UCC Genetic Engineering Group

Terms of Reference

1. The UCC Genetic Engineering Group (formally the Genetic Engineering Committee) has been established to satisfy the requirement of the *GMO (Contained Use) Regulations 2001*, as amended ('*the Regulations*') for the establishment of GMO related biosafety Groups as may be required by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Specifically, the Genetic Engineering Group [GEG] will advise the Chair of the Biological Advisory Group, the Vice President for Research (VPR) and the University Management Team on compliance with the requirements of *the Regulations* and other EPA requirements or legislation of relevance.

2. The VPR and relevant Heads of College, and Directors of Research Institutes are responsible for the corporate implementation of this GMO legislation within their functional areas, on behalf of the Governing Body.

3. Heads of College/School/Department, Directors of Research Institutes and the Principal Investigator/User undertaking work with GMOs are responsible for:

    3.1. The registration of work under *the Regulations* and associated notification to the EPA and other bodies as necessary. [This to include the payment of all associated fees.] Said parties are also responsible for prior notification to the Genetic Engineering Group of their intentions to conduct GMO work and for the furnishing of copies of all documents submitted to the EPA and other relevant bodies and copies of all correspondence with same. Inspection of facilities can be undertaken by the Chair (or an nominated alternate) of the GEG. These inspections can be either announced or unannounced.

    3.2. The provision of suitable facilities, equipment and competent personnel for the conducting of said work so as to ensure safety and legislative compliance* of individual projects(s).

        ** the Regulations* and *Safety Health and Welfare at Work regulations,* including specifically the *SHWW Biological Agents Regulations* current edition and schedules to same.

    3.3. The adherence to best practice and all University Safety Policies.

    3.4. The conducting of risk assessments prior to commencing work with GMOs and the keeping of same and any relevant standard operating procedures up to date. The implementation and operation of all regulatory requirements (whether by Schedule to *the Regulations*, EPA consent condition to the User, or other legislative requirement) including containment, signage, equipment, waste handling, record keeping and training. The implementation of any other requirements as may be advised by Biosafety Group, UCC fire or safety advisers or Inspectors of the EPA or other relevant body.

    3.5. The periodic dissemination of essential risk/control information to other relevant people (cleaning, security, maintenance, other contractors, emergency personnel).

    3.6. Devising and operation of local emergency response measures. The reporting and investigation of accidents or dangerous incidents. Liaison with emergency services and regulatory inspectors.

4. Group secretariat shall be provided by the Office of the VPRI. The Group will consist of no more than twelve members and shall include:
    (a) A Chairperson, appointed by the Chair of the Biological Advisory Group in consultation with the OVPRI.
    (b) Chair of the Biological Advisory Group.
    (c) A Biosafety Adviser, who oversees the day-to-day implementation of the decisions of the Group (subject to 2 and 3 above previously)
    (d) Representatives of appropriate staff from the Colleges, Research Institutes and Departments where regular work with GMOs is performed.
    (e) Two external representatives.

5. The Group shall meet at least twice per year, or more often as required.

6. The Group will liaise on behalf of the University with the relevant enforcement agencies (primarily the EPA) on all matters concerning GMO compliance.

7. The Group will review applications from University Users to the EPA for consent to use GMOs under the terms of *the Regulations* and other related legislation and provide advice on same.

8. The Group will oversee an annual review of work involving GMOs to ensure that EPA consent conditions are being adhered to and that risk assessments and control measures are adequate.

9. The Group will consult on emergency response plans covering accidental spills and personnel contamination resulting from GMO work and the treatment and disposal of wastes arising from GMO work.

10. The Group will report to the Chair of the Biological Advisory Group, the VPRI and relevant Heads of College as necessary and will report to the EPA on an annual basis. The VPRI will appraise the UMT as necessary.

11. The Group will address other GMO issues as they arise.