



**The University of Western Ontario  
University Biosafety Committee Meeting**

**Minutes of October 27, 2011**  
**10:00 am – Noon, Robarts Conference Room 2201**

**Present:** Dr. J. Millar (Chair), Dr. S. Barr, Dr. T. Dzialoszynski, Dr. P. Ferguson, Dr. A. Margaritis, Dr. E. Ostrakhovitch, Dr. G. Thorn, Dr. I. Welch, M. Mics, R. Noseworthy (for Dr. G. Dekaban), C. Pape, G. Ryder, J. Stanley, J. Tucker, J. Whitty, S. Xhiku

**Regrets:** Dr. S. Damjanovski, Dr. G. Dekaban, Dr. T. deLangley, Dr. J. McNeil, Dr. C. Pin, Dr. T. Rupar, Dr. S. Siu, T. Hammoud, J. McLachlan, Jane O'Brien, A. Scott

**1. Introductions & Approval of Agenda (J. Millar)**

The Committee introduces themselves to the new members.

Approval of the agenda:

**Motion:** Dr. P. Ferguson

**Seconded:** Dr. S. Barr

**Approved:** Agenda approved as presented.

**2. Approval of Minutes, June 1, 2011 (VOTE) (J. Millar)**

**Motion:** Dr. G. Thorn

**Seconded:** Dr. T. Dzialoszynski

**Approved:** Minutes approved as presented.

**3. Business Arising (J. Millar)**  
**(J. Stanley)**  
**3.1 Biohazards Subcommittee Update (J. Millar)**

The Biohazards Subcommittee has met 5 times since the last Biosafety Committee meeting. The meeting is usually held within the first or second week of the month.

**3.2 DSB Level 3 Re-certification Update (J. Stanley)**

The DSB Level 3 unit is recertified until July 25, 2012. There haven't been any developments regarding the after-hours medical care protocol in case of an accidental exposure to Level 3 biohazards. The issue is still being pursued and discussed within the University administration.

### **3.3 Sheep Unit**

**(T. deLangley)**

The decontamination of the Sheep Unit went well. The re-certification process is also underway. The only issue remains the fan failure testing, as the shutting down the unit for the duration of the test would affect other units that house animals.

## **4. New Business**

### **4.1 Human Pathogens & Toxins Act: Consultations**

**(J. Stanley)**

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) will be doing consultations online and in person with researchers. Some of the topics to be discussed with PHAC include: inventory requirements, security clearance requirements, licensing, functions and qualifications of the Biosafety Officer. The University has offered to hold an in-house session, so any researchers interested in having the in person discussion with the PHAC representatives can do so on campus. This discussion may be of interest to many Principal Investigators whose research would be affected by the forthcoming new regulations.

### **4.2 Biosecurity Plan Review**

**(J. Millar)**

The Committee has reviewed the document in 2010 and it is now up for review again. No changes except an error in “assess” not “access” the risk.

### **4.3 Biosafety Review Updates**

**(J. Millar)**

#### **4.3.1 Tri-Council Expectations**

The Tri-Council visited the University in February of 2011 and was fairly critical of the University’s financial practices. The University will be revisited by the Tri-Council after 2 years. Dr. J. Millar has attended a meeting with the Tri-Council and has reported that the Tri-Council expectations have become very high. In order to meet these expectations 3 different problems have been identified in the Biohazards Sub-Committee.

The Biological Agents Registry Forms take a very long time to receive approval from the Biohazard Sub-Committee. Too many proposals are sent back to the researcher from the Committee and this creates frustrations for all those involved.

The Biological Agents Registry Form was found to be unclear by most researchers. Steps have been taken to address this issue. As of August 12, 2011 a fillable form has been created and many of the questions have been rephrased for clarity. The new form is an evolving document and has already been revised several times.

Lastly, the forms are not always submitted in time by the researchers after expiry. In some cases three or more reminders were sent to the researcher from the Biosafety Officer, the Chair of the Sub-Committee and the Chair of the Department. It was common practice until now that a grace period was given between the expiry of the form and the submission of the new form and funding was not withheld from the researchers. This practice may have to be revisited if researchers do not take the completion and timely submission of their forms more seriously.

The Sub-Committee follows the guidelines set by the Tri-Council and an informational letter (from the Chair) will be sent out alongside reminders of form expiry to explain that to researchers.

In addition, a letter was sent in from Dr. P. Ferguson on behalf of several researchers at LRCC about concerns they had regarding the Biohazard Sub-Committee procedures and protocols. Dr. J. Millar drafted a letter in response outlining several of the steps taken by the Sub-Committee to facilitate the process for researchers and the requirements that must be met by the researchers when they submit their forms.

The Committee discussed sources of biosafety information such as [www.atcc.org](http://www.atcc.org).

#### **4.4 LHSC On-line Biosafety Training**

**(J. Millar)**

LHSC offers Biosafety training for hospital employees. This on-line training makes it more convenient for hospital staff to complete the course and eliminates the need to travel to UWO to attend the lecture. G. Ryder will send the presentation to J. Stanley to determine compatibility of the LHSC training to the University of Western Ontario's training.

#### **5. Other Business**

**(J. Millar)**

None.

#### **6. Next meeting: To be determined (February 2012)**

The next meeting will be held sometime in February.

#### **7. Adjournment**

**Motioned:** Dr. I. Welch

**Seconded:** C. Pape