

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH PORTFOLIO

Budget Estimates 2017 - 2018, 29 May 2017

Ref No: SQ17-000798

OUTCOME: 5 - Regulation, Safety and Protection

Topic: Gene Technology Technical Advisory Committee

Type of Question: Written Question on Notice

Senator: Rice, Janet

Question:

Did anyone on the GTTAC oppose its position “that organisms altered by some site-directed nuclease techniques and oligo-directed mutagenesis are unlikely to pose risks that are different to natural mutations, conventional breeding or mutagenesis”?

- a) If yes, which members of GTTAC disagreed with this position;
- b) if no, In light of expert opinion that contradicts GTTAC’s position and the lack of any opposition on the GTTAC, would you agree that the GTTAC may be biased and not providing the breadth of expert advice the OGTR actually needs?
- c) Will you table the minutes and any relevant documentation from the meeting?
- d) Will the OGTR now seek unconflicted technical advice regarding these new technologies?

Answer:

GTTAC reached consensus on the following resolutions:

- Risks posed by organisms altered by SDN-1 are unlikely to be different to naturally mutated organisms.
- SDN-2 and oligo-directed mutagenesis are unlikely to pose risks that are different to natural mutations, conventional breeding or mutagenesis.
- Successive rounds of modifications using SDN-2 and oligo-directed mutagenesis may pose risks similar to inserting new genes or SDN-3.
- Off target effects do pose risks different to the intended effects.

- a) Not applicable.
- b) The Department does not provide opinions on these matters.
- c) Yes. Minutes for relevant agenda items from the 6 June 2016 GTTAC meeting are at [Attachment A](#). An agenda paper for Agenda Item 4 – New Technologies, is at [Attachment B](#).
- d) The OGTR has, and will continue to seek the best technical advice when required in order to discharge the Regulator’s functions.

Attachments:

- Attachment A Extract from GTTAC Minutes - COI and New technologies - 6 June 2016
Attachment B Item 4 New technologies agenda paper - GTTAC 6 June 2016