



Australian Government

Department of Health

Office of the Gene Technology Regulator

Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee

Meeting of 26 June 2020

Communiqué

This Communiqué covers matters considered at the 14th meeting of the Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee (26 June 2020)

Background

The Gene Technology Ethics and Community Consultative Committee (GTECCC) is a statutory advisory committee established under the *Gene Technology Act 2000* to provide advice on the request of the Gene Technology Regulator (Regulator) or the Legislative and Governance Forum on Gene Technology, on issues of ethical or community concern relating to gene technology.

GTECCC members were appointed by the Minister for Aged Care and Senior Australians and Minister for Youth and Sport, Senator the Hon Richard Colbeck, for a three year term commencing 1 February 2020. The term of the previous Committee expired on 31 January 2020.

The purpose of this Communiqué is to provide a brief overview of the key matters considered by GTECCC at its inaugural meeting, held by videoconference on 26 June 2020.

Induction

GTECCC was provided with introductory information on:

- the national gene technology scheme and the role of GTECCC
- OGTR's communication activities
- OGTR's approach to risk communication and public consultation.

Third Review of the National Gene Technology Scheme

The Committee was updated on the implementation of recommendations from the [Third Review of the National Gene Technology Scheme](#) (Scheme Review). Members noted that the Scheme Review had found that overall, the gene technology regulatory scheme is working well, and that any proposed changes would aim to modernise and futureproof the legislation.

Work plan

The Committee discussed ideas for possible inclusion in a GTECCC 2020-2023 work plan, for consideration by the Regulator and further development at a future GTECCC meeting. Key topics raised include:

- the importance of effective communication on the 'gap-filler' role of the OGTR, the overall operation of the gene technology regulatory scheme, and how genetically modified vaccines and therapeutic treatments are regulated
- activities of community scientists wanting to contribute to solutions relating to COVID-19

- engagement of people identified in the [2019 survey of community attitudes to gene technology](#) as having 'middle ground' views
- work initiated by the previous membership of GTECCC on guiding principles for communication on gene technology
- work that may arise from implementation of the recommendations from the Scheme review.

For all inquiries, please call the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator on 1800 181 030 (free-call) or email ogtr@health.gov.au