

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
INSTITUTIONAL BIOSAFETY COMMITTEE



Minutes

Wednesday, 26 November 2025

On-line meeting

14h00-16h00

Committee members

Prof M Moshabela	<i>ex officio</i>
Prof J Murugan (acting)	<i>ex officio</i>
Prof E Ramugondo	<i>ex officio</i>
Prof B Collier-Reed	<i>ex officio</i>

Prof Digby Warner	(IBC Chair)
Dr Thomas Oelgeschläger	(Chair, SCI FBC & Deputy IBC Chair)
A/Prof Suraj Parihar	(Chair, FHS FBC & Deputy IBC Chair)
Ms Bronwyn Arendze-Bailey	(Scientific Officer)
Prof Johan Burger	(Community Member – Plant Expert)
Vacant	(Community Member)
Mrs Paula Saner	(Acting Director: ORI)
Vacant	(FHS, Health, Safety and Biosafety Manager)
Dr Tshepo Matjila	(RAF Director)
Ms Kim Van Reenen	(Environmental Risk Manager)
Dr Sandiswa Mbewana	(SCI Representative – Plant Expert)
Dr Sarita Groenewald	(Biosafety & Biosecurity Specialist)
Prof Robert Wilkinson	Co-opted committee member
Dr Ros Chapman	Co-opted committee member

Servicing Officer

Ms Thando Mdaka
Ms Lisa Williams (back-up)

By invitation:

Dr Blessing Silaigwana (FHS: RDU)
Ms Olivia Langenhoven (FHS: RDU)
Ms Kirshni Naidoo (Director: Occupational Health & Safety)

Attendees:

Prof Digby Warner
Dr Thomas Oelgeschläger
Sophia Gessner will be standing in for:
A/Prof Suraj Parihar
Ms Bronwyn Arendze-Bailey
Dr Tshepo Matjila
Dr Ros Chapman
Dr Sarita Groenewald
Mrs Paula Saner
Dr Blessing Silaigwana
Ms Olivia Langenhoven
Prof Johan Burger
Ms Lisa Williams
Ms Thando Mdaka

Apologies:

Prof Robert Wilkinson
A/Prof Suraj Parihar – Sophia Gessner will be standing in for him
Ms Kim Van Reenen
Dr Sandiswa Mbewana
Ms Kirshni Naidoo

1 PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed members

Apologies:

Prof Robert Wilkinson

A/Prof Suraj Parihar

Ms Kim Van Reenen

Dr Sandiswa Mbewana

Ms Kirshni Naidoo

2 QUORUM

The meeting achieved quorum.

3 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All members duly sent their responses confirming no conflicts of interest.

4 CONFIRMATION OF 2 SETS OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Two sets of minutes from the previous meeting (29 October 2025) were considered: an internal full version and a public redacted version.

The Committee approved both as accurate records of the meeting.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

5.1 Update on the appointment of new community members

The Committee noted that a previously identified prospective community member had declined appointment. The process of identifying an alternative candidate is ongoing, and potential candidates with relevant expertise will be approached.

5.2 Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training requirement

The Committee received an update on completion of the Responsible Conduct of Research training modules. Most members have completed the training; a small number still need to do so and will be contacted individually.

Completion of RCR training remains an internal audit requirement for all IBC members. The Committee noted that the training is accredited for professional ethics points and supports responsible research practice.

5.3 Updating of F-IBC Forms

The Committee discussed ongoing work to revise Faculty/Institutional Biosafety application forms, particularly to better capture work involving mRNA technologies and other advanced therapeutics. Experts

working in this area have agreed in principle to review the proposed form changes once current workload pressures decrease.

Additional technical issues identified by Faculty Biosafety Committees will be incorporated into form revisions.

5.4 UCT Integrated BioRisk Management Policy

The Committee received an update on plans to develop an integrated institutional biosafety and biosecurity / virus risk management policy, including a workshop provisionally planned for late January 2026. This workshop will involve key stakeholders and will inform subsequent alignment of forms, SOPs and oversight processes.

6 MATTERS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

6.1 New protocols for discussion

FHS Protocols

6.1.1 Immunogenicity and efficacy of mpox vaccines in mice

The Committee reviewed a new protocol involving the evaluation of candidate mpox vaccines in mouse models. Work will be conducted in appropriate containment facilities, with non-infectious work at BSL-2 and challenge experiments at higher containment.

The Committee noted that mpox virus is listed as a controlled biological agent under national legislation and agreed that this should be explicitly flagged in correspondence to the investigators. The Faculty Biosafety Committee had recommended approval.

Decision: Protocol approved.

6.1.2 Production of HIV pseudovirions

The Committee reviewed a renewal application involving the use of non-replicating HIV pseudoviruses for laboratory studies. These pseudoviruses are produced in cell lines and handled under BSL-2 conditions.

Members briefly discussed the theoretical oncogenic and recombination risks associated with the system. It was noted that this approach is widely used internationally. The Committee agreed that the risk is low but requested clarification from the investigators on specific technical points.

Decision: Protocol approved, subject to follow-up clarification from the investigators.

6.2 Protocol amendment for discussion

6.2.1 *IBC005-2023: A Phase Ib/IIa two-part, randomized, placebo-controlled, observer-blind, dose-finding evaluation trial to describe the safety, reactogenicity, and immunogenicity of two investigational vaccines against tuberculosis in BCG vaccinated, HIV-negative subjects.*

The Committee considered an amendment to an existing tuberculosis vaccine trial. The amendment removes a planned expansion into an additional participant group, thereby reducing the overall risk profile of the study.

Decision: Amendment approved.

6.3 Noting of protocols

The Committee noted a number of additional protocols that had been reviewed and approved at Faculty Biosafety Committee level and were submitted to the IBC for noting only.

No biosafety concerns were raised. The Committee reaffirmed that such protocols will normally be listed “for noting” and not discussed in detail unless a member specifically requests it.

Decision: All listed protocols were noted.

6.3.1 *Microbial modulation of the tumour microenvironment in pancreatic*

Prof. Jonathan Blackburn

6.3.2 *Immunogenicity and efficacy of mRNA RSV vaccine in mouse and rat models*

Dr Roanne Keeton

6.3.3 *Developing a microfluidic-based immune monitoring platform for TB biomarker translation auto WBA-2-study*

Dr Munyaradzi Musvosvi

6.3.4 *An investigation of neurobiological mechanisms involved in neurodevelopmental impairments of offspring exposed to HIV Tat protein in utero: a murine model for HIV-exposed uninfected children*

A/Prof Peter Naude

6.3.5 *Azithromycin-induced modulation of immunity and gut health in advanced HIV*

Dr Ruby Bunjun

6.3.6 *A Phase 2 Randomized, Adaptive, Dose-Ranging, Open-Label Trial of Novel Regimes for the Treatment of Pulmonary Tuberculosis (RAD-TB)*

Dr Enid Nicolette Tredoux

6.3.7 *Biomarker Approaches for Tuberculosis Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment Response Protocol Number: REPORT SA – 003*

A/Prof Sean Wasserman

6.3.8 *Characterization of HIV-1 diversity and evolution*

7 BIOSAFETY AND BIOSECURITY AUDIT AND FACILITY INSPECTION SCHEDULE

The Committee received a report on biosafety and biosecurity inspections carried out during the year and on the proposed inspection schedule for 2026.

Key points:

- A substantial number of research groups and laboratories have been inspected during the reporting period.
- A draft inspection schedule for the following year prioritises facilities with higher biosafety risk levels.
- An external funder has requested formal evidence that the IBC has reviewed and endorsed the institutional inspection schedule.
- The Committee discussed how inspection findings should inform protocol review and longer-term policy development, including potential alignment with formal bio-risk management standards.

Decision: The Committee approved the proposed biosafety/biosecurity inspection schedule for 2026.

The schedule will be included as a standing item on future IBC agendas for brief updates and flagging of any facilities of concern.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Farewell to Prof Johan Burger (Community Member)

The Committee noted that this was the final meeting attended by one of the external community members, who is stepping down after several years of service. The Chair expressed appreciation for his contribution, and the member thanked the Committee in return.

The Committee also noted that a formal letter confirming IBC endorsement of the inspection schedule will be prepared for submission to an external funder.

9 DATES OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

The Chair thanked members, FBC chairs and support staff, and the Servicing Officers for their work during 2025, noting the heavy load carried at faculty level and the significant transitions in personnel (including the earlier departures of Ms Suraya Azam and Dr Lynn Horn, and the arrival of new members such as Dr Tshupo Matjila and Dr Groenewald).

He wished members a restful year-end break and safe travels and encouraged them to return refreshed for 2026.

The meeting ended at 15h30.

Signed:



Prof Digby Warner

Chair: Institutional Biosafety Committee

Date: 19 February 2026