Important Update - Fieldwork

Animal Welfare Act 2002 - latest advice from the Scientific Licensing Office

There are new requirements for fieldwork studies involving the use of animals for scientific purposes under the Animal Welfare Act 2002. If the area where your fieldwork is taking place is not specifically listed on UWA’s licence, a Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia (DAFWA) Fieldwork Notification Form must now completed and returned to DAFWA before you commence work at these sites. See http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/staff/forms/animals under ‘Miscellaneous’. If you have any queries please contact the Animal Ethics Office, aeo@uwa.edu.au

ANZCCART 24-26th July 2012 - Thinking outside the cage: a different point of view

The ANZCCART (Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animal in Research and Teaching) conference was held in Perth last week. It was well attended with more than 160 delegates, including participants from Singapore and South Africa. The conference was officially opened by the WA Chief Scientist, Prof. Lyn Beazley. It was a great opportunity to showcase the research and teaching talent based in WA, with presentations from a wide range of outstanding presenters including Nobel Laureate, Prof. Barry Marshall, Prof. Fiona Wood and Prof. Jane Pillow.

Other topics included research in Alzheimer Disease, cancer, wildlife and a panel discussion on controversies in euthanasia. There was also a presentation from SymbioticA at UWA, which stimulated much discussion. A workshop on practical euthanasia was also conducted as an adjunct to the main conference.

Dr Geoff Dandie, ANZCCART CEO, with Prof Barry Marshall and Prof Lyn Beazley

Watch for a full conference update in the next edition of Animal Welfare Matters
UWA’s Animal Welfare and Veterinary Advisors, Dr Deirdre Bourke and Dr Melissa Lindeman have a wide breadth of experience as veterinarians and have worked in research, teaching, industry and private veterinary practice.

They offer a range of services to the UWA research and teaching community including up-to-date advice on the veterinary and animal welfare components of current and future research projects, in a wide range of species.

Recent advice includes projects as far ranging as:
- Surgery in tumour-bearing mice
- Behavioural and neuropharmacology in rats
- Coordinating specialist veterinary anaesthesia advice for a new procedure in mice
- Sleep studies in emus
- Preterm neonatal lambs
- Marine and wildlife studies
- Using new imaging equipment and techniques to enhance animal studies
- Identifying and contacting potential sources for novel information and biological samples for UWA staff e.g. tissue samples from feral cats and whales

Deirdre and Melissa provide regular small group workshops on understanding the Animal Ethics Application forms and developing monitoring sheets. These workshops can also be tailored to the specific requirements of your team or they can meet with you for one-on-one project discussions either in the pre or post drafting phase and even right up to the AEC submission deadline.

They assist with the School Technical Review process and are available to consult with researchers in the post Animal Ethics Committee phase of the process when requested by the AEC, and to visit projects at the request of the researcher or the AEC.

Melissa and Deirdre have extensive network linkages not only within UWA but within other universities, institutes, government departments and the private sector. They can connect you with expertise relevant to your project if required.

Other training available includes the PAWES Course for new researchers and more specific courses run by the Deirdre and Melissa, such as the PAWES Pig - Low Stress Handling.

Please contact us at vets-research@uwa.edu.au to discuss any training requirements you may have.

Deirdre and Melissa

If you need our help

Call:
Dr Deirdre Bourke (6488 4700)
Dr Melissa Lindeman (6488 4549)

Email:
vets-research@uwa.edu.au

Website:
http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/staff/animals/animal-welfare
**Unexpected deaths - what do I need to do?**

The general procedure for dealing with an unexpected death is that the technician who finds the animal notifies the chief investigator with some description of the event, and the CI (or technician in the absence of the CI) also contacts the AWO, acting DACVS and QCM. The AWO may not be immediately available, so the carcass should be chilled (placed in a fridge *not* a freezer) as soon as possible. In general, following an unexpected death or unplanned euthanasia, an independent post mortem will be required. However, this may be varied in some instances if the situation has been discussed with the AWO who concludes that the gross appearance or circumstances indicate a simple or obvious cause, such as misadventure. In this circumstance the AWO *may* decide that a post mortem is unnecessary from an animal welfare point of view.

Alternatively, the AWO may:

1. Direct that the animal be delivered to QCM at the Biomedical Research Facility, Shenton Park. The animal should be packaged and chilled, as appropriate. If the researcher needs to collect samples, the researcher can arrange for this to occur by being present for the post-mortem.
2. Direct that an external post-mortem is carried out and that the animal will need to be delivered to this service. Most commonly this will be at Murdoch University. Options to enable researchers to collect vital samples at the time post-mortem, can be negotiated in advance with the duty pathologist.

The ACVS staff must be informed of any deaths in their facilities. As a general rule, any person who is carrying out post-mortems in relation to investigation of an unexpected death or unplanned euthanasias should have some qualifications in veterinary pathology or veterinary medicine. QCM’s in-house post-mortems are aimed primarily at general health surveillance and assessments in relation to quality control within animal facilities, including confirming that post mortem findings are consistent with the expectations of a recognised phenotype, as described in the AEC approval.

In the case of unexpected deaths and unplanned euthanasia, it is crucial to *be able to determine the cause* of the unexpected loss, therefore these post-mortems will generally need to be performed by an external pathology laboratory.

For clarification on whether your animal requires an external post-mortem and where that post-mortem should occur, please contact the AWO on awo@uwa.edu.au, or 0428 021 529 or Ext 7882.

**Note:** You will also need to complete the unexpected death or emergency euthanasia report form and submit it to AEO within 24 hours of the event. ([http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/staff/animals/policies/deaths](http://www.research.uwa.edu.au/staff/animals/policies/deaths))

Abbreviations:
AEO – Animal Ethics Office, AWO – Animal Welfare Officer; DACVS - Director, Animal Care and Veterinary Services, QCM - Quality Control Manager, Animal Care and Veterinary Services
Introducing the new Acting Animal Welfare Officer - Dr Chris Mayberry

Chris did first year science at UWA way back in the 60s before moving to Queensland to complete a BVSc. He then spent 32 years working for the Department of Agriculture, mostly with domestic livestock and producers in rural WA, in diagnostic, advisory, research and regulatory roles. But enough is enough, so he jumped at the chance to complete a PhD in reproductive management of western grey kangaroos at UWA in 2006 before heading off into retirement to do some travelling with his wife and spend a bit more time in the ocean. His experiences with livestock inevitably led to an interest in animal welfare and he was recently coaxed out of retirement to look after the role of Animal Welfare Officer at UWA, when Julie Bellamy resigned as Animal Welfare Officer, after almost 2 years in this role at UWA.

Welcome to the new Associate Director of REBO (Research Ethics and Biosafety Office)

Mark Dixon has been appointed Associate Director for Research Ethics and Biosafety (which encompasses the Animal Ethics, Human Ethics and Biosafety Offices), reporting to Director of Research Services, Campbell Thomson.

Mark has worked for the University since 2000 when he commenced his PhD at the UWA Business School and taught the Network Management 331 unit. He was awarded the Excellence in Teaching Award (Faculty) for that unit in 2001 and was nominated for two other teaching awards during his time at the Business School.

Mark completed his PhD on *The effects of a transition to electronic methods on international trade and trade finance* in 2006 after which he returned to his business management role, as managing director of a software development consultancy.

Mark has also lectured undergraduate and Masters units at both Murdoch and Curtin business schools and was a guest lecturer in the MBA at Curtin’s Graduate School of Business for several years. It was these academic positions that piqued Mark’s interest in research integrity and research ethics.

Mark was involved in the Electronic Research Management (eRM/InfoEd) project for Research Services from 2009 through 2012 and continues his close link with that project which aims to improve our business processes in research ethics and biosafety by making them more efficient, more transparent, and more responsive to the reporting requirements of our internal and external clients.
What’s New?

IntelliCage

Dr Ralf Binsack from TSE Systems ([http://www.tse-systems.com/products/index.htm](http://www.tse-systems.com/products/index.htm)) visited the Biomedical Research Facility (BRF) in April and presented equipment and software designed to perform standardised phenotyping and measure physiology, metabolism and behaviour in rodents using fully automated systems.

The two systems of interest he focussed on were the “Intelicage” which monitors the behaviour of up to 8 mice or 4 rats (identified with transponders injected under the skin) in a large home cage that can incorporate specific modules include operant conditioning tests, metabolic chambers, auditory boxes etc. The “Phenomaster” system also relies on testing mice or rats in their home cages, but for this system, animals are housed individually for metabolic and behavioural monitoring.

“Intelicage allows normal social behaviour of mice and respects animal welfare. Your mice will act and react more naturally in an undisturbed environment while living in their normal social circle – increasing the quality and comparability of your data while minimizing your effort.”

For more information please contact Dr Jenny Rodger at jennifer.rodger@uwa.edu.au

Acknowledgements

This newsletter prepared and presented by Deirdre Bourke & Melissa Lindeman, Animal Welfare and Veterinary Advisors

Photographs provided by Sarah Legge, Dale Roberts, Deirdre Bourke, Melissa Lindeman, Bernadette Bradley, Chris Maybery, Mark Dixon & Lyn Beazley.

IntelliCage information provide by Dr Jenny Rodger