

## **Genetic Manipulation Supervisory Committee**

La Trobe University  
Academic Board  
Research and Graduate Studies Committee  
GENETIC MANIPULATION SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

The Genetic Manipulation Supervisory Committee, formerly known as the Supervisory Technical Committee on Recombinant DNA Studies, was constituted in September 1978 (Academic Board minute 136.14). The composition was amended in November 1979 (Academic Board minute 150.2.3) and the terms of reference in April 1983 (Academic Board minute 185.16.). This committee was made a sub-committee of the Research and Graduate Studies Committee in April 1991 (Academic Board minute 165.3.1). The Composition was amended by the Research and Graduate Studies Committee in November 1994 (RGSC36.4.2). The terms of reference and membership composition were amended in 1997 (RGSC minute 56.4.1), March 2000 (RGSC minute 72.5.7), November 2001 (RGSC minute 87.5.3), November 2005 (RGSC minute 119.5.3) and February 2007 (RGSC minute 129.5.1) and October 2008 (RGSC minute 145.5.3).

The Genetic Manipulation Supervisory Committee was made a committee of Council, reporting to Council through the RGSC, in October 1997 (C minute 310.9).

### **Membership Composition and Terms of Office:**

The composition of the Committee must comply with any relevant legislation.

- A. The Chair to be a senior member of staff appointed by the Research and Graduate Studies Committee.
- B. A microbiologist experienced in the handling of pathogenic micro-organisms, nominated on the advice of the Dean and Faculty Board of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering.
- C. A biologist familiar with the technique and concepts of recombinant DNA research, nominated on the advice of the Dean and Faculty Board of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering.
- D. An evolutionary ecologist/agronomist familiar with gene flow and population biology, nominated by the Dean and Faculty Board of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering.
- E. An engineer with expertise in the testing of biological cabinets, air pressures and filters and related equipment, or whose background would enable him/her to be trained readily in points of concern. Nominated by the Manager, Buildings and Grounds.
- F. Biological Safety Officer, a biologist chosen from amongst the Committee members, experienced with problems of biohazard and safety to act as technical adviser to the Committee. Nominated by the Genetic Manipulation Supervisory Committee.
- G. One representative from the Faculty at Bendigo, La Trobe University, to be nominated by the Dean and Faculty Board of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering.

- H. Lay person, not associated with the University and not directly involved in gene technology, who is in a position to consider the wider community issues. Nominated by the Genetic Manipulation Supervisory Committee.
- I. Power to co-opt three additional members. The Committee should facilitate the gender equity in the Committee's composition and ensure that membership is reasonably representative of all Schools and relevant research areas in which recombinant DNA projects are in progress.
- J. Manager, Occupational Health and Safety, or nominee of Manager.

The membership shall be reviewed annually at the March meeting of the RGSC. Terms of Office shall ordinarily be for two years, unless otherwise recommended by the relevant nominating body and approved by the *RGSC (The Dean of the Faculty of Science, Technology must approve re-nominations)*.

**Terms of Reference:**

1. Receive applications for projects involving recombinant DNA research, determine the information to be provided by applicants and seek advice from within the University or from other sources, of the possible hazards concerning recombinant DNA, involved in the proposed project (including possible hazards to the safety of the research personnel, to public health, and to animal or plant health and to the environment);
2. Recommend approval of proposed projects, either absolutely or subject to conditions, provided that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) shall be free to terminate any such approval at any time;
3. Through the Chair of the Committee, advise the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) of decisions relating to the granting of licences to conduct, or participate in, research into recombinant DNA to members of staff and students;
4. Through the Chair of the Committee, advise the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) of decisions relating to the safety precautions either generally or for particular projects, which must be observed by those involved in recombinant DNA research;
5. Assist the University to meet the requirements of the Gene Technology Act 2000 and the Gene Technology Regulations 2001;
6. Provide advice to researchers to enable them to ensure that research carried out at the University complies with all legislation and with the guidelines set out by the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care;
7. Co-operate closely, for the purpose of evolving effective safety standards, with the OGTR with a view to making fully effective, the guidelines laid down from time to time by the Regulator;
8. Provide advice to the University Insurance Officer and other University departments as required on matters relating to research involving genetic manipulation at the University;

9. Report to the Regulator annually on membership of the IBC, current Exempt, Notifiable Low Risk Dealings, and Licensed Dealings being conducted, certified PC2 Facilities, any contraventions of the legislation, any other matters that the University deems it necessary to draw to the Regulator's attention;
10. Maintain a list of people working on genetic manipulation research in Physical Containment facilities;
11. Through appropriately qualified members of the IBC, carry out annual inspections of all containment facilities against the Regulator's requirements for containment and inspect new PC2 facilities for which certification from the Regulator is sought;
12. Promulgate information about appropriate supervisory measures, thereby ensuring that safety guidelines laid down for particular projects are meticulously adhered to in the day-to-day conduct of research;
13. Establish a register of recombinant DNA research projects and ensure that this register is kept up-to-date by notification and registration of all significant modifications, including particularly such modifications as might tend to make the project more hazardous;
14. Inform itself of all developments that have a bearing upon potential hazards associated with recombinant DNA research, particularly those which lead to better understanding of the nature of such hazards and to improvements in containment techniques.
15. A Committee member must declare a conflict of interest prior to the issue being discussed at the meeting. A conflict of interest is defined as a situation in which a Committee member has a private or personal interest that appears to influence the objective exercise of his or her official duties.
16. Minutes of Committee meetings must contain records of all declared conflicts of interest and of any measures taken to address the conflict of interest.
17. The Committee will investigate all complaints about research projects which are lodged with the Committee. Such complaints can be made by any person.

### **Reporting:**

1. The Committee shall provide the RGSC (via the Executive Secretary) with a copy of its minutes within two weeks of a meeting being held.
2. The Committee shall report as required by the RGSC, on all matters relating to policy, guidelines and changes to application and progress report forms.
3. An annual report shall be submitted to the March Meeting of the RGSC and shall contain the following:
  - i. a review of the Committee's composition and terms of reference;
  - ii. an attached summary list of all applications received and the decisions taken;
  - iii. a review of the Committee's quality assurance mechanisms;
  - iv. a summary of all policy matters, amendments to procedures and guidelines

- v. referred to the RGSC for approval;  
matters to be approved or endorsed by the RGSC.

**Secretariat:** Administrative Officer (Research), Research and Graduate Studies Office.

Updated 24/11/08