



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

**Minutes of June 1, 2011**

**10:00 am – 12:00 pm, Robarts Research Institute, Room 2201**

**Present:** Dr. J. Millar (Chair), Dr. S. Barr, Dr. G. Dekaban, Dr. T. deLangley, Dr. T. Dzialoszynski, Dr. P. Ferguson, Dr. A. Margaritis, Dr. C. Pin, Dr. S. Siu, Dr. G. Thorn, C. Pape, M. Mics, R. Noseworthy, G. Ryder, J. Stanley, E. Gray, S. Xhiku

**Regrets:** Dr. S. Damjanovski, Dr. J. McNeil, G. Qubty, Jane O'Brien, T. Hammoud, A. Scott, J. Tucker

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

The committee introduced themselves to the new OH&S intern, S. Xhiku.

**2.0 Approval of Minutes, February 18, 2011 (J. Millar)**

**Motion:** Dr. P. Ferguson **Seconded:** C. Pape

**Approved:** Dr. S. Siu needs to be added under regrets.

**3.0 Business Arising (J. Millar)**

**3.1 Biotron Level 3 Update (J. Stanley)**

The Level 3 certification for the Biotron is due to expire at the end of June. The facility has not been used for Level 3 research and will not be re-certified. The facility will be used as a Level 2 laboratory space.

The Committee mentioned the difficulty principal investigators have in accessing the Biotron for their experiments, due to the very high financial cost of equipment and of using the space. C. Pape expressed concern about having to displace any researchers performing Level 2 research in the Biotron, in order to accommodate a Level 3 project in the future.

The DSB Level 3 is limited because it can only do non-aerosol work. This facility could attract Level 3 researchers in the future. Dr. Millar should pursue the potential future use and possible recertification of the Biotron Level 3 with Dr. Ted Hewitt.

### **3.2 Biohazards Subcommittee Update** **(J. Millar)**

The Biohazards Subcommittee has met 3 times since the last meeting.

### **3.3 DSB Level 3 Update** **(J. Stanley)**

The DSB Level 3 facility was re-certified from March-May 2011. The re-certification is on track. The current certification is valid until August 19, 2011.

#### **3.3.1 Level 3 Medical Surveillance** **(S. Siu)**

Dr. S. Siu and the Biohazard Subcommittee members have reviewed and updated the Level 3 Medical Surveillance program. Dr. S. Siu let the committee know that the current emergency response is only set up for working hours. Anyone working after hours will have to go to the hospital emergency room. Given the waiting time, the infected individual may have to wait longer than appropriate to get their prophylactic medicine. The University Hospital will not guarantee priority for potentially infected research personnel to get their prescription. A letter was sent to Jane O'Brien as well as Shelagh Hodson requesting a protocol to deal with after hour emergency cases.

## **4.0 New Business**

### **4.1 Sheep Unit** **(T. deLangley)**

Dr. T. deLangley informed the committee that a sheep which arrived in the containment unit at the West Valley Building in November has tested positive for *Coxiella burnetii*. A testing procedure for *C. burnetii* is in place during the procurement of the sheep; however there are frequent cases of false negative results. When the research is complete the sheep cotelydons are tested by PCR to check for *Coxiella burnetii*. Although a sheep has tested positive, the unit is operated as a containment facility, so there shouldn't be issue from an exposure perspective. There is the concern however, that visitors from other institutions who went into the unit may have been exposed. These individuals are being notified of the presence of a *C. burnetii* positive sheep in the unit by Steve Jarrett.

Dr. T. deLangley has met with the stakeholders and University representatives to discuss the future of the sheep unit. He has also contacted HEPA Filtration Inc. and a decontamination proposal will be created and sent to the Public Health Agency of Canada for approval. Dr. T. deLangley is waiting on advice on drafting the letter and on further details regarding the decontamination process. Dr. S. Siu informed the committee that Workplace Health has offered the individuals who have worked in the unit blood tests to detect a possible infection. Workplace Health is prepared to counsel any workers should they test positive.

### **4.2 Vaccinia Update** **(J. Millar)**

The Vaccinia project will begin soon. The SOP for the project has been completed. In addition information sessions for Level 3 and Physical Plant workers have been conducted.

### **4.3 Biological Agents Registry Form**

**(J. Millar)**

The Biohazard Subcommittee has recently noted that some of the forms submitted by Researchers are not completed properly. To address this issue the Subcommittee has decided to make the forms fillable. This will make it easier for Researchers to complete them. In addition, the Subcommittee is working on having the Researchers recognize the importance of the forms.

There was a discussion around the length of the form. It was noted that only necessary questions are asked. Dr. Thorn agreed to try out the new fillable form and get back to J. Stanley.

### **5.0 Other Business**

**(J. Millar)**

#### **5.1 Update on the 2009 CCAC Inspection**

**(T. deLangley)**

Most of the concerns presented by the 2009 CCAC inspection have been addressed effectively. Ted Hewitt has signed off on the follow up response from the University.

### **6.0 Next Meeting: To be determined (October 2011)**

The next meeting will be scheduled for October.

### **7.0 Adjournment**

**Motion:** Dr. A. Margaritis

**Seconded:** Dr. G. Dekaban

Meeting adjourned at 10:50 am.