

AWERB Minutes November/December 2023 meeting

The University of Edinburgh
Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body
Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986



Meeting of [REDACTED] AWERB on Tuesday 28th November and 14th December

1. Apologies for absence and Minutes of October meeting Approved
2. No matters arising

-
3. To consider and advise the Establishment licence holder (PEL) on new Project licence Applications:

PL 19-23 (re-submission) approved subject to completion of required changes and approval by subcommittee.

Refining of monitoring program is required, and humane endpoints need adjusting

PL 33-23 Approved subject to completion of required changes.

Removal of novel technique is required, as well as streamlining of protocols, in which there is currently much copy and pasting.

PL 34-23 Approved subject to revisions

Committee discussed whether all protocols, and in particular protocol 11, are required in this licence renewal. They require a clearer scientific justification where they are required, otherwise they should be removed. Imaging techniques are included in the protocols but also require explanation in the scientific justification and animal experience section. Objectives would benefit from being smartened.

Action: Check with lay member whether NTS was acceptable

PL 35-23 Application approved subject to completion of revisions

NTS currently contains too many professional terms. Monitoring and humane endpoints require work as do not always match the severity rating of the protocol.

PL 36-23: Approved subject to revisions

No major issues but applicant advised to consider combining protocols where relevant.

PL37-23: Re-submission to the sub-committee following satisfactory completion of required changes

Noted that a number of revisions is required in places. Specifically more details are required in relation to level of funding and review of proposed animal numbers is required, in relation to this numbers of animals may have to be clarified/reduced in a revised application.

Animal experience section needs to be clearer with more specific details of what animals will experience.

NTS: more details about refinements for severe procedures required.

AWERB Minutes November/December 2023 meeting

(b) Amendments – for consideration by full committee:

Amendment A69-23 The committee has a number of concerns, and would like to consider the amendment again once changes have been made.

The committee asks for a flow chart of an individual mouse's experience to get a sense of the cumulative severity of an individual animal's experience under the proposed work. Cumulative harms seem to indicate that the severity rating is not currently appropriate. The proposed protocol should have everything removed that is not completely necessary.

Amendment A75-23 The committee is not able to approve this on the basis of the information given. The amendment could be approved if the post-natal animal work is removed and other comments are addressed.

The committee suggests a stepwise approach, with priority given to what work is currently required and more detail on objectives, scientific background and animal experience. A flow chart would make the application clearer, and the applicant could be invited to present their application at a future AWERB.

Amendment A88-23: approved for submission

Applications submitted and considered by the amendment Sub-Committee

**Approved:
A79-23, A80-23, A82-23**

Updates to the AWERB:

4. BVS deputy director update to the committee

- The new unit has opened. Automatic watering system will be up and running once an expert arrives in January. Conversations with researchers continue to smooth transfer of projects to the new unit.
- We're going to have a workshop with technicians about what we can do to tackle [REDACTED] – to raise awareness.
- LASA conference, we gave a presentation that was well received.
- Facility forums are this week and next week. These have been relaunched after a period in which we replaced them with newsletters.
- Senior facility manager post has been filled. Will be starting on 1st January and will be responsible for 70% of all cages.
- Cage cleaning SOP. Looking at doing spot changes instead of cleaning each rack once a week or twice a week
- Memorial bench is in place, we'll have a blessing ceremony on it next year.

AWERB Minutes November/December 2023 meeting

6. NVS update to the committee

- SC18s – sporadic incidents which do reflect the severity of the models
- An updated cancer study guideline is due to be published next month in Nature Protocols. It will be circulated to the committee in due course
- One of our NVSes went to LASA and presented the AWERB approach to changing tamoxifen treatment to oral gavage. There was lots of interest from attendees on this.
- Micropipette dosing of analgesics: trials of this technique are ongoing.
- Potential refinement of schedule 1 techniques in rat. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] can be a refinement in certain circumstances, as it can be quicker and isn't technically challenging – something we could look into.
- The 3Rs committee meeting is tomorrow.

7. NACWO update to the committee

- breed to order system has been in place since 2020. Wild type numbers have gone down by 75% since before COVID. It's still important to spread the word that we breed wild types to order.

8. NTCO update to the committee

Year summary:

- 3 new training coordinators
- 3 new members of staff completed the new husbandry training program, 3 to 4 weeks sooner than predicted
- 10 technicians completed their NACWO training refresher
- All courses now into the new Learn Ultra and P&M system, issued a new e-learning course for zebrafish and also on the use of NMBAs in fish.
- 245 people have attended our PIL courses, 25% are external candidates.
- 1000 procedures have been assessed this year, 60% completed by the three training coordinators.

9. HOLC update to the committee

- Busy with licences leading to the necessity of an extra AWERB meeting in December
- HO have been helpful with getting urgent amendments through
- Issues with ASPeL continue and despite raising our concerns about missing comments in licence applications, we have not yet received any reply or improvement in the situation.

10. BVS Deputy Director (Vets/home office) Roslin AWERB report

- 2 non PIL holders involved with projects in Roslin will undergo PIL training to improve their knowledge around legislation
- We are about to advertise for a grade 7 post for recording of regulated procedures on tick@lab with the aim of helping the PIL holders with recording procedures for return of procedures.
- Roslin is aiming to better capture data around animals that are not returned under ASPA because the work is not regulated, starting with large animals.
- Roslin is looking at ways to facilitate the sharing of animal tissues between research groups, as a method of Reduction.

.....

11. Overseas Research Proposal OS13-23. The committee approves this proposal, and would like to see evidence of local ethical approval.

12. Retrospective reviews: Approved subject to review of harms section and severities.

PPLs: PCB113BFD, PADF15B79, P04ABDCAA

13. A.O.C.B

AWERB Minutes November/December 2023 meeting

The committee discussed timed matings in rodents, with some technicians able to tell when a mouse is pregnant at E7. It would be good to document this properly, as certainly would have 3Rs implications.

Next meeting: **Tuesday January 30th 10am via Teams**