

To Vice-Presidents/Deans, Heads of Schools, HoFAs

From Dr Melanie Taylor

Date 4 August 2009

cc Prof M Case, Dr S A Robson, Dr D Barker, HOFAs,
School Biological Safety Advisors, Safety Representatives

Reference Safety Circular 5/2009

Biological safety developments

HOSs are asked to note:

- the existence of new University guidance on how to identify persons competent to advise on biological safety matters, and revised guidance on disinfection, and to distribute this information to relevant staff in their school.
- the forthcoming revision of legislation relating to biological agents, known as the single regulatory framework for work with human and animal pathogens.
- the recommendation to maintain lists of biological agents in the likely event that there will be exemptions from payment of registration fees in transitional arrangements.

1. Guidance on "competent person"
The University Biological Safety Advisor has developed guidance for managers and others on what to look for in a competent person. It is available at http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/healthandsafety/Technical_Briefing_Notes/biological_agents-competent_help.pdf
2. Guidance on Disinfection
The HSS guidance on disinfection in laboratories has been revised and updated, and is at <http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/healthandsafety/CoPs&Guidance/disinfectants-g.pdf>
3. Single regulatory framework for work with human and animal pathogens
The current legislation has been comprehensively reviewed by the Callaghan Committee, following the escape of foot and mouth virus from Pirbright labs in 2007. The proposed Biological Agents and Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations 2010 will result in revocation of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (as far as biological agents are concerned), the Genetically Modified Organisms (Contained Use) Regulations and the Specified Animal Pathogens Order, giving us a single regulatory framework for all such work. There will be a new approved list of pathogens (the current ACPD list only covers human pathogens). Work covered by the proposed Regulation is likely to be subject to cost recovery by the Regulatory Authority. In preparation, Schools are advised to maintain a list of **all** projects involving biological agents (but not established cell lines at this stage) so that the research activities can be registered under any transitional arrangements that may obviate the need to pay a fee. Progress towards the regulatory changes can be tracked at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/biosafety/callaghan.htm>

Dr Melanie Taylor
University Safety Advisor