

Media release



The Hon Dr Michael Wooldridge
Minister for Health and Aged Care

MW98/01

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NEW GENE TECHNOLOGY REGULATOR TO TAKE UP POSITION IN DECEMBER:WOOLDRIDGE

Federal Health Minister, Dr Michael Wooldridge, today announced the appointment of Dr Sue Meek, as the Commonwealth's Gene Technology Regulator (GTR).

Dr Meek, who is at present Executive Director of the Science and Technology Division of the West Australian Department of Commerce and Trade, will take up her new appointment in December this year.

The Acting GTR, Ms Liz Cain, who founded the Interim Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the new Office of the GTR, will continue as Regulator until the end of the year. Ms Cain did not apply for the permanent Regulator's position.

Dr Wooldridge said he was delighted that Federal Cabinet and all State and Territory Governments had endorsed Dr Meek's appointment.

"Dr Meek has extensive experience in biotechnology-based industry development along with a proven track record in public sector administration and implementation of public policy in the science and technology arena," he said.

"As a representative for the WA government, Dr Meek was extensively involved in the consultative processes in the formulation of the Gene Technology Act and she has represented the States in international negotiations to develop a Biosafety Protocol under the United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity.

"In her role as the Gene Technology Regulator Dr Meek will face a number of challenges as gene technology continues to expand its horizons and I am convinced that she is well qualified to face these with enthusiasm and a commitment to protect, above all else, human health and safety and the environment," Dr Wooldridge said.

A CV for Dr Meek is attached.

Media contact: Craig Simonetto, Office of Dr Wooldridge 0413 722 281
Kay McNiece, Office of the Gene Technology Regulator 0412 132 585

Note: Dr Meek will be not being doing media interviews until she commences in the position in December 2001.

Dr SUE MEEK
COMMONWEALTH GENE TECHNOLOGY REGULATOR
(Appointment effective December 2001)

AREAS OF FOCUS:

Dr Sue Meek specialises in promoting understanding and awareness of science and technology issues and operating at the interface of industry, academia and government to develop policies and programs to facilitate the conduct and commercialisation of research and development.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:

1997 - Present

Executive Director, Science and Technology Division, Department of Commerce and Trade

Member of the department's Corporate Executive team. Responsible for promoting the integration of science and technology (S&T) across the department's sectorally-based structure, expanded research and development (R&D) support and infrastructure development programs, and the whole of government implementation of the *State Science and Technology Policy* and *Government Intellectual Property Management Policy*.

1994 - 1997

Manager, R&D Branch, Department of Commerce and Trade

Coordinated the consultation, formulation and Cabinet approval processes for the State's S&T and public sector intellectual property management policies. Responsible for the development and implementation of programs designed to increase investment in research in WA and enhance the State's infrastructure for industry-focussed R&D

1991 - 1994

Manager, Emerging Industries Branch, Department of State Development

Responsible for improving the State's capacity to identify, develop and adopt opportunities from strategic R&D intensive industries such as aquaculture, biotechnology, environmental management, information technology and renewable energy.

1988 to 1991

Manager, Biotechnology Branch, Technology and Industry Development Authority

Responsible for promoting the establishment and development of biotechnology-based industry within the State, encouraging the application of biotechnology to existing industry and providing advice on bioethical and regulatory issues.

1984 to 1988

Technical Director, Sue Meek and Associates

Development Consultant specialising in the commercialisation of biologically-based ventures. Consultancies involved technical and commercial performance appraisals of companies for potential investors, evaluations of products for inventors and business plan preparation for startup ventures. Also engaged as Executive Officer to the South Australian Biotechnology Promotion Committee and Consultant on Biotechnology to the South Australian State Government.

1981 to 1984**Consultant Biologist, Australian Mineral Development Laboratories (AMDEL)**

Projects undertaken include an Australia-wide survey of new business opportunities for AMDEL in the biological sciences, the establishment of a regional water and waste water monitoring facility for the North Queensland region. Designed and managed a diverse range of consultancies ranging from environmental management strategies to product failure investigations.

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:**1982 Doctor of Philosophy, Marine Biology, James Cook University of North Queensland**

Research into the growth and regeneration of a fast growing coral species. Funded under the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan.

1976 Master of Science, Oceanography, Southampton University

Course work in both physical and biological oceanography and research into the metabolism of enclosed marine microbial populations. Funded by the Natural Environmental Research and Development Council.

1975 Bachelor of Science (Hons), Microbiology, University of Surrey

Majored in medical bacteriology and virology and researched the structure and composition of dental plaque.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

- * Australian Institute of Company Directors
- * AusBiotech
- * Australian Marine Science Association

CURRENT COMMITTEES & APPOINTMENTS:

- Premier's Science Council
- Commonwealth, State and Territory Advisory Council on Innovation
- Medical and Health Research Infrastructure Council
- Telstra Small Business and Business Woman of the Year State Judging Panels
- Joint Venture Management Committee of Strategic Research Fund for the Marine Environment (Chair)
- NW Shelf Joint Environmental Management Study Steering Committee
- Commonwealth-State Consultative Group on UN Biosafety Protocol
- Executive Committee, WA Branch of AusBiotech
- Contributing Editor, Australasian Biotechnology Journal
- IDCs on Gene Technology Regulation and Access to Biological Resources
- State Agricultural Biotechnology Centre Management Committee
- WA Biomedical Research Institute Board
- The University of Western Australia's Intellectual Property Committee

As at 27th September 2001

