Australian Government

Department of Health

Office of the Gene Technology Regulator

Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee

15 October 2018

Communiqué

This Communiqué covers matters considered at the 16th video conference of the Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee (15 October 2018)[1]

The Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee (GTTAC) is a statutory advisory committee established under the *Gene Technology Act 2000* (the Act) to provide scientific and technical advice to the Gene Technology Regulator (the Regulator) and the Legislative and Governance Forum on Gene Technology.

The Regulator seeks advice from GTTAC on licence applications to work with genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and on Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plans (RARMPs) prepared for applications. The purpose of this Communiqué is to provide a brief overview of GTTAC's consideration of applications and RARMPs and, in accordance with the Gene Technology Regulations 2001, to publish committee resolutions given to the Regulator. The Communiqué also provides an overview of any other deliberations of the committee.

DEALINGS INVOLVING THE INTENTIONAL RELEASE OF A GMO

Dealings involving the Intentional Release (DIR) of a GMO can involve a limited and controlled release (clinical trial or field trial) or a commercial (general) release.

The Regulator must seek GTTAC advice during the preparation of a RARMP for DIR applications which do not qualify as limited and controlled under Section 50A of the Act. The Regulator must also seek advice from GTTAC on RARMPs that have been prepared for all DIR applications.

The RARMP for every DIR licence application is released for public consultation. Information on how to obtain copies of DIR applications and RARMPs is provided at the end of this document.

ADVICE ON CONSULTATION RARMPS – LIMITED AND CONTROLLED RELEASE

DIR 164 – Limited and controlled release of canola genetically modified for herbicide resistance

Monsanto Australia Limited applied for a licence to conduct field trials of canola plants that have been genetically modified (GM) for herbicide resistance.

GTTAC noted the key points in the consultation RARMP including the conclusion that this release poses negligible risks to the health and safety of people and the environment. GTTAC suggested that the RARMP may benefit from further clarification regarding any new or additional information related to the *cp4 epsps* gene and the combination of the *cp4epsps* and *dmo* genes.

GTTAC also discussed proposed licence conditions relating to containment of the GMO.

[1] The video conference was held at Department of Health facilities in Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth and Melbourne.

Resolutions:

- The Committee agrees with the overall conclusions of the RARMP.
- The Regulator should consider clarifying whether any new or additional information has been considered in relation to the *cp4 epsps* gene and any possible interactions with the *dmo* gene.

ENQUIRIES AND RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT PLANS

For all enquiries and to obtain copies of applications or RARMPs for dealings involving the intentional release of GMOs into the environment, please call the OGTR on 1800 181 030 or email ogtr@health.gov.au. RARMPs are also available on the OGTR website.