Questions & Answers on licence DIR 220 – Commercial supply of multivalent cat vaccines containing a genetically modified component for the prevention of feline leukemia virus infection

What does this licence allow?

This licence allows Intervet Australia Pty Ltd to commercially supply multivalent cat vaccines containing a genetically modified organism (GMO). The vaccines received approval under the *Gene Technology Act 2000* and protect against several infectious diseases in cats, including feline leukemia virus infection. The vaccines contain the GMO and other attenuated, non-genetically modified (GM) viruses and bacteria. The vaccine is only available by prescription and can only be administered by qualified veterinarians, Australia-wide.

What diseases do the vaccines protect against?

The vaccines protect against feline panleukopenia virus, feline calicivirus, feline herpesvirus, *Chlamydia felis* and feline leukemia virus infection. These infectious pathogens cause gastrointestinal, respiratory, conjunctival, or immunosuppressive disease in cats, and some can be fatal.

How has the GMO been created?

The vaccines contain GM Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis Virus (VEEV) that produces a protein from feline leukemia virus (FeLV) and cannot produce more viral particles. The GMO does not cause disease in cats but triggers an immune response against the protein and protects against later infection by FeLV.

What other regulatory processes apply to this release?

Veterinary products must comply with requirements of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).

What controls have been imposed for this GMO?

The licence is for an ongoing commercial release. The Regulator has not imposed specific measures to manage risk, as the risk assessment concluded that this release of the GMO poses negligible risks to the health and safety of people or the environment. General conditions have been imposed to ensure that there is ongoing oversight of the release.

Want more information?

A number of documents relating to this decision are available on the DIR 220 page of the OGTR website or via Freecall 1800 181 030. These documents include the finalised Risk Assessment and Risk Management Plan (RARMP), a summary of the RARMP and the licence.

The Office of the Gene Technology Regulator

Tel: 1800 181 030 E-mail: ogtr@health.gov.au

OGTR Website