



RESEARCH  
AND ENGINEERING

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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DEC 16 2011

Rear Admiral William S. Stokes  
Director, National Toxicology Program Interagency  
Center for the Evaluation of Alternative Toxicological Methods  
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
P.O. Box 12233, K2-16  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Dear Rear Admiral Stokes:

I am replying to Dr. Linda Birnbaum's letter dated June 30, 2011, requesting the Department of Defense's review of the suitability of an alternative testing method recommended by the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods (ICCVAM) for the Department's use in research. This alternative is for a specific criterion for the murine local lymph node assay when used to characterize the potency of chemicals causing allergic contact dermatitis (described in NIH Publication No. 11-7709). The Department agrees with ICCVAM that this method is scientifically valid and can reduce the use of animals. The Department also agrees with ICCVAM regarding the limitations of this method and qualified recommendations to use this method to determine potency categorization of chemicals causing allergic contact dermatitis.

The Department will use a variety of mechanisms to educate researchers and encourage the use of this method for Department-sponsored research. Informing Department scientists and veterinarians will be accomplished through activities such as newsletters and training sessions for both Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) members and laboratory personnel. Extramural scientists supporting Department research will be informed of these alternative test methods through their interactions with Department personnel supporting the research. The Department of Defense takes very seriously our responsibility to develop and encourage methods that replace, reduce, and refine the use of animals in research.

Sincerely,

Patrick A. Mason, Ph.D., SES  
Director, Human Performance, Training &  
BioSystems