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OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF  
DEFENSE RESEARCH AND ENGINEERING  
3040 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-3040

February 10, 2009

Rear Admiral William S. Stokes  
Executive Director, ICCVAM  
National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences  
P.O. Box 12233, Mail Code EC-17  
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709

Dear RADM Stokes:

I am replying to Dr. Wilson's letter dated October 23, 2008, requesting the Department of Defense's review of five *in vitro* tests for assessing potential pyrogenicity on pharmaceuticals and other products. The Department agrees with the recommendations by the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods (ICCVAM) that these five methods do not completely replace the rabbit pyrogen test for the testing of Gram-negative endotoxins. The Department also agrees that the five tests can be used to reduce the number of animals used to detect Gram-negative endotoxins under very specific circumstances described in the ICCVAM Test Method Evaluation Report (NIH Publication No. 08-6392).

The Department will use a variety of mechanisms to promote and encourage the use of these test methods 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 and IACUCs. 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.

I appreciate your leadership role in the federal government's effort to identify and validate alternatives to using animals in research. The ICCVAM has been instrumental in facilitating federal-wide endorsement of alternatives to animal use.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "RF", written in a stylized, cursive-like font.

Robert E. Foster, Ph.D.  
Director, BioSystems

