

GENE TECHNOLOGY REGULATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

BACKGROUND

The Government has tasked officials to advise on reforms to biotechnology regulation, with a focus on establishing new gene technology legislation and a regulator by December 2025.

This work (the Programme) is led by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), with support from the Ministry for the Environment, the Ministry of Primary Industries, and the Ministry of Health.

The Gene Technology Regulation Technical Advisory Group (TAG) has been established to support the work of the Programme and MBIE expects to require its advice until late 2025.

PURPOSE

The role of the TAG is to:

- provide technical advice to MBIE on up-to-date gene technology regulation, including regulatory procedures and science and technical matters related to biotechnology, genetic techniques and gene therapies.
- ensure that officials' interpretation of relevant science is accurate, that both opportunities and risks are clearly understood and that technical considerations are effectively incorporated into policy development.
- answer specific questions at the request of MBIE that would benefit from its expertise.

MEMBERSHIP

It is the intent that the TAG will provide for a well-balanced group in terms of gender, ethnicity, geographic and sector representation.

Members should collectively have the appropriate mix of skills and experience necessary to:

- Preferably have deep technical expertise and be actively researching in the field.
- Have representatives from the institutes and organisations actively involved in the field (e.g. CRIs, Universities, Biotech companies).

The TAG will be Chaired by Professor Emily Parker, Professor Chemical Biology Ferrier Institute, Department Science Advisor MBIE.

MBIE officials may change the composition of the TAG as the reform programme progresses if different technical expertise is required.

The initial composition of the TAG will be:

Name	Organisation
Professor Emily Parker - Chair	Professor Chemical Biology Ferrier Institute, Department Science Advisor MBIE
Dr William Rolleston	Co-founder of biotechnology company South Pacific Sera Limited; Biotechnology
Associate Professor Tim Hore	Associate Professor in Department of Anatomy, University of Otago
Dr Richard Scott	Science Team Leader – Plant Biotechnology, AgResearch
Professor David Ackerley	Professor of Biotechnology

	School of Biological Sciences, Victoria University of Wellington
Dr Hilary (Billy) Sheppard	Senior Lecturer Biological Sciences, University of Auckland
Dr Alec Foster	Manager Bioproducts and Packaging portfolio, Scion
Professor Jasna Rakonjac	Professor Microbiology, School of Natural Sciences, Massey University
Associate Professor Maui Hudson Whakatōhea, Ngāruahine, and Te Māhurehure	Director Te Kotahi Research Institute Office of Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori, University of Waikato
Dr Andy Allan	Principal Scientist at Plant & Food Research, joint appointment as Professor, University of Auckland.
Dr Nikki Freed	Co-Founder and Chief Scientific Officer, Daisy Lab and lead technologist, Auckland Genomics, the University of Auckland core genomics facility
Dr Rachel Perret	Team leader in Weinkove Laboratory, Malaghan
Ariana Estoras Ngāti Uekaha and Ngāti Maniapoto,	Director Māori Research and Partnerships AgResearch
Professor Neil Gemmell	Professor and Acting Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor Department of Anatomy, University of Otago

Members are appointed until 31 December 2025. Members may resign from the TAG at any time by notifying the Chair and secretariat in writing.

If the Chair is absent from a meeting, the Chair may designate an Acting Chair for that meeting. Because members and observers are appointed in their personal capacity rather than as representatives of organisations, no proxies will be permitted to attend in place of members, except at the discretion of the Chair.

Additional attendees may attend parts of the meeting if required to support specific agenda items. Gene Technology Regulation Programme officials may also co-opt expertise for particular meetings at the discretion of the Chair.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Members of the TAG serve in their individual capacity as experts. They are responsible for presenting their views as objectively as possible and contributing their perspectives to advice provided to the Gene Technology Regulation programme.

Members are expected to consider the views of other members to provide the best possible advice to the Programme but are not expected to reach consensus.

ACCOUNTABILITIES

The TAG's accountabilities are to provide advice to MBIE on gene technology regulatory reform.

Officials from MBIE will be present at the TAG meetings.

DECISION-MAKING

The TAG does not take decisions, it provides advice to senior officials from MBIE for consideration.

The TAG is not expected to reach consensus, and the Chair may present its advice as a range of views.

OPERATION

Frequency of meetings

The TAG will meet monthly, or as otherwise agreed with the Programme Secretariat.

TAG members can expect a workload of three hours per month, that includes a two-hour meeting each month and one hour preparation time. All meetings will be online.

The TAG may also be asked by the MBIE to meet on an ad hoc basis outside of the agreed meeting rhythm.

Role of the Chair

The Chair of the Technical Advisory Group is responsible for summarizing advice for MBIE Programme officials, including in accurately reflecting the range of views expressed and fairly representing any disagreements on technical issues.

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Quorum

Quorum will be a majority of TAG members (half the committee members plus one). Because members serve in their individual capacity there are no substitutes.

Conflicts of Interest

Members should be aware of all actual, perceived and potential conflicts of interest and notify the Chair prior to any meeting. The Secretariat will maintain a register of notified conflicts.

Reporting

The TAG will report to MBIE through its Chair.

Meeting minutes

The Secretariat is responsible for formally recording the actions and decisions and distributing these to TAG members and attendees within five working days after the meeting.

The Chair will review minutes prior to circulation for endorsement by the TAG at the following meeting.

Remuneration

No remuneration is payable to members who are employees of government agencies listed in Schedule 2 of the Public Service Act 2020. Their employer is responsible for meeting all costs associated with their membership on the Technical Advisory Group.

All other members are entitled to compensation of \$54.38/hr in accordance with Group 4 of the Cabinet fees framework.

Should there be the need for an in-person meeting, MBIE will be responsible for booking and paying for travel and accommodation such costs if required.

Secretariat

MBIE will provide the Secretariat. It is the Secretariat's responsibility to:

- Ensure meeting packs are created and promulgated to the committee within an appropriate timeframe agreed by the TAG.
- Liaise with the Chair and key stakeholders regarding materials being submitted to the TAG.
- Ensure meeting rooms, teleconference, or video conference units are booked.
- Provide draft minutes to the Chair as soon as possible after a TAG meeting and ensure that actions are being followed up in accordance with the agreed due dates.

Conflicts of interest and confidentiality

- To positively contribute to the discussions and work of the TAG, it is expected that members will have detailed expertise and experience in Biotechnology. That in itself will not be considered a conflict of interest.
- It is expected and acknowledged that TAG members will have outside interests and obligations. On an on-going basis, each TAG member must disclose any conflict or potential conflict of interest (between those outside interests and obligations and their role on the TAG) to the Chair and the secretariat to manage relevant conflicts. A register of interests will be maintained by the secretariat. These conflicts can be recorded in the table in Annex 1.
- Where there is a direct conflict, TAG members may be asked to by the Chair to excuse themselves from related discussion.
- Members of the TAG may be presented with a range of confidential information, including on aspects of government agencies' business as well as commercially sensitive information. The level of confidentiality on documents will be clearly identified and all members will be expected to protect confidential information.
- Except for such use or as required by law, TAG members will not disclose such confidential information to anyone without prior written consent of the Chair, MBIE and any affected party. TAG members will take reasonable measures to avoid disclosure, dissemination or unauthorised use of any confidential information. Any requests under the Official Information Act should be directed to MBIE secretariat.
- Any discussion at the meetings that is confidential will be clearly identified and noted in the minutes.