

International Committee on Systematics of Prokaryotes

Subcommittee on the taxonomy of *Leptospiraceae*

Minutes of the closed meeting, 22 September 2009, Cochin, India

Minute 1. Call to order. The closed meeting was held at 17:30 on Tuesday 22 September 2009 at the Gokulam Park Inn, Cochin, India, in conjunction with the Sixth meeting of the International Leptospirosis Society. The meeting was called to order by the Acting Chairman, Ben Adler.

Minute 2. Record of attendance. The members present were Ben Adler (Acting Chairman), Rudy Hartskeerl and Roderick Chappel. Renee Galloway and Mathieu Picardeau were in attendance as observers.

Minute 3. Apologies for absence. Apologies were received from Lee Smythe (Chairman), Paul Levett (Secretary) and Richard Zuerner. Ben Adler chaired the meeting at the request of the Chairman, and Roderick Chappel took minutes at the request of the Secretary. Sharon Peacock had been invited as an observer but was unable to attend.

Minute 4. Minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes of the meeting held in Quito, Ecuador in 2007 had been published [Levett and Smythe, *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* 58 (2008), 1049-1050].

Minute 5. Membership and office holders. No new nominations for office holders or membership had been received. Both the Chairman and the Secretary had indicated their willingness to continue in office. The subcommittee expressed disappointment at the inability of either the Chairman or Secretary to attend.

Minute 6. Proposal regarding future lapsing of membership. It was agreed by the subcommittee that if a member misses two or more consecutive future meetings, they will be deemed to have resigned.

Minute 7. Reference laboratories. The subcommittee agreed that only WHO Reference Centres should be recognised as having a reference function relating to *Leptospira*. Currently there are WHO Collaborating Centres in Amsterdam, Brisbane, Paris and Port Blair. The reference collection in Port Blair had been substantially derived from Amsterdam, but a collection of 157 serovars was shortly to be sent to Port Blair from Brisbane. In addition, CDC, Atlanta, has a serovar collection, and the National Veterinary Service Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, has a collection, substantially derived from CDC. A new WHO Collaborating Centre has been established at FIOCRUZ, in Rio de Janeiro, and holds a panel of strains to be made available in South America.

Minute 8. Verification of culture collections. There have been significant past problems with culture collections, and the subcommittee recognised that much better coordination between reference laboratories is required. Some exchanges of cultures

between the reference laboratories in Amsterdam and Brisbane have taken place, but a full discussion could not occur at this meeting because of the absence of Lee Smythe.

Minute 9. Recognised typing laboratories for new serovars. It was agreed that all newly identified serovars should be verified by at least one of the four WHO Collaborating Centres in Amsterdam, Brisbane, Paris and Port Blair. New strains are often isolated and identified only to the species level, and reference laboratory verification is not necessary in these cases. Ideally each newly serovar should be deposited in all four reference collections, but in all cases the new serovar should be deposited in at least two of the collections.

Minute 10. Deposition of type strains in international culture collections. Paul Levett (Secretary) is to advise ICSP and the editors of IJSEM of the subcommittee's recommendation that type or reference strains of all new species or serovars be deposited with all WHO Collaborating Centres.

Minute 11. Recognition of new species. The species *L. kmetyi* [Slack *et al.*, *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* **59** (2009), 705-708] *L. licerasiae* [Matthias *et al.*, *PLoS Neg Trop Dis* **2** (2009) 1-12] and *L. wolffii* [Slack *et al.*, *Int J Syst Evol Microbiol* **58** (2008), 2305-2308] have now all been validly published and were formally recognised as taxonomic species by the subcommittee.

Minute 12. Revision of the book *Classification of the Species Leptospira interrogans and History of its Serovars* by Kmety & Dikken. This vital resource is now sixteen years out of date. A web-based revised version is in preparation by Rudy Hartskeerl, but the revision is a major task and there have been unavoidable delays. Sections of the revised text will be sent to other subcommittee members for checking and editing.

Minute 13. Naming of *Leptospira* genomospecies 1, 3, 4 and 5. A manuscript, with recommendations as outlined in the minutes of the 2007 meeting, was submitted to IJSM, and was returned to Paul Levett, as corresponding author, with requests for revisions. It has not yet been accepted.

Minute 14. Correct use of nomenclature. The subcommittee noted with concern the frequent use of incorrect nomenclature in publications relating to leptospires. It was agreed that every abstract submitted for future meetings of the International Leptospirosis Society should be submitted to a subcommittee member for the nomenclature to be checked, and that abstracts with incorrect nomenclature should be returned to the authors for correction.

Minute 15. Shortcomings of multilocus sequence typing characterisation of leptospires. The subcommittee received a submission about the shortcomings of the current MLST system, requesting a critical analysis of the situation. Rudy Hartskeerl and Sharon Peacock have each done work on the MLST system, and have been in contact with one another. It is hoped that there will eventually be a revised system that is applicable to a wider range of species and serovars.

Minute 16. Current membership. The current membership of the subcommittee is as follows: Lee Smythe (Chairman), Brisbane, Queensland, Australia; Paul Levett (Secretary), Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada; Ben Adler, Clayton, Victoria, Australia; Roderick Chappel, Fitzroy, Victoria, Australia; Rudy Hartskeerl, Amsterdam, The Netherlands; Richard Zuerner, Ames, Iowa, USA.

Minute 17. Date and venue of the next meeting. The next meeting will be held at the seventh meeting of the International Leptospirosis Society, to be held in México in 2011.

Minute 18. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 19:30 on 22 September 2009.