

COMMITTEES

LABORATORY STEERING COMMITTEE (LSC)

The combination of laboratory-based and epidemiological research at IARC offers unique opportunities to conduct interdisciplinary research to identify the causes and mechanisms of cancer and translate these findings into better disease prevention. Laboratory research directly involves seven Groups or Sections at IARC (BMA, EGE, GCS, ICB, LSB, MMB, and MPA) and implements highly sophisticated techniques and methods. These techniques are as diverse as high-throughput DNA sequencing, single-nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) genotyping, mutation scanning, infectious

agent detection, hormone and nutrient measurement, metabolome analysis, and biomolecular imaging.

The IARC Laboratory Steering Committee (LSC) oversees the IARC core laboratory facilities and advises the Director on their most efficient use. LSC meets every one or two months to discuss issues related to the acquisition or replacement of laboratory equipment, the development and renovation of laboratory facilities, the maximization of cost recovery, and the development of external collaborations.

Over the past two years, LSC has been instrumental in the installation of new mass spectrometers for the analysis of the human metabolome, the acquisition of a digital slide scanner for pathology confirmation of tumour material, the establishment of Electronic Laboratory Notebooks, the initiation of a new series of Laboratory Technical Watch seminars, the organization of regular meetings of the laboratory technical staff, and the launch of a new intranet site for laboratory activities.

BIOBANK STEERING COMMITTEE (BSC)

The number of biological specimens stored in IARC's Biobank facility is now close to 6 million, and this number continues to grow with our ongoing scientific activities. The IARC Biobank Steering Committee (BSC) oversees biobanking at the Agency and advises IARC's Director regarding the strategic development of the biobank and the advantages and challenges associated with the heterogeneous nature of IARC's biobanking needs.

The key development of BSC in the 2012–2013 biennium was the creation and implementation of a sample Access Policy for the Agency. The goal of this policy is to ensure that the Agency's samples are put to their best possible use in cancer research by providing clear guidelines through which qualified researchers are able to apply for access. BSC has also supported the day-to-day logistic challenges of biobanking at IARC and the continued implementation of IARC sample management systems,

particularly debating the ideal data variable contents needed to standardize data across studies.

The IARC Ethics Committee (IEC) is composed of eight external members, one WHO member, and four IARC staff members.

IEC holds five meetings each year at IARC. In 2012–2013, IEC met eight times (up to July 2013). During these meetings, 60 applications were evaluated; 47 were approved after ethical review, eight were requested to resubmit or

provide additional information before approval, four were given conditional approval pending submission of further information, and one study was not approved.

The IARC Ethics Advisory Group (EAV), composed of three international experts, supports the work of IEC by providing expertise in ethical issues when necessary. During the biennium,

EAV was consulted on the management of incidental findings in genomic studies. Further information about IEC and EAV can be found on the IEC web site (<http://ethics.iarc.fr/role.php>).

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (OHSC)

The IARC Occupational Health and Safety Committee (OHSC) focuses on issues in close collaboration with the Staff Physician and the IARC administration to provide a safe and comfortable work environment for all IARC staff.

Educational activities offered include a general safety introduction for new employees, a fire extinguisher briefing, a course for the emergency first-aid team, training programmes for newcomers

in the laboratories and for workers in the Level 2 and Level 3 facilities, and a course on the hazards of handling liquid nitrogen.

In the 2012–2013 biennium, the main OHSC activities included: an inspection of all IARC radioactivity-based procedures by the French Autorité de Sûreté Nucléaire, which resulted in the application of new surveillance methods for radioisotope users; submission of

a renewal request for our Genetically Modified Organisms authorization to the Commission de Génie Génétique of the Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche; and an updated medical follow-up procedure for staff working in laboratories, adapted to their potential exposures.