Fillable Format

(J. Stanley)

Dr. Koval and Dr. Thorn have completed the new form and have informed the Committee of any issues they have encountered. Some of the improvements suggested are:

- Section 1.2 – removing “other than bacteria used for cloning” as this may encourage researchers not to acknowledge the use of *E.coli*, etc.
- Section 1.2 – adding a box underneath the table with the caption “Supply MSDS if the bacterium used is not listed on this link:
http://www.uwo.ca/humanresources/docandform/docs/ohs/CFIA_Ecoli_list.pdf”
- Section 4.2 – box four should be changed to “Gene(s) Transformed or Transfected”
- Section 4.2 – the last box should be changed to “Will there be a change in the pathogenicity of the bacteria after the genetic modification?”
- Section 4.2 – another box should be added to the table with the question “What are the consequences due to the transformation of the bacteria?”
- Section 4.4 is to become Section 5, and all following sections will be renumbered accordingly
- Section 4.4 – another question should be added in the section to ask the researcher if they are working with prions or prion sequences
- Section 14.3 – the instructions for the completion of the Hazard Communication Form on the Workplace Health Website should be changed by Workplace Health to include administrative staff as well as students

On page 1, the form should also read “all questions are to be fully and clearly answered” and that the completed forms are to be submitted electronically.

5. Sheep Unit Update

(I. Welch)

The scheduled decontamination of the facility will take place in August. Bruce Peat has inspected the unit and identified what needs to be done. Due to the size of the facility, the decontamination process is expected to be more extensive than previously thought. The gas will be expanded from one room to two, so that all small items can be tented and then gassed. The unit is ventilated to the outside.

Workplace Health has received the list of workers who have entered the sheep unit during the time *Coxiella burnetii* was present and they have all been contacted by Workplace Health via e-mail. In total eight workers came forward for testing and their tests for *Coxiella burnetii* were all negative.

6. Level 3 Medical Surveillance Update

(J. Stanley)

J. Stanley informed the Committee that she has contacted several universities across Canada to inquire about their after-hours Level 3 Medical Surveillance Programs. The Committee reviewed the document and noted that all universities contacted have a program in place and that Level 3 researchers have access to emergency medical care in case of an exposure.

Jane O'Brien has this document. It was suggested that the University Hospital be contacted to implement a program at Western.

7. Next meeting date: August 12th?

(J. Stanley)

The next meeting will be held on August 12th. Drs. Millar, Koval and Siu are available. Dr. Dekaban is not available, but Ron Noseworthy may be available. Dr. Barr will be unable to attend. ACVS will let us know their availability.

8. Other Business

(J. Millar)

8.1 Annual Report to Dr. T. Hewitt

Dr. J. Millar informed the Committee that he will be sending Ted Hewitt a year end report explaining some of the difficulties encountered by the Committee. Some of the issues that have been faced are the researchers not submitting their proposals on time, not filling them in carefully, as well as not responding to reminders that their approvals are approaching the expiration deadline.

J. Stanley sent Dr. J. Millar a list of 11 people whose forms needed to be renewed, who had all received two reminders from J. Stanley and then a reminder by Dr. J. Millar that the forms need to be completed prior to July 4th. Out of those 11 researchers, 6 have still not replied. The Committee has done its part in facilitating the process by introducing the fillable form. Dr. J. Millar suggested that perhaps the reminders sent need to be more strongly worded.

8.2 Nomination to Expert Committee

Dr. J. Millar also informed the Committee that the Public Health Agency of Canada and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency are developing joint biosafety standards and guidelines. As a result, the agencies are seeking members to contribute to this new initiative. Research Services at the University of Western Ontario have nominated Dr. G. Dekaban to participate in this Committee. The Biohazards Sub-Committee congratulated Dr. G. Dekaban on his nomination.

9. Adjournment

(J. Millar)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 am.