

# WHO Appoints H1N1 Cover-Up Committee

By [James Corbett](#)

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In-depth Report: [THE H1N1 SWINE FLU PANDEMIC](#)

Reports that the WHO is appointing an 'independent' committee to investigate its own conduct in the H1N1 panic of 2009 has been tempered by the fact that one of the committee's members, John Mackenzie, was in fact one of the advisors who urged the WHO to declare a pandemic in the first place. He also [has ties to vaccine manufacturers](#), making him part of the very charge being investigated: that the WHO relied on advisors with a financial interest in declaring a pandemic regardless of the facts on the ground.

Evidence continues to mount that the WHO declared a pandemic for the [relatively mild](#) H1N1 outbreak last year in order to trigger billions of dollars of automatic vaccine contracts for the benefit of [WHO advisers with connections to Big Pharma](#). In the face of growing opposition and a [loss of credibility](#) due to the conflicts of interests among key WHO advisors, WHO Director Margaret Chan [called Monday](#) for a "frank, critical, transparent, credible and independent review of our performance" before entering a closed-door meeting with the "independent experts." No photographers were allowed inside and press was allowed only occasional access to the meeting.

Hopes for a genuinely independent investigation into the scandal were quickly dashed, however, when it was discovered that one of the group's members, Professor John Mackenzie of Curtin University in Australia, was a member of the very panel that advised the WHO to declare the H1N1 pandemic. In fact, Mackenzie is already on record with his assessment of his own actions: "I think we did everything right," he told [Der Spiegel](#) earlier this year.

Clues to the likely findings and recommendations of the group in Geneva can be derived from other comments Mackenzie made to the German paper: "The system of pandemic levels needs to be revised," he was quoted as saying. "We need to fine-tune phase 6 so that the severity of the disease is also taken into account." Analysts are expecting the review to find that the WHO was a victim of fog of war and loose definitions for a pandemic and that no individual will be held responsible for the billions of dollars that have been spent around the world on vaccines that [governments are now giving away](#) and may ultimately have to [throw out](#).

Also at issue is why the WHO changed its definition of a pandemic virus just as it was considering whether the emerging swine flu may fit that criteria. A definition [available on the website](#) before the panic specifically listed "enormous numbers of deaths and illness" as a criterion for declaring a pandemic. By April, the definition [had been changed](#) to specifically allow for "mild" pandemics.

The cover-up committee is being formed ahead of the final report of the ongoing [Council of](#)

[Europe investigation](#) into the scandal. Just last month, the Council released a [draft report](#) of its investigation into the affair, delivering a blistering critique of the WHO and its motives for declaring the H1N1 pandemic:

Some members of these advisory bodies evidently have professional links to certain pharmaceutical groups – notably through receiving extensive research grants from the big pharmaceutical groups – so that the neutrality of their advice could be contested. To date, WHO has failed to provide convincing evidence to counter these allegations and the organisation has not published the relevant declarations of interest taking such a reserved position, the Organisation has joined other bodies, such as the European Medicines Agency (EMA), which likewise, have still not published such documents. -“[The handling of the H1N1 pandemic: more transparency needed](#)”

The Council of Europe committee inquiry was spearheaded by Wolfgang Wodarg, the former chair of the Council's health committee who made waves last year for saying that the WHO [faked the pandemic](#) to make money for vaccine manufacturers. The committee is expected to be quite critical of the WHO, leading many to speculate that the WHO-sanctioned group in Geneva is an attempt to get ahead of the damage and issue a limited hangout on the issue.

The independent group is expected to finish its meeting on Wednesday. No word yet if they will address the fact that flu vaccines [actually increase the risk of contracting H1N1](#), or what the effect might be if a vaccine-pushing WHO ignores this information.

The H1N1 panic started last March, with the WHO estimating as many as [two billion infections](#) and millions of deaths. Newly released data shows that the 2009 flu season was actually [much less deadly](#) than the regular flu season.

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Articles by: [James Corbett](#)

### About the author:

James Corbett is a Film Director and Producer based in Okayama, Japan. He started The Corbett Report ([www.corbettreport.com](http://www.corbettreport.com)) website in 2007 as an outlet for independent critical analysis of politics, society, history, and economics. It operates on the principle of open source intelligence and provides podcasts, interviews, articles and videos about breaking news and important issues from 9/11 Truth and false flag

terror to the Big Brother police state, eugenics, geopolitics, the central banking fraud and more.

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