

## Global eradication of polio

*World Health Organization: Global action plan and timetable for safe handling and maximum laboratory containment of wild polioviruses and potentially infectious materials.*

The goal of global eradication of poliomyelitis (polio) is in sight. The number of reported cases has been reduced by more than 90% since the initiative began in 1988 and at least 155 countries are now reporting zero cases annually. The date of onset of the last case of polio associated with wild poliovirus infection in the Western Pacific Region (which includes Australia) was 19 March, 1997.

Once polio is eradicated, the laboratories of the world will be the only remaining source of the virus. Safe handling and, ultimately, maximum containment of poliovirus and potentially infectious materials in the laboratory is crucial.

In July 1998, the World Health Organization (WHO) released the above document for public comment.

The proposed plan is posted on the Internet and can be accessed at:

<http://www.who.ch/gpv-documents/DocsPDF/www9829.pdf>

Access to this file requires the use of Adobe Acrobat Reader Software which can be downloaded free of charge at:

<http://www.adobe.com/prodindex/acrobat/readstep.html>

Comments on the plan should be submitted to

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by 1 November, 1998.

For copies of the WHO document or further information on polio eradication, the Plan, or polioviruses please contact:

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## Final report of the Food Regulation Review

### *Food: a Growth Industry*

The difficulties of balancing public health and consumer protection against the needs of business to be competitive and efficient are nowhere better illustrated than in the area of food regulation. The recently completed Food Regulation Review, chaired by Dr Bill Blair, has spent 12 months considering these issues, while undertaking extensive consultation with government, consumers and all sectors of the food industry (primary industry, manufacturing, retail and export). The final report of the Food Regulation Review,

*Food: a Growth Industry*, was released in late August 1998. It makes recommendations for major legislative, procedural and structural reforms to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the food regulatory system in Australia. The report will be considered by governments, ministerial councils and the Council of Australian Governments.

The report (ISBN 0 642 34518x) is available for sale for \$16.95 from **AusInfo** (see below).

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