



## Compliance Assurance Meeting

To [REDACTED], All NACWO's  
From [REDACTED] Named Information and Compliance Support Officer  
Date 31/10/2017  
Time 09.00  
Venue [REDACTED]  
Subject Assuring weekend checks  
Pages 3  
Our Ref [REDACTED]

### Policy-

Compliance Assurance Meetings (CAMs) are a management tool, designed to ensure Governance outside of the Act, to protect individuals, ensure due process and systems are implemented within the division of University Biomedical Services. This process will ensure the University upholds the highest standards of animal welfare and good practice relating to animal care and use.

**NOTE:** A CAM meeting does not replace the investigation of an incident by the Home Office or other authority. Therefore for example, where the local inspector deems appropriate a Home Office non-compliance investigation may run in parallel or sequentially with a CAM.

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### Event-

To ensure compliance with PEL standard condition 4(5) a thorough review of current weekend out of hours UBS staff cover will be undertaken. Once current practices have been established discussion will focus on whether and where changes may be required.

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### Action-

The ELH acknowledged that ensuring weekend checks are undertaken without incident 100% of the time presents a challenge. However the local inspectors have noted the University has reported a number of incidents in recent years and recently recommended he take steps to address this issue, as a matter of priority. The format of this round table assurance meeting is to discuss the systems currently used and to formalise a harmonised way forward. He acknowledged that we are all human so mistakes will happen. He explained University policy does not penalise genuine mistakes.

A discussion took place regarding size of facilities, numbers of animals, sharing staff and systems already in place including the new [REDACTED] door disc colour change system which works well having been implemented after a compliance incident earlier in the year. UBS facilities have several weekend staffing procedures currently in place (ranging from loan working in the smaller units to multiple technicians in each weekend day overseen by a "senior") but it was apparent that there are commonalities of practice (see below).

### Core topics discussed:

- a. If resources were no issue could weekend rotas be addressed differently and with more staff? The Deputy Directors and NACWOs did not feel providing more staff would address

[REDACTED]



this issue because non-compliance incidents of this nature were relatively rare, incidents had occurred where both loan working and multiple technicians were on duty and more staff might precipitate more incidents.

- b. In larger units the rotation of staff between rooms and repetitive tasks is used to facilitate fresh interest whereby avoiding “mouse/cage blindness” which can be an issue where technicians are required to check multiple whole rooms of cages.
- c. Larger facilities reported using a “senior check” after the routine weekend husbandry tasks have been performed by more junior staff.
- d. Weekend systems, for example the use of handover sheets, are in place in all units. In some units staff are required to work the Friday before their weekend shift.
- e. Elevating the importance and provision of post-surgical and known harmful phenotype GA strain checks already takes place. This ensures higher risk animals receive attention at the beginning of the shift so action can be taken if necessary. It was acknowledged that a more formal agreement should be drawn, up before each weekend, with researchers with post-surgery or adverse phenotype animals so it is clear who is responsible for the husbandry vs PIL checks and making it clear that one does not replace the responsibility of the other.

It was agreed UBS should accept a system which provides for one degree of redundancy when complying with PEL standard condition 4 (5).

This would entail as a minimum system where:

**1. Weekend staff call to say they have been in**

NB-If a call is not received from the technician this triggers a response by the NACWO or senior technician on duty to attend or find a replacement for the staff member. The cause of the non-attendance is investigated.

**2. Weekend staff call to say they can't come in**

NB-When a call is received from the technician who cannot attend this triggers a response by NACWO or senior technician on duty to either rearrange the work or find a replacement. The cause of the non-attendance is investigated.

When technicians are trained to undertake weekend duties they will be made aware that:

- a. If they cannot come in they must liaise with colleagues and arrange cover and this must be communicated to either the NACWO or senior tasked to ensure provision of the weekend cover or if they cannot find a replacement they must notify the NACWO or senior on duty as soon as possible

**Action: NACWOs** [REDACTED]

- b. How to contact the on call NVS/VS – robust system are already in place as detailed in a new UBS SOP and each facility displays the NVS contact details poster and the NVS on call rota

**Action: NACWOs** [REDACTED]

- c. Training is provided to ensure those areas requiring specialist knowledge have available enough staff with the necessary cross-training competencies.

**Action: NACWOs**



Other issues and actions:

i. Remuneration

Discussion moved to remuneration of non-NVSs for providing additional out of hours cover. This would include attending alarms and responding to calls about technician weekend cover as detailed above.

It was agreed that 1 person per unit would receive an "on call gesture" when undertaking these responsibilities, regardless of grade.

**Action:** [REDACTED]

To note: Below are the legal responsibilities, as set out in the Home Office Guidance to the Act for NACWOs and NVSS:

A NACWO should "establish a system to ensure that a competent person sees and checks every animal kept in an approved holding area at least once daily".

An NVS should "ensure adequate veterinary cover and services are available at all times at the establishment and that those caring for animals have their contact details".

ii. Thresholds of response:

- a. Consider call-outs for Estate management related issues, priority list to address and redefine what an emergency is to reset the threshold of response to security reducing the call-out events. [REDACTED] has compiled a document which will form the basis of this work

**Action: Directorate**

- b. Review and renegotiate with Security and Estates management the UBS service level agreement

**Action: ELH**

- c. Detail the specialist equipment and who is responsible for its maintenance and attendance of alarms and provide this information to the Deputy Directors.

**Action: NACWOs**

- d. Staff psychological issues should be reviewed and addressed where necessary. The University has a responsibility to staff to ensure individuals who are expected to be on call are provided with adequate downtime.

**Action: Directorate.**