

AWERB Minutes August 2023 meeting

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



1. **Apologies for absence and Approval of minutes**
2. **Matters Arising**
3. **Presentation: mouse handling survey**

Very clear and interesting talk, very informative. The study is not yet finished, so it was suggested the presenter could return in the future to update the AWERB.

4. (a) To consider and advise the Establishment licence holder (PEL) on new Project licence Applications

PL 25-23 Committee to approve subject to addressing the following comments:

- The project application should explain explicitly the intended usage of all animals, not only the 20% that will be viable for use genetically.
- The severities given should add up to 100% of animals.
- Needs a little more detail on experimental design.

PL 27-23 AWERB to approve subject to the following comments:

- A few typographical errors to correct.
- The behavioural phenotypes all have moderate severity limit, but justification of this severity is that animals aren't expected to display clinical phenotypes. More detail required to justify why moderate is required.
- No indicative group sizes are given though power calculations are described.
- Administration of substances – should be either Establishment guidelines or BVS guidelines
- Total numbers under all 8 protocols don't add up and should be adjusted.

(b) Amendments – for consideration by full committee:

PPL amendment: A49-23

Committee happy to approve this, subject to addition of more prescriptive monitoring outlined in the licence.

Applications submitted and considered by the amendment Sub-Committee

Approved:

A45-23, A47-23, A52-23, A54-23, A55-23

5. Updates to the AWERB:

5. BVS Deputy director update to the committee

- Recruitment: There have been several new starts and interviews for staff in grades UOE3 and 4 across the facilities. An import/export manager has been appointed to the post. Admin post also being advertised.
- 70% of cages will soon be on [REDACTED], a manager will be appointed.
- [REDACTED] still not open due to water ingress, investigations are under way. Autowatering system training not yet been arranged but will be soon.
- Planning for animals to be moved out [REDACTED] by Jan 2025.

AWERB Minutes August 2023 meeting

- Technicians week: various technicians across areas are involved. 6 of our technicians have been nominated for awards. [REDACTED]

6. NVS update to the committee

- SC18s: Since end of June we've had 16 schedule 18s reported. Most are likely to be non-procedural related. Specific details detailed below:

[REDACTED]

- 'Natural behaviour in farm animal species' day coming up on 28th September.
- Rehoming scheme: 7 further rats rehomed and are doing really well. Currently setting up a program to rehome rats to vet students.

7. NACWO update to the committee

- Modern apprentice – interviewing for another two modern apprentices. Of the current two, : one moving to fish unit, one to a different rodent unit.
- Demolition work at [REDACTED] delayed, now not sure when this will go ahead.

8. NTCO update to the committee

- Zebrafish course put into e-learning is now accredited. We can now run it 5 times a year alongside the other courses.

9. HOLC update to the committee

- The department has dealt with a lot of urgent amendments recently, the Home Office have been very helpful in dealing with these promptly.
- 63 amendments and 31 licences so far this year. Have met with a couple of new groups coming to the University soon.
- Next week attending the HOLITIF meeting so will present an update to the AWERB next time.
- Natural behaviour in farm animals currently have 82 people registered which is great.
- [REDACTED] at start of August and [REDACTED] is now dealing with personal licences for now until replacement recruited

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

- Facilities audit at [REDACTED] Minor comments only on preliminary report.
- Ongoing conversations with PELh and director around the necessity of facilities audits which we understood were to occur on a risk-based approach.
- Compliance [REDACTED] Facility managers are looking at systems to increase reliability.
- Recruitment: expecting a new NVS, unfortunately this has now fallen through at the last minute. We have approached another possible candidate.
- RSPCA visited recently to see a facility. They want to work with the AWERB and are going to run a workshop on assessment of severe protocols for the AWERB away day.
- In July a mixture of vets and techs took part in the Science Insights program. To give school pupils an idea of what it is to work with animals and what our respective roles are.

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6. Overseas research application [REDACTED] OS10-23.

[REDACTED]

Reviewers have not come to consensus yet, the committee agreed that the applicant should attend a future AWERB meeting to talk about the proposal: attending September 2023 meeting.

AWERB Minutes August 2023 meeting

Action: Ask applicant to present at future AWERB and particularly to address the questions raised here

7. Retrospective Review

- The review is reasonable, could do with expansion in some areas eg benefits. Good details of animal experience in terms of severities.
- Figures related to breeding will be required too.
- 4% of animals experienced severe severity, which was less than predicted.
- Replacements were described, it would be helpful for AWERB to know more about the replacements.
- Computer modelling used as a refinement to predict recovery – more detail would be great, and would be potentially publishable in a 3Rs-related journal

8. A.O.C.B

• [REDACTED]

Date of next meeting – 26th September [REDACTED]