

Scientific Animal Protection

Regulatory Update: September 2017

This is our third quarterly *Regulatory Update* for the year 2017. In order to get the most value out of these updates, please distribute this document to all animal researchers, animal care staff, and animal welfare body and ethics committee members within your establishment.

1 BREEDER/SUPPLIER/USER ESTABLISHMENT RENEWAL APPLICATIONS

A number of breeder/supplier/user establishment authorisations are due to expire in the next few months. For those authorisations that will soon expire, we would like to remind compliance officers to submit their renewal application eight weeks in advance of the expiry date. Renewal applications not received on time put the establishment at risk of non-compliance.

2 PROJECT APPLICATIONS

2.1 Additional refinements field

We would like to advise applicants to fully complete the 'additional refinements' field for each procedure within Section F of the project application form. We receive many applications where this particular field is left blank, or 'N/A' inserted, and would therefore like to remind applicants of their legal responsibility to refine all procedures, in order to reduce to a minimum any possible pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm to the animals.

3 END-OF-YEAR CLOSURE DATES

Please take note that the HPRA will close on Friday, 22 December 2017 (normal closing time) and will re-open on Tuesday, 2 January 2018. Please note that as the HPRA is closed on these days, they are not considered 'working days' so all SAP applications will be 'clock stopped' during that period. Please ensure that applicants within your establishment are made aware of the potential effects this may have on the processing of any current and future applications.

4 NC3RS UPDATES

4.1 Ischaemia Models: Procedural Refinements of *in Vivo* Experiments (IMPROVE)

[The IMPROVE guidelines](#), which are based on a two year collaboration of representatives from the UK's stroke research community, have recently been published in the [Journal of Cerebral Blood Flow and Metabolism](#). These extensive and important guidelines set out 43 recommendations and refinements for best practice in the most commonly used mouse and rat stroke models. The HPRA expects that all stroke researchers in Ireland make themselves familiar

with these essential guidelines and ensure that relevant recommendations are implemented in any future project applications involving stroke models. We recommend that this information is also shared with ethics committees and animal welfare bodies in establishments where *in vivo* stroke research is conducted.

4.2 Refined mouse EEG recording device

A [new ultra-lightweight system for recording neural activity in the brains of mice](#), referred to as TaiNi, has been developed by engineers at Imperial College London. This device allows untethered monitoring for up to 72 hours, and promises welfare benefits when compared to other recording devices.

4.3 Mouse aggression study: technicians wanted

A [new project for animal technicians to collect data on the prevalence and potential triggers of cage aggression](#) in group-housed male mice has launched. Animal technicians across the world are being asked to participate in the study, which involves collecting data within their own establishment over one four-week period. Data collection must commence by 23 October 2017, and participation can earn technicians up to ten hours of CPD credits from the Institute of Animal Technology.

4.4 Guidance for university web pages on the 3Rs

A [guidance document has been prepared by the NC3Rs](#) to help universities to provide useful and informative animal research web pages, particularly in relation to the 3Rs. This is a helpful document for universities wishing to enhance their communication with the public on their animal research programmes.

4.5 Rat enrichment - IAT Congress 2017 - workshop summary report

Two workshops held at the Institute of Animal Technology (IAT) Congress in March 2017 explored practical approaches to providing laboratory rats with increased opportunities to exercise and to perform natural behaviours in a more complex, enriched environment than is often provided for them. A detailed summary of the workshops can be found [here](#).

5 UPCOMING EVENTS

5.1 SGV annual meeting 2017

The [annual meeting of the Swiss laboratory animal science association \(SGV\)](#) will be held in Zurich on 28-29 November 2017. Topics include reproducibility in animal research, models of aging, humane endpoints, euthanasia and the use of zebrafish in research. Registration closes on 10 October 2017.

5.2 Danish 3R symposium 2017

The [Danish 3R centre will be holding their annual symposium](#), in order to promote the development of the 3Rs, on 7-8 November 2017 in Copenhagen. Registration closes on 24 October.

5.3 RSPCA/UFAW rodent and rabbit welfare meeting

The 24th rodent and rabbit welfare meeting will be held on 14 November 2017 in Surrey, England. Agenda items include the welfare of breeding rabbit does, refining rabbit housing, husbandry and care, and group housing of male mice. For information on this event contact: research.animals@rspca.org.uk.

6 USEFUL LINKS

6.1 PREPARE guidelines

[The PREPARE \(Planning Research and Experimental Procedures on Animals: Recommendations for Excellence\) guidelines](#), written by a group of experts led by Norecopa, have recently been published in *Laboratory Animals*. These provide overarching guidance on how to plan animal studies, and cover formulation, dialogue with scientists and the animal facility, and quality control of the various components in the study. These guidelines are important reading for anyone planning a research project and are available to download free of charge. In addition, a PowerPoint presentation on the guidelines, and a simple checklist, are available from the [Norecopa website](#).

6.2 Guidelines on severity assessment of genetically altered rodents

Detailed [guidelines on how to perform welfare assessments on genetically altered mice and rats](#) in order to determine the presence of a harmful phenotype, and its severity, have been produced by the Working Group of Animal Welfare Officers in Berlin and published in *Laboratory Animals*. These guidelines should provide a structured approach to welfare assessment of genetically modified lines, and thus will be beneficial to scientists, veterinarians and animal care staff.

6.3 RSPCA/LASA guidance on developing induction materials for AWB members

A [useful guidance is now available online to help establishments prepare induction packs](#) for new members of the AWERB. In the UK, the AWERB is a joint animal welfare body and ethics committee; however the guidance will still be highly relevant to animal welfare bodies in Irish establishments.

6.4 Diagnosis of pain levels in sheep

Researchers in the University of Cambridge have developed [an artificial intelligence \(AI\) system to detect pain levels in sheep](#). This system uses five different facial expressions and is currently able to estimate pain levels with 80% accuracy.

6.5 All eyes on zebrafish

An [interesting article about the growing interest in zebrafish science](#) has been published in the September 2017 edition of *LabAnimal*. This article should be of interest to scientists currently using, or considering using, zebrafish as their animal model.

6.6 AniMatch

[AniMatch is an online sharing platform](#) facilitating the exchange of organs and tissues of laboratory animals used for scientific purposes, and is available in Europe for universities, private institutes and companies. This is an important platform which encourages responsible animal use and reduction.

6.7 Bf3R website

The [German Centre for the Protection of Laboratory Animals \(Bf3R\)](#) has developed a website, which contains some useful 3Rs links, publications and information on alternatives.

7 FEEDBACK

As always, we welcome your queries and feedback which can be forwarded to sap@hpra.ie. Any requests to be added or removed from the mailing list should also be sent by e-mail.