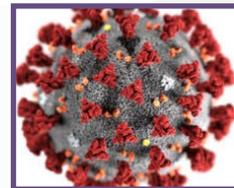


SSBA NEWSLETTER

Special Issue MARCH 2020



Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

The Australian Government Department of Health is undertaking national coordination of the health sector emergency response to COVID-19, under direction of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC). COVID-19 was first reported in December 2019 in Wuhan City in Hubei Province, China. For up to date information visit Health's website [here](#).

On 30 January 2020, the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern and on 11 February 2020 named the disease coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19. The International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses has formally named the virus that causes COVID-19, severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 or SARS-CoV-2 due to its genetic relatedness to the virus that caused the SARS outbreak in 2003.

In brief:

Situation in Australia

- As at **16:00** hrs on **3 March 2020**, there have been **38** confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Australia, including one death.

Situation Overseas

- Internationally, as at **16:00** hrs on **3 March 2020**, approximately **90,846** confirmed cases of COVID-19 and **3,115** deaths have been reported.

SSBA Regulatory Scheme - List of SSBA's

As SARS coronavirus is listed as a Tier 1 agent on the List of SSBA's, the SSBA Regulatory Scheme has received a number of enquiries about whether SARS-CoV-2 is also considered to be a Tier 1 SSBA. At this point in time there is insufficient evidence about the novel virus to determine whether SARS-CoV-2 should be included on the List of SSBA's. As the outbreak evolves, further reviews will be undertaken. For now, if your facility is involved in handling live and viable SARS-CoV-2, it is recommended that accurate records of specimen movements and handling activities are maintained, and that appropriate biosafety and biosecurity precautions are observed. Public Health Laboratory Network guidance on laboratory testing for SARS-CoV-2 may be found [here](#).

SSBA MAILING LIST

Please remember to notify the SSBA Regulatory Scheme if your contact details change. The SSBA Regulatory Scheme uses a mailing list to send out the SSBA newsletter and other information about the scheme.

If you need to update your contact details, or know of others that would like to be added to the SSBA mailing list, please email the details to ssba@health.gov.au

FEEDBACK

If you would like to provide feedback or discuss any aspect of the SSBA Regulatory Scheme, please contact us at ssba@health.gov.au

Check out our website at: www.health.gov.au/SSBA