

COMMITTEES

LABORATORY STEERING COMMITTEE (LSC)

Laboratory research directly involves seven Groups or Sections at IARC (BMA, EGE, GCS, ICB, LSB, MMB, and MPA). The IARC Laboratory Steering Committee (LSC) oversees the IARC core laboratory facilities and advises the Director on their most efficient use. Significant tasks of the LSC over the biennium have concerned the reallocation

of laboratory space and the move of the Biomarkers Group (BMA) to the 6th and 13th floors of the tower building, as well as the purchase of new laboratory equipment, including four robots for handling liquid biospecimens, two mass spectrometers, a pyrosequencer, and a next-generation sequencer of medium capacity. An inventory of current needs

for equipment maintenance and a plan for replacement of old items of equipment were prepared. The LSC also played an active role in the reclassification of laboratory technician posts, the definition of space requirements for laboratory activities in the “Nouveau Centre”, and the organization of Laboratory Technical Watch seminars.

BIOBANK STEERING COMMITTEE (BSC)

The IARC Biobank Steering Committee (BSC) continues to support biobanking activities at the Agency and advises the Director regarding the strategic development of the Biobank both internally and with external collaborators and projects, including the growing involvement in international biobanking capacity-building in low- and middle-income countries.

Following the establishment of a sample Access Policy for the Agency

during the 2012–2013 biennium, the BSC has supported the Biobank in the development of standard operating procedures and working instructions to ensure that samples are received and shipped from the Agency in optimal condition and according to strict international regulations.

The BSC also approved the proposal for a revision of the Common Minimum Technical Standards and Protocols for Biological Resource Centres, first

published in 2007, which was started in 2015.

The BSC also participated in discussions about plans for the Biobank of the new IARC building, according to the future needs of the Agency, and proposed the development of contingency plans for different types of events that could threaten the integrity of the current biospecimen collections.

The biennium witnessed the formation of the new Bioinformatics Steering Committee (BISC), which is tasked with overseeing matters related to bioinformatics in support of the Agency's own and collaborative projects. The BISC, led by chair Dr James McKay (GCS) and vice-chair Dr Jiri Zavadil (MMB), consists of 14 members representing all Groups with bioinformatics needs. The BISC oversees two working groups.

The Bioinformatics Working Group, led by Dr Magali Olivier (MMB), is responsible for facilitating interaction in bioinformatics within the Agency and with collaborative partners. This group holds biweekly sessions attended by about 30 participants from IARC and local bioinformatics groups. With the Education and Training Group (ETR), the Bioinformatics Working Group has also developed courses in bioinformatics for

IARC staff members. The Informatics Working Group, led by Mr Christopher Jack (ITS), is responsible for the information technology aspects of the Agency's scientific activities and has overseen two major technical expansions of IARC's high-performance computing capacity, ensuring that the computing environment matches the Agency's current demand.

ETHICS COMMITTEE (IEC)

The IARC Ethics Committee (IEC) ensures that research conducted or supported by IARC conforms to international ethical standards for research involving humans, and that measures are in place to safeguard the rights and welfare of participants. The IEC ethical review is complementary to local/national ethical approval. The committee is composed of

15 senior members of diverse nationalities with complementary expertise in epidemiology, genetics, oncology, law, and bioethics. Dr Jean-Pierre Boissel (chair, 2010–2013) terminated his mandate in 2014, and Dr Béatrice Fervers was appointed to the role of chair, supported by Dr Paolo Vineis as vice-chair. During the period 2014–2015 (up to September

2015), the IEC evaluated 74 new projects and 13 resubmissions of projects previously reviewed by the IEC. In addition, the IEC regularly considers specific ethical issues on a broader level to advise the Agency. An example is the discussion document on the ethical issues raised by incidental findings in genomic studies, prepared in 2014.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (OHSC)

The mission of the IARC Occupational Health and Safety Committee (OHSC) is to ensure, in close collaboration with the Staff Physician and the IARC administration, that excellent working conditions are provided to all IARC personnel. In support of the process of the conception of the new IARC building, the OHSC produced a report in 2014 outlining recommendations on office spaces and optimal physical

working conditions, including social space and dedicated recreational areas. The report also took into consideration the expectations of IARC personnel who were interviewed through a questionnaire developed by the OHSC and the Staff Association. The activities of the OHSC also included (i) the revision of the procedures to be followed in case of an accident with biological samples and in the event of a colleague feeling

faint or dizzy, (ii) regular and specific safety trainings, and (iii) implementation of measures and controls to improve laboratory safety. In collaboration with the Laboratory Services and Biobank Group (LSB), the OHSC has started to work on management of exposure to chemicals and biological hazards in the Agency and is currently exploring the options for developing a risk assessment methodology.