



Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 23/03/2021

The University of Edinburgh

Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986

Minutes of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body held 23/03/2021

Microsoft Teams

1. **Welcome** The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending, the recent roadshows were commended by the Chair

2. **Minutes of Meeting held on 22nd February 2021: approved**

3. **Matters arising and action point summary**

- **AWERB video clips:** see Director's report below **Action: ongoing**

4. **Named person and Director updates**

Directors update:

- **Roadshows:** very positive feedback received from these roadshows, information and recordings will be put online to our BVS website. **Action complete:** over 550 licence holders attended the workshops.
- **Communications assistant:** appointed for 8 weeks to assist with the upload of NTS's to our website as part of our openness development. She will also work on improvements to the animal research website (front facing).
- **Non-compliance:** very complex non-compliance currently under investigation. Will use this event to develop guidance on PILs and training where there are extended gaps between animal work. This would be enforced by the AWERB going forward.

Deputy Directors update:

- **Shielders:** Noted that those shielding will return to work from the 26th April.
- **Building:** noted that closure has been delayed.
- **Air handling unit work** nearly completed and cage wash refurbishment program, to commence mid April. New robot and dry heat steriliser to be introduced, it is hoped that disruption will be minimal.
- **COSHH:** COSHH Health passports for users are being reviewed to ensure all users compliant.
- **Procedural space at [REDACTED]:** looking at different options here for caging and creating space, some challenges with specialised caging, new lids ordered
- **Staffing:** noted that there is a current freeze on recruitment



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NVS update

- **Condition 18s:** a number have occurred in the last few months, most have been relatively minor.
- **Training and assessment:** these have re-started and numbers requesting training have increased.

NACWO update:

- **COSHH passport:** anyone with facility access should be on this passport system to ensure that we are compliant with health and safety. Current access records for facilities are being reviewed.
- **Space allocation:** space within [REDACTED] is limited with a review of room usage underway to allow for more efficient allocation of space.

NTCO update:

- **Assessments** have re-started in the facilities.
- **Roadshows:** Following the roadshows, six people have come forward to ask for PIL refresher training.
- **Handling:** during assessments we are ensuring that less aversive methods e.g. tunnel handling are used.
- **Training records:** currently looking at training records and data will be presented at the next AWERB.

5. Project licences under consideration:

PL03-2021: Approved subject to comments

The review committee felt that the licence was scientifically valid and an important area of research; the application is from a clinical researcher. Outputs from the previous licence have been very positive and have led to work on clinical trials.

Summary:

- **Breeding and maintenance protocol:** this should be revised to remove the insertion of mini-pumps, not permitted in the B and M protocol. This should be moved to an experimental protocol.
- **Monitoring spreadsheets:** these should be adapted for mild and moderate protocols, currently the monitoring spreadsheet is non-specific. Consider additional scoring sheets relevant to the specific models used.
- **Optional steps:** noted that the experimental protocol has a number of optional steps, consider adding a flow diagram or schematic to the action plan or animal experience section.
- **NTS:** this was generally good, however no details in the reduction section on numbers. The refinement section contains overly technical language and should be revised. In the harms section there should be more relation to the human aspect of these conditions.



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- **Administration of substances:** for example DSS admin which can be used at 1-5%, clarify whether there are different adverse effects at each strength.

PL04-2021: Approved subject to comments

The applicant is a group leader at [REDACTED] with a research focus on inflammatory responses. The application is well funded and there have been a number of significant publications in the previous applications. The application contains 4 objectives and 4 protocols, the application has generally been well written but a few revisions are required.

Summary:

- **Severities:** in some protocols the severities appear incorrect for example in protocol 4 where the models involve sepsis in neonates but has been described as mild or sub-threshold.
- **NTS:** some terminology not well defined. Refinement section not very well described.
- **Behavioural testing:** very little justification for the use of behavioural testing. Adverse effects need to be considered, for example the use of specific habitat
- **Neonatal infection:** The model is not currently performed at Edinburgh and clarification of adverse effects is required.

PL05-2021: Approved subject to comments

The applicant is an experienced senior researcher with a significant profile in the field. The applicant is very well funded and there have been a number (more than 30 papers) of important publications in the previous application.

- **Severities:** clarify if numbers required against severe protocols are consistent with use on previous guidelines.
- **Workmann guidelines:** noted that some levels of ulceration in this licence are greater than permitted in these guidelines. Limitations have been put in place in this licence and there is no change from the previous licence.
- **Models:** request that the UV model of skin carcinoma is removed, it has never been used in the previous licence.
- **Decapitation of neonates:** there is no mention of neonates within the licence but the inclusion of decap is detailed in one of the protocols, we need to clarify if this is required.
- **NTS:** clarify terms and revise, "terminated" should not be used.

6. a. Amendment applications submitted to the full AWERB:

No amendments submitted

PPL transfer: [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] approved

7. **Non compliance:** The committee were given an excellent presentation and update of the numbers and types of non-compliance cases over the last few years at the University.



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8. **UK Research Integrity Office seminar:** The committee were given an update on a recent conference which focused on how establishments may consider work involving animals not regulated by ASPA. This could include pre-regulation stages and those species not protected by the act, the conference also looked at how overseas research work is considered by establishments.

9. **A.O.C.B:** none

Date of next Meeting: 27th April 2021 10am MS teams