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# NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2022

## Have you downloaded the ABSANZ App?

Taking less than two minutes to download, the ABSANZ App is your own personal way of receiving instant notifications on member-only benefits including upcoming events, interesting articles and the latest ABSANZ news.

You will also be able to participate in the newest feature, the Chat Room. Discussion groups that can be used by any ABSANZ member to ask questions, clarify processes, and ask advice from peers and/or more experienced members.

Current topics include Biocontainment, Regulation and COVID-19, the Chat Room is an enormous benefit for those new biosafety personnel who are just at the start of their career, or those just experiencing a challenge who could benefit from another perspective.

The more voices, the greater the benefit to all, so please use the App Chat Room - there will always be someone who will know the answer to your question!

### To Download the App:

1. Use either the Android Google play or iPhone App Store
2. Search for 'Member Jungle' in the store
3. Once downloaded, find 'ABSANZ'
4. To login use your current membership email and password

## From the President: A busy start to 2022...

*It's certainly been a busy start to 2022! All our committees have met, and plans are afoot for member engagement and benefits... The ABSANZ face-to-face conference is proceeding at the end of June... And I became a grandfather for the first time...*

The Board recently met and based on the recommendation by the hard-working Conference Committee, it was unanimously agreed that the ABSANZ face-to-face conference will proceed at the Adelaide Convention Centre from June 27 – July 1. We will provide additional updates over coming weeks in relation to the program, but [Abstracts](#) have re-opened and we welcome submissions. The program promises to provide a diverse and interesting range of new topics and presenters, as well as the traditional workshops and speakers.

On Friday this week, Bernadette Bradley will present a discussion '[Insights into the construction of Curtin University's newest biocontainment lab building](#)'. I have no doubt this will be a valuable presentation for many members. Architects, their staff and students

in particular should see the value of consultation with the client.

In sad news, Lisa van Duin and Katherine Garnett have both resigned from the Board. Both have given a significant amount to the success and development of ABSANZ, and whilst they will remain on committees, I thank them for impact on the Board and contribution to the association. An expression of gratitude for Lisa can be found below.

Finally, in exciting news for my wife Dianne and I, on January 27 of our first grandchild arrived. At a healthy 4.5 Kg and 54 cm, Xavier looks set to be tall like his grandfather. We are all pretty chuffed and look forward to getting to know him.



Warm Regards  
Allan

>>>Continuing on

## BC2 implementation

# Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

## Approved Arrangement Biosecurity containment level 2 (BC2) implementation



Over the past 12 months, the department has continued its program of transition to the new BC2 conditions. 377 audits have successfully been conducted with these sites transitioning to the revised BC2 conditions. This represents almost 80% of sites meeting the revised conditions. Great work to all involved! This is a fantastic achievement considering the impact of COVID and lockdowns.

The success of this implementation is largely due to the extensive co-design process including engagement with biosecurity industry participants (BIPs), Third Party Assessors (TPA), and relevant departmental policy areas.

As requested by industry, one significant change with the new BC2 conditions is the removal of references to the Australian/New Zealand Standard™ AS/NZS 2982.1:1997 and 2243.3:2002. This change will mean greater efficiencies when AA sites are being audited, with well-defined and clearly auditable conditions. The new conditions align with the latest versions of the Standards and are set out in a way that enables both industry and auditors to better understand see the intent of each clause. Additionally, the department has developed a comprehensive informative text document to assist biosecurity industry participants to meet the conditions.

The department will continue to work with biosecurity industry participants to assist those sites yet to transition. In addition, the department will provide some further clarifications to the AA conditions and add information to the informative text to further assist BIPs with meeting the Biosecurity Act, regulations, and conditions. Thank you to all who have provided feedback during the process.

The next steps for the department include collating and assessing site plans and ensuring the TPA documentation alignment.

In addition, we are working closely with AA Class 6.1, 7.5, 7.6 and 7.7 sites which are being transitioned into BC2 and have not been previously assessed by a TPA. These classes did not previously require TPA certification prior to approval, and the department will allow time for the sites to obtain TPA certification during the transition period (projected to be 2 years).

We have been working closely with BIPs to remedy situations where a design and construction condition has not been met by BIPs, but where an alternative equivalent that meets biosecurity containment has been proposed by the BIP. This approach allows the department to work with industry flexibly, developing bespoke arrangements while still managing biosecurity risk.

We look forward to future engagement on the development of the Biosecurity Containment Level 3 conditions and transition.

## Former Vice President, Lisa van Duin's resignation from the ABSANZ Board

After five years contributing as a director, including a term as Vice President, Lisa van Duin has resigned from the ABSANZ Board.

As a founding member, Lisa has contributed to ABSANZ in various committee roles over the years, most significantly supporting the Regulatory Liaison Committee since 2013 (Chair/Co-Chair from 2018-2020) and as Convener of the 2016 Melbourne Conference Committee.

Lisa will continue her long-standing support of the Regulatory Liaison Committee but will switch her focus from ABSANZ governance to supporting a new ABSANZ initiative - the consideration of a fit for purpose Biosafety Professional Qualification.



This is being led by June Freeland and a newly formed Education and Training Committee.

We wish to thank Lisa for her tireless support and input to the functioning of the Board over the last 5 years. Her extensive experience, along with a calm, friendly and professional approach will be very much missed by the Board.

Allan King  
President

## ABSANZ COVID-19 Fortnightly Discussion Groups With Dr Bernadette Bradley

In April 2020 ABSANZ Hero Neil Walls began hosting a weekly online COVID-19 discussion group, to support ABSANZ members during the start of the pandemic. The records of those discussions can be found [here](#).

Now in this very different stage of the pandemic, we aim to revisit those discussions to share information and provide support. Held each fortnight commencing February 24, we will explore a variety of topics relevant to us all.

All members are welcome to join in the discussion, and contribute their part to the theme of "What is work like at the moment?"

In Western Australia and New Zealand there is low level community transmission and both places have yet to experience high case numbers, whereas South Australia's and Tasmania's numbers have only recently risen, and NSW and Victoria have suffered the full brunt of Delta and Omicron in their communities.

Some workplaces were required to vaccinate by the Government. Some workplaces have chosen to mandate vaccination. What can we learn from each other?

To register, please email [julie@absanz.org.au?subject=COVID-19 discussion groups](mailto:julie@absanz.org.au?subject=COVID-19%20discussion%20groups)



## Updates from the Regulatory Liaison Committee (RLC) >>>

Lisa van Duin and Amy Jones represented ABSANZ at the Biological Consultative Group (BCG) meeting held 4 November. Documents relating to this meeting along with a brief report will be uploaded to the website by the end of February.

The RLC is currently working on the feedback received from members relating to the updated Australian Biosecurity containment level 2 (BC2) Conditions for Approved Arrangements. A guidance document directly related to the issues raised by the members will be prepared and made available following liaison with the DAWE.

Other items to note:

- Date of IBC Forum has been postponed to 12-13 May
- MPI Import Health Standard for Biological Products released
- DAWE risk review of importing FBS

Michelle McConnell, Chair

**Become an active part of ABSANZ and make a difference...**

*ABSANZ would love more committee members. It doesn't take much of your time, yet what you gain far outweighs the time and effort. We are seeking participants in a variety of areas, so if you can give an hour a month, please ring Julie on the office for more information +61 3 9087 9988.*

# X BIOSAFETY CROSSROADS

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

10TH ANNUAL ABSANZ Biosafety and Biocontainment Conference

ADELAIDE CONVENTION CENTRE  
NEW DATES CONFIRMED: 27<sup>TH</sup> JUNE - 1<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2022



Utilising the knowledge and resources within the ABSANZ community, the association is committed to providing an outstanding event which will enable experiences we have all missed, in-person connections. Once more we will benefit from networking, new technologies, advancement, and from seeing faces in a COVID-Safe manner. The [Conference](#) provides the opportunity to reconnect, to contribute to the achievement of ABSANZ objectives, and to relink the biosafety and biosecurity community across Australia and New Zealand.

After the last few years of a constantly evolving new norm, being able to meet face-to-face in Adelaide will be something to look forward to.

Thanks to the support of our valued sponsors and volunteers, the ABSANZ Biosafety, Biocontainment and Biosecurity Conference will play an essential part to the overall professional development of our delegates by offering extensive networking opportunities with professionals throughout Australasia.

The conference offers the chance for the broader biosafety community to come together and discuss issues we all face on a day-to-day basis with our peers, specialists and experts in various fields, as well as representatives from the relevant regulatory bodies. It provides the opportunity to engage collaboratively on workable solutions that can have significant impacts on Biorisk management as well as access to numerous exhibitors providing the ideal opportunity to find out about new technologies and equipment, and better ways of refurbishing or building biocontainment facilities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a heightened perspective to the management of biological hazards and the biosafety arena has grown to encompass the everyday life of not just biosafety professionals but the community as a whole.

Now, more than ever, we understand the significance of biosafety and will gather to share our experiences and lessons learned. The pandemic has brought a wider audience interested in learning more, so in June we welcome not just biosafety professionals, but anyone with a role in managing biological risks to the ABSANZ face-to-face Biosafety and Biocontainment Conference. Looking forward to seeing you all there.

Dr Amanda Jones  
(Conference Convenor, 2022)

ABSANZ is to the grateful Sponsors and Exhibitors who elected to maintain their support of the association when the event was rescheduled

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**Would you like to contribute to the newsletter >>>**

*If you would like to contribute with news, regulatory updates, anything at all related to ABSANZ, please email to [admin@absanz.org.au](mailto:admin@absanz.org.au)*



PO Box 46

Grantville VIC 3984

+61 3 9087 9988

## ABSANZ Affiliates *Event links:*



International Federation of Biosafety Associations

