

## **Policy – Conduct Standards Committee**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Since its inception, the APB has had an Ethics Committee that offered advice on request to members regarding ethical practice issues. With the establishment of the College of Applied Biology, a decision was taken to formalize the service provided by the APB under the name of a Contact Standards Committee.

The Code of Ethics is a policy of the College of Applied Biology that provides the basis for the standard of conduct for members of the College. In addition to the Code of Ethics, an interpretive document has been prepared to help members take the Code from paper to practice. However, many members find that from time to time practice issues are not as black and white as the printed word would have them appear. Therefore, in addition to their role of taking the lead in authoring ethics articles of general interest to the membership, the APB Conduct Standards Committee also functions as a group of mentors to whom members can, in confidence, forward questions of conduct and/or practice. **THE ADVICE PROVIDED BY THIS COMMITTEE IS NOT INTENDED TO BE OR TO REPLACE LEGAL ADVICE.** Rather, it is advice provided, in good faith, by experienced members of the Association to other members on request.

### **2.0 COMMITTEE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 2.1 Responsible for interpreting the Code of Ethics as set out in the College of Applied Biology Code of Ethics Policy and providing information to the membership on ethics issues in general
- 2.2 Responsible for interpreting the Code of Ethics as set out in the College of Applied Biology Code of Ethics Policy and providing information to individual members on specific ethic issues on request on a without prejudice basis
- 2.3 Responsible for interpreting the Code of Ethics as set out in the College of Applied Biology Code of Ethics Policy and providing information to the membership on ethics issues in general
- 2.4 Responsible for reviewing and suggesting revisions to the College of Applied Biology Code of Ethics Policy on an ongoing basis

### **3.0 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

- 3.1 The Committee will be a standing committee composed of a group of senior Active and/or Retired members selected where possible for a diversity of age, gender, geography and practice
- 3.2 Committee members will be named to the committee by the Board of the APB

### **4.0 COMMITTEE OPERATIONS**

- 4.1 When a member of staff is approached with a question, the question will be forwarded to the Chair of the Committee.
- 4.2 When a member of the Committee is approached with a question, the Committee member may, so long as the circumstances are such that confidentiality is not breached, circulate the circumstances as a “sanitized hypothetical situation” to other committee members for comment. Where a committee member feels consultation

with other committee members is not required, the member may address the situation him or herself, and make a report to the other committee members at the next opportunity.

- 4.3 Where a matter has been circulated to other committee members for input, once the committee members have agreed on the advice to be presented to the member, the Committee member first approached with the question will draft a response and reply to the member raising the issue. (Note that in order for this process to be of benefit to the member bringing the question forward, it is important that circulation of the questions and drafting of responses happen in a timely manner.) A copy of the response is retained in the files in the event a similar situation arises in future.
- 4.4 The Committee members will, from time to time, present articles for BioNews or BioNotice setting out some of the issues considered so all members can benefit from the advice. Care must always be taken to ensure that the confidentiality of the member raising the question is retained. It is hoped that the actions of the committee will both assist the member who raised the issue, and other members who face similar situations; therefore, the Committee may author guidance documents for publication by the APB where common areas of difficulty are identified.

## **5.0 CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 5.1 The identities of the individual requesting the advice and any others (if any) named in the query will be kept confidential.
- 5.2 Information will be collected and relayed in writing, and will be retained in the APB files
- 5.3 This service is in no way connected with the discipline process of the College of Applied Biology.
- 5.4 In the event a matter considered by the Committee proceeds to a discipline complaint, the party who sought the advice of the committee may divulge the advice received.

Approved by the Board of Directors, APBBC, April 16, 2004