



## Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board (AWERB) Minutes 27/06/2023

The University of Edinburgh

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

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Minutes of the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body held 27/06/2023

*Microsoft Teams*

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**1. Welcome, apologies for absence (separate attendance log) and minutes of meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023 approved.**

### **2. Matters arising**

- [REDACTED] (action: complete)
- Overseas application OS6-23 noted that a meeting had been held with supervisors to explain about AWERB concerns. A letter has been approved for circulation to the relevant supervisors.

### **3a. PPL applications considered by the committee**

**PL 19-23:** The committee noted that while this is a scientifically justified application a number of revisions are required before submission to the home office. It was agreed that the application should be returned to AWERB for re-submission due to the number of issues involved, a summary is detailed below.

- **Protocols** one protocol requires quite significant revision, particularly around humane endpoints for example weight loss within the application.
- **Typographical errors** More consistency required when referring to the establishment guidelines, entire document needs checking for typographical errors
- **Refinement:** the models in question have very little refinement for example including supportive measures such as keeping animals warm/offering analgesia etc. There does seem to be much more that could be offered.
- **Clinical scoring systems:** clear refinements are needed to these systems, some approaches would allow endpoints that would exceed severe limits as currently written.
- **Numbers:** the numbers do not look like they have been clearly considered, more consideration to design should be given here.
- **Non technical summary:** this was generally well written, some terms require revision for example in relation to killing of animals. More focus on welfare of animals in the NTS needs to be given to the other techniques such as the pneumonia models.
- **Training:** clarification on how will train the PPL holder and other licence holders on the techniques is required.
- **Protocols:** a review of weight loss should be considered to bring within moderate severity limits and humane endpoints should be reviewed.

**PL21-23:** This is a short and generally well-written application from a new researcher at the university. The committee is happy to approve subject to revision of the following points:

- **Severities:** some of the adverse effects do not align with the relevant step, this needs revision.
- **Protocols:** suggest that we can combine protocols 2 and 3 together, with suitable revision to the animal experience section. These protocols are almost identical and would make things less complex.
- **Proof reading:** general proof reading is required throughout to revise grammatical errors..
- **NTS:** this would benefit from more details on glucocorticoids as this had not been clearly explained.

**PL22-23:** This is a renewal licence and while the work is clearly of a scientific benefit in terms of the translational work involved; for example in liver disease and injury however more details on the benefits



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are required in this licence. Additionally, greater justification of the use of [REDACTED] and relevant experimental studies is required. The committee agreed that the application could be approved subject to addressing the points detailed in the review, a summary is given below:

- **Protocols:** these are generally well written, minor revisions are required.
- [REDACTED] much more details on why [REDACTED] are suitable for liver regeneration models, not a huge amount of detail has been included on why these models are suitable. They need to be much more explicit in the licence in relation to the comparative work they are planning to do between [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] there has been no rationale included for this within the application.
- **Controls:** consider whether controls should be included within the [REDACTED] protocols. However it is thought not required.
- **NTS:** this is quite broad but has been written very clearly.

**PL24-23:** This is a new application which has been well written the overall aim of this PPL is to look at the role of specific cell types in [REDACTED]. There were no concerns raised and it was agreed that the application could be submitted to the home office subject to addressing the minor issues detailed below:

- **Numbers:** clarify the numbers within the application, there appears to be a discrepancy between the numbers listed in the protocols and that of the NTS.
- **NTS:** some terminology should be revised to make more “lay” for example “cerebral vascular dysfunction” or give more of a clarification on what this is.

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### 3b. Amendments – for consideration by full committee:

- **PPL amendment: A44-23** This amendment has been presented to AWERB to discuss a potential reduction in monitoring regime. It was noted that when this PPL was originally granted a 4 times daily monitoring was required by the home office. This amendment is to consider the monitoring of the animals being reduced to 3 times daily.

### **Discussion:**

Data has been provided in relation to monitoring however, this looks like only a very small number of animals (2) has been included which is not enough information at this stage it was noted that within the previous PPL the checking regime was only 3 times daily and there was no reported adverse effects ; however, the committee raised a number of points (detailed below) and it was agreed to bring a revised version back to the committee when available.

### Summary of points

- More information on the welfare assessments is required in terms of the timepoints observed and scored.
- Consider also the timing of surgeries: perhaps it would be most appropriate to conduct surgeries as early as possible to allow more monitoring during the day.
- Noted that a number of refinements have been made to these models, suggesting that monitoring of 3 times daily would be sufficient.
- Group housing: single housing used to be used post surgery. This amendment is also to add the option for single housing on occasion on a temporary basis. This does raise issues as this would mean that mice could not be re-housed together, more justification would be needed



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- \*noted that the committee is supportive however more evidence is required at this stage to support this change to 3 times daily monitoring.

**Action:** a revised version to be circulated to sub-committee and then full committee. It was also agreed to discuss further the changes to monitoring regime with the PPL applicant.

**PPL amendment: A51-23:** this has been presented to the committee as the result of the addition of a new protocol which is severe. This will focus on development of the new vector agents for certain neurodegenerative conditions [REDACTED]. The committee were happy to approve the amendment subject to addressing the following points:

- **Gene therapy agents:** possible severe phenotype could occur with the use of the vector agents. This should be considered and appropriate adverse effects noted.
- **Humane endpoints:** need more clarity on animals showing convulsions and when animals will be culled. This is particularly important as there is a chance of toxicity occurring.
- **Numbers:** the requested numbers should be reviewed and their use justified.

**PPL transfer: A50-23: approved**

**Applications submitted and considered by the amendment Sub-Committee:**

Approved:

**A41-23A43-23, A46-23**

Updates to the AWERB:

#### 4. BVS director update to the committee

- [REDACTED] Noted that [REDACTED] will now bill/contact users direct which will streamline the process and make quicker, this has positive implications for animal welfare. They will meet with users and explain the process and how billing works.
- [REDACTED] working with estates/users to look at a new facility, if refurbishments occur to an existing building this could cause issue for us.
- **3Rs centre:** [REDACTED] is leading on this, has met with some European colleagues to discuss.
- **Culture of Care centre:** this is also progressing and there should be developments in 2024
- **Mouse lineage:** working on more details of this to give background to users.
- **Coaching/management:** looking at implementing this within the dept for senior staff.
- [REDACTED] looking at logistics for scientists for when labs close to ensure science can continue.

#### 5. BVS Deputy director update to the committee

- Recruitment: aiming for a more targeted approach to recruitment to try to attract a more specific type of person.



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- [REDACTED] looking at improving insulation so that it can be up and running soon.
- [REDACTED] some issues with steam, unable to use autoclaves at the moment which will delay the move in date for the animals. Auto-washer avidity training will commence next week.
- [REDACTED] meeting has been held to progress. Proposal will allow us to use existing equipment. ACTION: researcher will be asked to present to aWERB at a suitable date.
- [REDACTED] recent training sessions have been set up which were very successful.
- Culture of Care: "burnout" session to be held 28/6/23 the session is full and has a mix of both scientists and techs attending.
- Health and Safety: external company will review processes.

### 6. NVS update to the committee

- Condition 18: 5 submitted this month, 4 in relation to animals [REDACTED], no specific reason found. A further condition 18 submitted in relation [REDACTED]
- RSPCA: meeting 27/6/23 to discussion involvement with AWERB.
- [REDACTED]
- LASA: session on Tamoxifen NVShas been invited to attend and present. New trials with a form of tamoxifen which is more palatable.
- NVS invited to attend the [REDACTED] culture of care day.
- Computer game testing: triaame about using animals in research trialled.
- Rehoming: rats available now and we are hoping to expand our circulation/advertisement of this.

### 7. NACWO update to the committee

Vet students: vet students have been attending the facility to conduct routine husbandry, this went very well. Noted that they have also been involved with the monitoring of the rat playpen which has been very successful. It has been noted that the visits have been very helpful in demonstrating to the students about the care and commitment to the animals. Feedback from students has been excellent.

### 8. NTCO update to the committee

- [REDACTED] 75 people have been re-trained which is a huge undertaking, 15 people are currently awaiting training.
- Accreditation for the new ZF course is in place (provisionally), accreditation for the other [REDACTED]
- Home Office: Attended the home office accreditation meeting. Home office are currently amending the act to remove any references to the EU, this may cause issue and will need thorough review.
- Home office CPD: looking at CPD for those working with animals nothing defined

### 9. HOLC update to the committee

- Amendments: the home office advised to expect 40 days for amendments. However asking for urgent amendments has been quite successful.
- Roadshows: 224 attended on the 9<sup>th</sup> May and 179 attended on the 18<sup>th</sup> May.
- Licences: 53 amendments, and nearly 28 licences completed in 2023.
- Compassion fatigue: working on a compassion fatigue initiative for the department and hope to have a questionnaire circulated shortly as a starting point.
- Condition 18: no response to any condition 18 reporting, ASRU are aware.

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



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- The current chair is stepping down but will remain on the committee. A new chair has been appointed.
- Presentations: 2 really good presentations one with clear refinements, the other discussing the renewal of a PPL but a very good presentation with clear replacements such as organoids etc and in-ovo models.
- Tissue sharing: a new form and process is being set up at Roslin as tissue sharing occurs frequently there. We need to ensure that this is also recorded and in place.
- New NVS to join the team hopefully in August.
- Recruitment for PIL administrator and data analysis/returns post is underway.

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### 11. A.O.C.B

Noted that the emergency meeting on 2/8/23 may not be required.

#### [Date of next meeting:](#)

**22nd August 2023, MS teams 10am**