

ASPAs e-Newsletter: March 2011

Directive 2010/63/EU

Since November, we have been looking in detail at the final text of the new European Directive in preparation for a public consultation. This has taken somewhat longer than we had hoped, but the draft consultation paper is now nearing completion along with a detailed impact assessment. All being well, we expect to agree them both shortly. We should be in a position to say when the consultation will launch in the next newsletter.

Separately, Article 47 of the new Directive – dealing with the development and validation of alternatives – requires Member States to nominate a single point of contact to provide advice on the regulatory relevance and suitability of alternative approaches proposed for validation. We are very pleased to report that Dr Vicky Robinson, Chief Executive of the NC3Rs, has agreed to take on that role for the UK.

Delivery of the coalition pledges

Work is well in hand on arrangements for the delivery of the two coalition pledges on working to reduce the use of animals in scientific research and ending the testing of household products on animals. We will announce the outcome as soon as this work is complete.

IT Strategy

We are currently in the early stages of evaluating a system called the Collaborative Business Portal (CBP) which will permit online processing of licence applications and amendments. The system is already used extensively for electronic caseworking by the UK Borders Agency. Initial impressions of CBP have been very positive and we intend to move towards a wider pilot involving our user group of external establishments within the next few weeks. Those involved will be contacted individually in due course.

Risk-based inspections

Risk management has been reviewed by the Inspectorate and it is considered that the scope, frequency and depth of inspections should be dependent on how each establishment is working in compliance with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (ASPAs) with its specified licence authorities and with any conditions placed upon those licences.

The 'compliance history', overall management and appropriate discharge of their duties by those holding positions under ASPAs are therefore key determinants in assigning relative risk ratings to an individual establishment. Added to this are considerations of the nature of work undertaken, the species and numbers of animals used for the regulated procedures and the severity of those procedures.

Risk ratings identify the degree of surveillance required within the licensing and inspection programme for each designated establishment. There is no intention that establishments be rated against each other as a result of risk ratings assigned to them, and specific risk ratings will not be published. Risk ratings can change following inspection, resulting in either increased or decreased risk, and correspondingly an increase or decrease in the frequencies of future inspection.

Annual Statistics 2010

On the 4th January 2011, the statistical return of procedures (RoP) form was sent to the Certificate of Designation holder/Home Office Liaison Officer (HOLO) at your establishment, for distribution to every project licence holder for completion and return to the Home Office. The subsequent collation of your statistical return will enable the Home Office to produce its 2010 annual statistical publication of all regulated procedures conducted under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

We are grateful to those many project licence holders who have submitted their individual returns to us, but there remain a number of who have yet to return their completed form. It is a condition of every project licence that this statistical form is completed, even if no procedures were undertaken throughout 2010, and failure to comply constitutes a breach of the Act and may be considered as an infringement.

If you have not yet completed your statistical return would you please do so immediately. Return address details are contained in the form.

If you have not received your statistical form it is essential that you speak with your Certificate holder or HOLO now and obtain this from him/her.

All forms relating to Personal Licences, Project Licences and Certificates of Designation

From the week beginning 1st November 2010, new operating procedures were introduced to help the licensing team improve its service to you.

A version date box has now been added to each form, which all applicants applying for a new licence or certificate, together with those requesting an amendment to an existing licence or certificate, are required to complete. Applicants should insert the date on which the application or amendment was completed ready for posting to the Home Office.

The only instance in which it is acceptable to use the old project licence application form is in those cases when it is necessary to apply for an amendment to an existing project licence i.e. a project licence that was originally applied for, and granted, using the old form.

Project licences have a maximum life of five years. As they expire and are revoked, the need to apply for amendments using the old application form will diminish and eventually the form will be removed from our website.

For any amendment requests to existing Personal Licences, please use the Personal Licence application form on the web site which incorporates the version date box which is to be completed by the applicant.

New applications for Personal Licences must be submitted on the form located on the Home Office website.

Animal Procedures Committee

The Animal Procedures Reports on Guidance on the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the delivery and accreditation of training under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 and the report on Module 5 and the training of project licence holders have now been published on the Animal Procedures Committee page on the Home Office web site.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/apc/>

The individual reports can be found at the web links below.

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/apc/publications-2010/apc-training-guidance>

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/apc/publications-2010/apc-module-5>

Animal Procedures Committee & Animals Scientific Procedures Inspectorate: Joint Review of Cumulative Severity

The Animal Procedures Committee (APC) in conjunction with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate (ASPI) is planning a review of the assessment of cumulative severity taking the example of non-human primates used in neuroscience research.

Over recent years, the APC has considered the lifetime experience of animals used in scientific procedures when project licence applications are referred to it by the Home Office. This has been particularly pertinent in procedures involving non-human primates where animals may undergo a number of procedures over a period of time.

The timing of this review is additionally relevant as there is an emphasis on lifetime experience of animals, together with the requirement for retrospective reporting, included in the new Directive (2010/63/EU).

There will be a call for written evidence in due course. Those interested are invited to submit their contact details to apc.secretariat@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Terms of Reference and supporting papers can be found at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/agencies-public-bodies/apc/>.

National Centre for Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs)

The NC3Rs 2010 Annual Report and their latest NC3Rs newsletter can be found at: <http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/>

Royal Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals

GA passports

The Society's booklet on "GA passports: the key to consistent animal care" can be read at:

<http://content.www.rspca.org.uk/cmsprd/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobnocache=false&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1232992403995&ssbinary=true>

Zebrafish

The Society's new resource on "Guidance on the housing and care of zebrafish" can be read at:

<http://content.www.rspca.org.uk/cmsprd/Satellite?blobcol=urldata&blobheader=application%2Fpdf&blobkey=id&blobnocache=false&blobtable=MungoBlobs&blobwhere=1232996528828&ssbinary=true>

1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON VETERINARY AND ANIMAL ETHICS

12 – 13th September 2011 at the Royal College of Physicians, London, UK

Veterinary ethics combines professional and animal ethics and can be interpreted as a critical reflection on the humane treatment of animals. As an academic discipline, veterinary ethics is in a similar state to that of biomedical ethics in the late '80s, before the publication of the General Medical Council report 'Tomorrows Doctors' in 1993. This conference aims to stimulate scholarship, research and teaching in

veterinary ethics by bringing together leading scholars from mainstream biomedical ethics, veterinary medicine and senior Government officials.

The programme of invited speakers is available on the conference website www.icvae.com

Understanding Medical Research

The latest newsletter can be found at:

http://www.understandinganimalresearch.org.uk/latest_news

Named Animal Care & Welfare Officer (NACWO) Advanced (CPD) Workshop

The Institute of Animal Technology is arranging a one day NACWO workshop on the 12 April 2011 the main theme being "Change", Europe directive, changing in pain-kills, change in working environment etc.

<http://www.iat.org.uk/education/cpd.htm>

8th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences

The Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) is hosting the 8th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences, taking place in Montréal from August 21-25, 2011.

<http://www.wc8.ccac.ca/programs>