

Meeting:	Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB)		
Date:	10 November 2023	Time:	13:30 – 16:00
Location:	On campus		
Members present:	AWERB Chair / Named Information Officer (NIO) Deputy Chair Named Veterinary Surgeon (NVS) NACWO Chair of BRF User Forum NASPA Chair PIL representative x2 Research Integrity and Governance (RIGO) officer NEER Officer Independent, external lay member Communication's team representative Academic staff member with relevant research experience.		
In attendance:	AWERB Secretary,		
Minutes:	AWERB Secretary		
Acronyms	AWERB – Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body BRF – Biomedical Research Facility ECR – Early Career Researcher FEO – Favourable Ethical Opinion HOLC – Home Office Liaison Contact NASPA - Non-Animal in Scientific Procedures Act NACWO – Named Animal Care and Welfare Officer NEER – Non-Establishment Ethics Review NIO – Named Information Officer NVS – Named Veterinary Surgeon PILh – Personal Licence (holder) PPLh – Project Licence (holder) PELh – Establishment Licence (holder) RIGC – Research Integrity and Governance Committee RIGO – Research Integrity and Governance Office SAGE-AR – Self-Assessment for Governance and Ethics – Animal Research URIC – University Research and Innovation Committee		

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Agenda Items:

Item		Action #
1.	<p>Welcome and Apologies Apologies received from: PELh, Statistician, Academic staff member with relevant research experience.</p> <p>Chair welcomed all members and introduced two new Personal Licence representatives who recently joined the committee.</p>	Apologies for absence to be sent to Chair in advance of meetings. (ALL)
2.	<p>Approval of minutes and Update on actions from previous meeting Minutes of the previous AWERB meeting (held on 07/09/23) were circulated for final approval via email prior to the meeting; it was noted that gender-neutral language should be used going forward. Minutes were approved. Action log will be removed from the official version prior to publishing on BRF website.</p> <p>3/23 Updating of animal research/ethics webpages is on-going; Chair has created a <i>beta</i> version and content will continue to be edited.</p> <p>5/23 and 25/23 Draft 3Rs strategy document – no comments were received; spreadsheet to be converted to word document and re-shared with AWERB members and the User group.</p> <p>8/23 Rehoming policy document to be shared with the committee and once updated it will be uploaded to new webpages.</p> <p>15/23 UK legislation training module/site for Schedule 1 users; carried forward - update to be provided during January meeting.</p> <p>19/23 – Zebrafish larvae SOP will be presented at next NASPA meeting for review and approval. Item closed.</p> <p>22/23 – Compassion fatigue leaflet – no response from HR; Chair will post and circulate leaflet on various sites/places. Item closed.</p> <p>23/23 – Animal health database – item will be revisited when animal numbers increase and/or when financial situation has improved. Item closed.</p> <p>24/23 SAGE-AR Historic data storage. Decision made to store all records since NASPA was created. NASPA Chair to discuss technical aspects with RIGO IT Team.</p>	<p>3/23 AWERB Chair / marketing & communication representative</p> <p>5/23 AWERB Chair /All 3Rs champions</p> <p>8/23 NVS</p> <p>15/23 NVS/NACWO</p> <p>24/23 NASPA Chair</p>
3.	Key points from Named Person reports:	

	<p>NVS reported one animal had to be euthanised three days after surgery as it became unwell. Samples were submitted to the pathology lab; report is pending.</p> <p>NACWO updated AWERB members about staffing changes in the BRF unit; new senior lab manager and an animal technician will soon be joining the team.</p> <p>NIO reported new deputy NVS was appointed.</p> <p>User forum Chair reported new Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) imaging machine will be validated, and a presentation was given about the Visualsonics VEVO F2 ultrasound Imaging system. Call for interest for AWERB PIL representative was advertised.</p> <p>Detailed reports were provided prior to the meeting. Major ethical/welfare notifications are summarised above.</p>	
4.	<p>Discussion of language in revised SAGE-AR form</p> <p>The Chair of AWERB shared a link to new SAGE-AR form. The committee were shown what had changed, tested some scenarios and discussed language choice. Committee members were asked to continue reviewing it after meeting and reports any feedback to awerb@surrey.ac.uk.</p>	26/23 All
5.	<p>2-year review PP0344017</p> <p>The researcher joined the meeting remotely and provided a very detailed mid-term review on their project. They have explained the aim of their project was to better understand the processes that occur for a neglected tropical skin disease, Buruli ulcer, caused by the bacterial pathogen, <i>Mycobacterium ulcerans</i>. A minor amendment to the licence, based on experiential learning with the model and on the advice of the HOI following a SC18 report, has been made. This was approved by the AWERB (Nov 2022) but has not yet been submitted to the HO as the PILh was waiting for histological data on the FVB tail samples.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the PPLh for their clear and comprehensive mid-term review. Committee members asked questions and discussions focussed on the following:</p> <p>Q1. Did foot oedema result in any signs of pain in the animals? No, the animals have been monitored closely and they use both infected and uninfected feet without preference, which suggests they aren't in pain.</p> <p>Q2. How does the disease progress? This licence does not allow the infection to progress to the stage of disease, however, the literature states that tissue in the infected region would start to break down if this were to happen.</p> <p>Q3. Did you look at steroid levels in animals to check if they were raised suggestive of suffering? This wasn't considered at the time but can be looked at.</p> <p>Q4. Are you on track in terms of the numbers of animals used?</p>	

	<p>The numbers of animals used in this licence are lower than initially expected.</p> <p>Q5. Is there a difference on the outcome of the experiment performed on male versus female animals?</p> <p>Yes, the disease progressed more quickly in males than in females.</p> <p>The researcher thanked the committee for their input and discussion as well as the BRF unit staff for their contribution to the project.</p>	
6.	<p>Culture of care & application of the 3Rs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update from Pirbright Institute 3Rs Culture of Care day <p>The Chair and independent external lay member provided an update from the meeting. They both found the meeting and exercises performed very interesting. Learning about how various Schedule 1 methods had changed over time, the 12 recommendations from the Rawle report and the 'role play' exercise were particularly useful. The 'role play' activity was designed to help individuals understand what it might be like to hold other 'roles' (e.g. a researcher or NVS) and make decisions under pressure. Having empathy and understanding between individuals is critical for a good culture of care. Short talks on the use of organoids as a replacement for animals concluded the meeting.</p>	
7.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>N/A</p>	
	<p>Chair thanked everybody for their contributions and closed the meeting.</p>	

Next AWERB Committee Meeting

<p>9th January 2024 13:30-16:00</p> <p>in-person meeting</p>	<p>TBC</p>
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