



**Date** Friday, 22/10/2021

**Time** 1.30pm

**To** Committee Members

**At** Held virtually using MS Teams

**Subject** AWERB Operations Committee

**Attendees:** [REDACTED]

**Apologies:** [REDACTED]

**Minutes:** [REDACTED]

**Mentioned within text:** [REDACTED]

#### 1. Minutes

Spelling and grammatical errors were noted.

#### 2. Matters arising

For non-regulated procedures it was suggested that animals from other facilities are used rather than ordering additional animals in.

#### 3. Establishment Licence Holder Report

It was reported that the main points of concern to be raised with ASRU are bridging ways of working, the full system audit, realignment of the ASPeL priorities and changing the ROP process. These have been raised by the HOLTIF group across the UK and not just by Cambridge. An update on the ROP process was given. The largest difference noticed by the University of Cambridge is how to liaise with the Home Office. As part of the Governance Review process, the statutory function of the AWERB Operations Committee needs to be looked at. It was recognised that it is unlikely issues will be raised at this meeting that haven't already been addressed locally. The committee were asked what they would find most useful moving forward. The meeting should act as a place to discuss tissue sharing from non-regulated procedures. During times of uncertainty, the default is for all committees to continue meeting online unless otherwise organised. It was suggested holding the meeting in person occasionally.

#### 4. Licensing update; SC18; legislation; welfare issues; Home Office inspections

It was reported that 11 Standard Condition 18 reports have been received since the last meeting. The 3 repeat concerns are excessive bleeding from spinal cord lesion surgery, mice deaths from rotarod behavioural testing and intracardiac inoculation of cancer cells. Internal reviews are taking place for these. [REDACTED] has been announced as the new chair of the AWERB Standing meeting. She has been tasked with streamlining the meeting. As part of the new format, the initial comments will be given by the scientist and lay person. The NACWO, NVS and NIO are expected to have raised any issues at the PST stage. It was asked what happens if PPL holders ignore the comments provided by the committee. It was confirmed the comments are only advice and it is possible for applications to be sent to the Home Office without making any of the changes recommended by the committee. The licencing team will relay information from the PST meetings to [REDACTED] before AWERB. It was requested that comments made at the

PST meetings are made available to the full AWERB committee. The facility or PST NACWO will no longer be invited to the AWERB meetings. It was noted that if the presentation given in the AWERB meeting does not answer all questions or raises new ones, everyone would be welcome to speak. The Home Office have been asked if they still want to see the recommendations provided by the AWERB committee. The changes to this process are being made after the Home Office noted concerns over how long the meetings were and how much was expected to be covered.

PIL applications should be sent directly from the applicant and not the NACWO. It was noted that not all NACWOs are receiving confirmation of granted PILs, but it was agreed that it would be useful to receive this information.

New project licences and amendments should also be sent directly to the licencing team. The NACWOs were asked to direct PPL holders to the licencing team if they make contact regarding an application.

## **5. Non-regulated procedures**

It was queried whether the embryo brains and female rats could be sourced internally.

It was noted that this applicant will be seeking spare and surplus animals from the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED].

The applicant is working to find these animals spare from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

It was suggested that the researchers could use the form to list the tissues requested but not required for their particular non-regulated procedure. The [REDACTED] have a mailing list to inform their users of animals coming in, the date and which tissues will be used. The [REDACTED] work similarly. It was noted that the [REDACTED] use SharePoint for this purpose.

It was requested that the NVS and NACWO are copied in to any comments sent to the researcher after the non-regulated procedure forms have been seen by this committee.

## **6. Discussion of animal production, care and use; animal accommodation; animal health issues; animal models; animal transport; health screening**

[REDACTED] reported that she and [REDACTED] have recently advised a group on alternative killing methods for frogs. As a result, the group will no longer use concussion. This is a positive outcome which started from the non-regulated procedure process.

There is currently a worldwide shortage of Xenopus. The aquatics team are now breeding in house in the hope to become self-sufficient.

The status of the Merino sheep was queried. Originally it was suggested the sheep were gone before the HSE visit in December but it is unlikely this will be possible. Due to being genetically modified, the sheep have to be kept on licence. If the animals are to be kept, the HSE have to be informed and they will visit. [REDACTED] should be kept up to date. [REDACTED] asked if they were still being paid for. January 2022 is the deadline for the animals to leave due to the project licence expiring. Once the licence expires, the animals are to be put down immediately. The directors will put something in writing.

## **7. Good practice; training and competencies**

The NACWOs were asked to inform users that if they have a record on MCMS, Camtral should not be used. All CPD course dates are on the website.

A new Introduction to Rodent Dissection course will be running in November. A poster has been circulated and the details are on the website.

The cut off for IAT January term is the 20<sup>th</sup> December.

## **8. Staffing; management and operation processes**

None

### **9. 3Rs; rehoming; outreach and openness**

After the successful rehoming programme, there are just 6 hamsters left. These might be used for tissues. A poster, photos and video footage will be used at the 2022 Science Festival.

A rehoming and release programme will take place next year for the corvids. The committee were asked to keep an eye out for acorns. [REDACTED] will collect.

The Science Festival will take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2022 in the Guild Hall. There will be 4 themes; Society, Health, Environment and Discovery. There will be a blend of in-person and digital approach to the festival and help is needed for the weekend.

[REDACTED] has organised an event for the CAST students. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] will both be speaking but other volunteers are welcome for talks or facility tours. The event will run from January - March 2022.

UAS have published some video footage by [REDACTED] regarding the naked mole rats. This is also available on the University of Cambridge website.

[REDACTED] will be meeting [REDACTED] and the communications team about filming new footage for the facilities. Anyone featured in the videos can be made anonymous.

The committee were told about a 3 minute 3Rs podcast. An internal podcast is being considered. The NACWOS were asked to suggest the idea to the technicians to see if there is enough interest.

The LASA virtual annual conference will take place on the 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> November and the 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> November.

UAR are running a social media campaign focusing on #fishinresearch. This will be running from the 22<sup>nd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> November on Twitter.

The importance of discussing Zebrafish at the Science Festival was noted due to the increased numbers from the Returns.

Positive feedback has been received for PPL licencing team and the new processes.

### **10. Any other business**

An email will be circulated to confirm there will be no Christmas event taking place this year.

Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day will be triple pay.

It has now been confirmed that the additional bank holiday in 2022 will be given by the University and annual leave is not required.

Applications are open for Congress in 2022.

**Date of next meeting:** Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2021