Background:
Biosafety and biosecurity have recently come under increased scrutiny nationwide. This scrutiny has resulted largely from well-publicized incidents involving biohazardous materials, in particular two incidences that occurred at federal laboratories within the last year. These incidents, as well as others, have heightened public awareness of research using biohazardous material, Congressional hearings, and directives from the White House and National Institutes of Health. The latter include directives that institutions conducting federally funded research, such as the UC campuses, re-examine their inventories of biohazardous material and re-assess their practices toward the goal of enhanced “stewardship” of biohazards and improved individual and public safety.

Current Status:
In partial response to these emerging issues, risks, and concerns, President Napolitano convened a Task Force on Biosafety and Biosecurity. The Task Force included membership from faculty, campus biosafety officers, environmental health, risk services, and compliance. The Task Force was asked to identify UC’s facilities and practices for the use of infectious agents and toxins, with an emphasis on BSL-3 laboratories.

The President met with members of the Task Force in January to discuss their findings and recommendations.

Next Steps:
The following recommendations have been accepted by the President:

1. Each campus that operates high-containment facilities (BSL-3 and SAT laboratories) should create and fund a High-Containment Laboratory Director position within its current biosafety program. Appointments should be made by April 1, 2015.

2. A site visit team, led by UC Irvine’s BSL-3 Training and Development Program Director, will gather additional information from the system's high-containment facilities regarding their operations (practices), testing and verification and personnel training needs. The target completion date is November 30, 2015.

3. Campuses shall utilize the UCI National Biocontainment Training Center to conduct initial and recurrent training of the High-Containment Laboratory Directors. The initial training should commence by March 15, 2015 and with a target completion date of August 31, 2015.

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1 Biosafety Level 3
4. Each campus should establish a **High-Containment Laboratory Oversight Group** ("Group") to coordinate laboratory operations including preventative maintenance, testing and verification, planning of modification to existing and proposed high-containment facilities, emergency management planning and implementation of training for all laboratory-associated personnel groups. Campus oversight Groups should be convened no later than May 31, 2015.

5. UCOP will establish and facilitate a systemwide committee composed of Chairs and representatives of each campus’s **High-Containment Laboratory Oversight Group** to enable sharing of best practices and development of policies and guidance. This systemwide committee will convene before June 30, 2015.

6. All campuses should conduct an inventory of their infectious agents that incorporates positive principal investigator (PI) attestation that he or she has reviewed their inventory of biohazardous agents, that the inventory is consistent with list of agents declared on their Biohazard Use Authorization (BUA), and that they are either aware or unaware of any unaccounted-for freezers or laboratory space in which unidentified biohazards might be suspected.

**Contact:**
Ken Smith, Interim Director of EH&S, (Ken.Smith@ucop.edu)
David Lane, Systemwide Deputy Compliance Officer (David.Lane@ucop.edu)
Elizabeth Boyd, Executive Director, Research Compliance (Elizabeth.Boyd@ucop.edu)

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2 The UCI program was established through funding support from the NIH-Regional Centers of Excellence program and has provided integrated training to over 900 people from across the U.S. and internationally including personnel from academic, public health, government, military and corporate sectors.