The University of Western Ontario
Biohazards Subcommittee Meeting

Minutes of October 14th, 2011
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., SSB 4220

Present: Dr. J. Millar (Chair), Dr. S. Barr, Dr. T. deLangley, Dr. S. Koval, Dr. S. Siu, J. Stanley, S. Xhiku (OH&S Intern)

Regrets: Dr. G. Dekaban, Dr. I. Welch

1.0 Introductions

None needed.

2.0 Approval of Minutes – September 9th, 2011

Motioned: Dr. T. deLangley Seconded: Dr. S. Koval

Approved with edits to item 3.22, McCormick.

3.0 Biological Agents Registry Forms

3.1 Bassi, A.

Approved: No issues.

3.2 MacFabe, D.

Approved: Section 8.2 should be marked 'Yes'. In Section 15.2 the description should say "with warm water and soap" and "wound" instead of "would". The form should also make a reference to the SOPs concerning rodent bites.

3.3 Babwah, A. (Modification)

Approved: No issues.

3.4 Huner, N.

Approved: The lab personnel must complete their Biosafety training. In Section 1.2 the full name of the bacteria should be used and "*reinhardtii*" should be spelled correctly.

3.5 Han, V.

Approved: The use of E1A oncogene should be marked as 'Yes' since the researcher uses HEK 293 cells. The form requires a signature.

3.6 Wagner, G.

Approved: Section 2.1 should say 'Yes'. Does the researcher have any lab personnel working for him?

3.7 Savory, E.

Tabled: There is some concern about the protocol of the Influenza and about the room where the research will be conducted. The form needs to be reviewed. There are human ethics concerns about this project. Dr. S. Siu has communicated with the researcher; Workplace Health will not be involved.

3.8 Sinclair, B.

Approved: Sections 8.1 is 'Yes' and Section 8.2 is 'No'. Level 2 is needed per the containment level standards regarding insects. The project is nicely done – easy to read and easy to understand.

3.9 Lajoie, G. (Modification)

Tabled: The Committee is unsure whether the researcher is generating viruses and if the researcher has the proper authorization to do so. Dr. Postovit also needs to update her Biological Agents Registry Form since she is working with a new plasmid. Is there really a fridge in the shared facility? The Committee requires clarification on who supervises C. Hughes.

3.10 Gunaratman, L. (Modification)

Approved: Over half of the toxins listed on the form do not have any toxicological information attached to them, but these agents do not need to be listed on this modification. The Committee is also unclear on why there is an asterisk next to the names of some of the personnel.

3.11 Rogan, P. (Modification)

Tabled: The summary provided on the form needs to be more detailed. The Committee is unclear as to how the researcher will use the plasmids in the project. The Committee needs more information than used to predict "other related genes".

3.12 Ferguson, P. (Re-visit, August 2011)

Tabled: Dr. Dekaban's comments (by e-mail) on the form were distributed to the Committee. The Committee requires clarification on whether any lentivirus is being made or whether the plasmid is being transfected into prostate cell lines. Section 4.4 needs to be properly completed. The form needs to clarify in Section 6.0 that *in vivo* lentiviral experiments are not being performed in animals.

3.13 Zabulionis, R.

Approved: Section 11.0 should say 'greenhouse'. The form was well written.

3.14 Betts, D. (Modification)

Approved: The Committee needs clarification as to who is the supervisor of Chris Hughes.

Last Minute Additions

3.15 Koren, G.

Approved: No issues.

3.16 Torchia, J.

Tabled: No additional comments other than those provided by Dr. G. Dekaban by e-mail.

3.17 Others?

None.

4. Sheep Unit Update (ACVS, J. Stanley)

ACVS, Health and Safety and Facilities Management met in August to discuss the partial recertification of the sheep unit. The recertification is now underway and is proceeding slowly.

6. Biological Agents Registry Form: Review Process (J. Millar, J. Stanley)

Dr. Millar met with Ted Hewitt to discuss how the process of reviewing and approving Biological Agents Registry Forms might be more efficient. Dr. Millar has received feedback from some researchers, expressing their frustration about the time it takes and frustration about forms being returned to them for revisits. Researchers seem to believe that the Biohazards Sub-Committee is being unnecessarily particular about the forms. Dr. Millar explained that the Committee is protecting researchers from any negative Tri-council reviews. Dr. Millar also explained that to make the process more efficient researchers should take considerable care in preparing their documents and need to submit their forms in a timely fashion to avoid delays in approvals. The researchers should also complete the forms themselves, rather than having a technician in the lab fill them out.

In order to encourage a prompt renewal of expired forms the Committee will reformulate the statement that is sent to researchers when their forms are due for renewal. In addition, an information sheet may be attached to the message outlining the responsibilities of the researcher in terms of how the form is completed and the deadline of submission. These new proposals will be further discussed at the Biosafety Committee meeting.

The Committee has received a letter from Dr. Ferguson outlining some concerns he has about the Biohazard Sub-Committtee form review process. The Committee addressed some of the points made in the letter during the meeting:

- The MSDSs and cell lines are required for the Committee to make decisions about containment levels.
- The Committee also encourages researchers to share with their personnel information about MSDSs and cell lines, to educate and ensure the safety of the personnel.
- The Biological Agents Registry Form is always evolving and reviewed to make it as clear and easy to use for the researchers. In this year alone the form has been edited on 5 different occasions.
- If there are any issues in terms of using the new electronic form then the Biosafety Office can always assist with such difficulties.
- The Committee meets on a monthly basis and the dates of the meetings are now posted on www.uwo.ca/humanresources/biosafety.
- The information presented on all peer-reviewed Committees is kept confidential.
- In terms of the compatibility of the LHSC Biosafety training with the University's Biosafety training, this issue will be discussed in the upcoming Biosafety meeting.

The Committee has addressed several of the points made in the letter. Dr. Millar will send out a formal letter to address these issues.

7. Next meeting date: November 18th? (J. Stanley)

The next meeting will be held on November 18th. Drs. Millar, Barr, deLangley and Koval are available. Dr. Dekaban may be available. Dr. Siu will be unable to attend.

8. Other Business (J. Millar)

8.1 Biological Agents Registry Form

The Committee suggested adding a new question in Section 7.0 on the new fillable Biological Agents Registry Form. The question will ask the researcher to provide the location(s) of animal holding room(s) and animal experimentation room(s).

9. Adjournment (J. Millar)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am.