

Release of the GAO's (Government Accountability Office) report today, *Perimeter Security Assessment of the Nations' s Five BSL-4 Laboratories*, impacts Georgia State University (GSU). GSU is currently registered for Select Agent work involving only one BSL-4 pathogen, B virus. Housed at GSU is the NIH-funded National B Virus Resource Center, for which a BSL-4 Laboratory was constructed in 1998 with the assistance of the Georgia Research Alliance. The mission of the laboratory is to diagnose and investigate B virus, a benign herpesvirus in macaque monkeys that can cause an occupationally acquired zoonotic disease, which can result in high mortality when not recognized and treated promptly. This laboratory is an internationally recognized diagnostic and research facility that has been funded by NIH for over two decades to learn more about controlling this virus. This work has resulted in human lives saved, minimization of morbidity, and advances in controlling B virus zoonotic disease in a clinical setting.

Although Select Agent Regulations do not mandate specific perimeter security controls that need to be in place at each BSL-4 laboratory, today's report discusses perimeter security evaluated earlier this year by the GAO. GSU has nonetheless implemented numerous additional security perimeter controls over and above Select Agent Regulations since the inspection, and efforts are underway to aggressively address the remaining issues. Even though the GAO Report addresses perimeter security, GSU has had multiple layers of interior security actively implemented since the inception of the laboratory.

The laboratory has repeatedly and consistently passed all CDC inspections of the containment laboratory according to the CDC Select Agent Regulations since these regulations were initiated in response to 9/11. Laboratory workers and students in this laboratory maintain strict FBI Security Clearance required for handling the Select Agent B virus. GSU is proud of this unique laboratory resource, and is dedicated to the rapid implementation of additional recommended perimeter security in light of this report.