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December 5, 2006

Edward H. Hammond, Director
The Sunshine Project
P.O. Box 41987
Austin, TX 78704

Dear Mr. Hammond,

Thank you for taking the time on the phone to answer my questions regarding the Sunshine Project and its survey of Institutional Biosafety Committees registered with the National Institutes of Health Office of Biotechnology Activities. It was very informative for me. Also, thank you for allowing me to provide an explanation as to why the University of Missouri-Rolla IBC has no minutes for the time period requested (since 1 may 2003).

No research at UMR currently receives, or has ever received, any support for recombinant DNA research from NIH (Section I-C General Applicability). However, UMR does have a limited amount of research activity that involves recombinant DNA (less than 15 researchers, all BL1 level, and most fall under exempt experiments. Section III-F). In addition to its being prudent UMR established an IBC and annually registers with OBA for the following reasons:

- Other agencies that have funded UMR research involving recombinant DNA require compliance with NIH Guidelines. (Four USDA ARS CREES proposals in the last 15 years)
- Section I-D. As a condition for [potential future] NIH funding of recombinant DNA research, institutions shall ensure that such research conducted at or sponsored by the institution, irrespective of the source of funding, shall comply with the NIH Guidelines.

Our committee's business has been limited to either designating research activities exempt or approving and overseeing the few non-exempt activities. Because of this we have been able to conduct our business via e-mail. We have not found it necessary to meet on a regular basis to discuss recombinant DNA issues as none of our research activities fall into categories described in Sections IIIA, B, or C, requiring IRB, NIH, or RAC review prior to initiation. In addition, no recombinant DNA activities by UMR researchers involve microbial agents that raise concerns about their potential misuse as described in the National Academy of Sciences report "Biotechnology Research in an Age of Terrorism."

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information regarding recombinant DNA research at University of Missouri-Rolla or its oversight by the Institutional Biosafety Committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ronald L. Frank'.

Ronald L. Frank, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Biosafety Committee
University of Missouri-Rolla
Rolla, MO 65409-1120