

Animals in Science Committee

Minutes of the 21st Meeting: 10th December 2018

1.0 Welcome, Introductions and Conflicts of Interest

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees to the 21st meeting of the Animals in Science Committee.
- 1.2 Professor Malcolm Macleod joined the meeting via teleconference. Apologies were received from Professor Gail Davies. A full list of attendees is provided at Annex A.

2.0 Minutes and Actions from the previous ASC meeting

- 2.1 Minutes of the last meeting had been agreed and published on the ASC website.
- 2.2 Actions were complete with the following exceptions:

‘Action 2: ASRU to send a formal response to the ASC in respect of the recommendations set out in the ASC’s letter to the Secretary of State (24 May 2018). Action underway but not yet complete.

Action 3: ASRU to put CSR Subgroup chair in contact with Netherlands policy officials for input re comparative regulation. Action underway but not yet complete.

Action 4: ASC members to share references on automatic integration with ASRU for the development of the searchable NTS database (This work had been delayed but would be taken forward at a later date).

Action 5: ASC members to provide advice to ASRU during the development of the searchable NTS database (This work had been delayed but would be taken forward at a later date).’

3.0 Chair’s Update

3.1 Second meeting of the EU Communication Working Group of National Committees

- 3.1.1 The Chair informed members that he had attended the second meeting of the National Committees on the use of animals for scientific purposes. It was noted that the degree of implementation of the Directive 2010/63/EU varied across the European Union (EU). Project licence applications (PLAs) had

been discussed and the Chair had noted that the U.K. had significantly longer PLAs than other jurisdictions. The UK appeared unique in its use of Establishment Licences to ensure that establishments would be fully resourced throughout the duration of a project licence before it was granted. The Chair had received positive feedback concerning the ASC's Hub Network initiative.

3.2 Update on the annual meeting of the ASC and Animal Science Group

3.2.1 The Chair had attended the annual Animals in Science Committee and Animal Science Group meeting at the Royal Society of Biology, where each committee provided an update on their current workstreams.

4.0 Presentation to the Committee

4.1 The Chair welcomed Dr Hannah Clarke, ASC member and lecturer in neuroscience at the University of Cambridge to provide an overview of neuroanatomy and function.

5.0 Update from the Animals Science Regulation Unit (ASRU)

5.1 UK exit from the EU

5.1.1 ASC members were informed that the Statutory Instrument had now been published on the gov.uk website.

5.2 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

5.2.1 Earlier this year, ASRU signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement and Reduction of Animals in Research (NC3Rs). The MoU represented a positive step in further embedding the 3Rs into the work that ASRU takes forward.

5.3 Update from European Meetings

5.3.1 ASRU Head of Policy had attended the second meeting of National Committees in Brussels and had provided feedback that ASRU's presentation on the methodology used by the ASRU Inspectorate to review project licence applications had been well received.

5.3.2 The Chief Inspector also reported her attendance at a European Commission Expert Working Group meeting at which current issues around regulating and reporting the use of genetically altered animals across member states had been discussed.

5.4 New E-Licensing System

5.4.1 Members were informed that the new E-licensing system was on target to be delivered by August 2019.

5.4.2 Members discussed options to provide input on the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) section of the new E-Licensing system during development.

Action 1: ASC members to provide ASRU with advice on NTS section of new E-Licensing system.

5.5 Article 54 - Implementation Report (and publication of additional statistics)

5.5.1 Article 54 of the Directive requires that every five years (starting November 2018) each Member State must provide the European Commission with specific information relating to the implementation of the Directive. It also requires 'additional statistics' to be reported every fifth year on the numbers of animals bred as part of the scientific process but ultimately not used in procedures, together with information about the use of various methods of genotyping. The UK published these statistics (using data collected for 2017) in November.

5.5.2 ASRU thanked the committee for their input to the Assessment Framework for the efficient breeding of genetically altered (GA) animals which would be published shortly.

Action 2: ASRU to share link for the GA framework with ASC members.

5.5.4 It was agreed that issues raised around the publication of the 'additional statistics' could be further discussed at the next ASC meeting.

Action 3: ASRU to provide more information on the additional statistics and genetically altered animals at the next ASC meeting.

5.6 ASRU Annual Report 2017

5.6.1 Members were informed that the 2017 annual report had been published. Members highlighted that they were keen to continue to see and have the opportunity to contribute to future Advice Notes produced by ASRU.

5.7 Update on Freedom of Information Requests and Parliamentary Questions

5.7.1 Members were provided with updates since the ASC's last plenary meeting.

6.0 Project Licence Application Subgroup Update

- 6.1 Feedback was provided by members on the four project licence applications that had been reviewed since the last ASC plenary meeting.
- 6.2 Members reiterated the need to move towards adherence with the ASC's agreed timetable for the review of project licence applications.
- 6.3 It was noted that there appeared to be a misunderstanding by some in the research community regarding the role and responsibility of the ASC in reviewing project licence applications. The ASC is mandated by the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (as amended) to provide advice to the Minister on project license applications referred to the committee by ASRU. ASRU agreed to ensure inspectors would provide information on the statutory role of the ASC to applicants whose applications were referred to the committee.

7.0 AWERB Subgroup Update

- 7.1 Two Road Shows had been held, in Birmingham and Newcastle. Both Road Shows had been well received and a number of emerging themes were identified. The subgroup would use the forthcoming Hub chair's workshop in March 2019, to consider the themes with the aim of developing a 'Top 20 tips for AWERBs'.
- 7.2 The AWERB Knowledge Hub Group was officially launched on the 8th November. Over 100 members had started using the features of the site.
- 7.3 The AWERB Subgroup Chair provided details on the draft agenda of the Hub chair's workshop to be held in March 2019. This would be circulated to Hub Chairs for comment.
- 7.4 The ASC agreed that the fourth edition of the AWERB newsletter 'The Hub', outlining the outputs from the ASC AWERB Road Show could be published on the ASC website and circulated to AWERBs.

Action 4: ASC Secretariat to publish and circulate the fourth edition of the AWERB newsletter 'The Hub'.

8.0 Task and Finish Group Updates

8.1 Non-Human Primate Welfare Assessment Subgroup

- 8.1.1 The Subgroup Chair confirmed that three members had been co-opted to the group with confirmation from one additional co-optee still awaited. Members agreed that it would be useful to include an industry representative on the subgroup. ASRU agreed to help provide contacts that might be approached.

Action 5: ASRU to provide contacts to the NHPWA Chair.

8.2 Comparative Study of Regulation Subgroup

- 8.2.1 The Subgroup Chair confirmed that information had been provided to ASRU that would feed into the UK's response to the European Commission regarding the Article 54(1) requirement for submitting Reports.
- 8.2.2 The next stage of the work of the subgroup consisted of two areas. The first would look at how a number of different jurisdictions around the world review some key aspects of the project licence authorisation process. ASRU had agreed to provide the Subgroup with a list of the questions from the above-mentioned EU survey that would be helpful in this regard.

Action 6: ASRU to provide a list of the relevant questions from the EU survey and contacts for EU counterparts who may be able to provide assistance with this work.

- 8.2.3 The second part of this work would look at how other regulatory frameworks within the UK identify 'quality', beginning with evidence gathering via a literature review. ASC members also suggested that there could be some value in investigating how public opinion was evaluated by regulators. Further, the importance of comparing regulators who had similar participants, i.e. individuals or establishments was noted by members.
- 8.2.4 The Head of ASRU confirmed that he would be happy to discuss and provide advice moving forward.

8.3 Licence Review Subgroup Update

- 8.3.1 The Subgroup Chair noted that the discussion questions for the licence analysis had been agreed by the Subgroup. ASRU had also provided subgroup members with the requested additional regulatory toxicology protocol licence.
- 8.3.2 The subgroup had also formulated an additional ten Non-Technical Summary (NTS) questions as part of the review of the NTSs.
- 8.3.3 To date, two licences had been reviewed by the Subgroup. The remaining nine licences would be reviewed by March 2019. Following this there would be an extended meeting to discuss findings with the Home Office Inspector.

8.4 Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021 Update

- 8.4.1 The Chair thanked the REF 2021 Subgroup for submitting the ASC's contribution to the REF consultation in October.

8.4.2 It was also noted that a member of the ASC and the Science Secretariat would attend the REF conference on 'Next Steps for the Research Excellence Framework' in April 2019.

9.0 Chair's Update

9.1 Establishment Visit

9.1.1 The Secretariat has been liaising with ASRU to organise a visit to a research establishment. Members agreed that a visit in February 2019 would be suitable.

9.2 ASC Away Day

9.2.1 Members agreed that it would be useful to invite the new ASC Chair, once announced, to the ASC Away Day.

9.2.2 Members discussed possible topics for the ASC Away Day.

Action 7: Secretariat would seek further views from committee members regarding topics for the Away Day.

10.0 AOB

10.1 Arms-Length Bodies Conference Attendance

10.1.1 In November, the ASC Deputy Chair attended the Arms-Length Bodies (ALB) Conference at the Home Office. The discussions were centred on how ALBs work with the Home Office to protect people and increase security. For example, by ensuring the Home Office use the talent within the ALBs and ensuring that there is cooperation so that ALBs can be involved early in policy development.

Action 8: Secretariat to circulate the ALB conference report to committee members.

10.2 Animals Science Meeting

10.2.1 A few members of the Committee had attended the annual Animal Science Meeting at the Home Office which was co-organised by the Royal Society of Biology and ASRU.

10.2.2 It was noted that the ASPEL system demonstration was received positively. One ASC member had given a presentation at the meeting about the importance of investing in training for staff to improve good practice.

Annex A

Animals in Science Committee Members

Dr John Landers (Chair)

Mrs Wendy Jarrett

Mr Ken Applebee

Professor Clare Stanford

Dr Hannah Clarke

Dr Sally Robinson

Mrs Anna Rowland

Mr Barney Reed

Dr Gilly Stoddart

Dr Donald Bruce

Professor Malcolm Macleod

ASRU

Mr Will Reynolds (Head of Unit, ASRU)

Dr Kate Garrod (Chief Inspector, ASRU)

Science Secretariat

Dr Joanne Wallace (Head of Science Secretariats)

Mrs Caroline Wheeler (ASC Secretary)

Ms Laura Zagarella (ASC Secretariat)

Annex B

Action Table

ASC 21 1	ASC members to provide ASRU with advice on NTS section of new E-Licensing system.
ASC 21 2	ASRU to share link for the GA framework with ASC members.
ASC 21 3	ASRU to provide more information on the additional statistics and genetically altered animals at the next ASC meeting.
ASC 21 4	ASC Secretariat to publish and circulate the fourth edition of the AWERB newsletter 'The Hub'.
ASC 21 5	ASRU to provide contacts to the NHPWA Chair.
ASC 21 6	ASRU to provide contacts for EU counterparts who may be able to provide assistance with this work.
ASC 21 7	Secretariat would seek further views from committee members regarding topics for the Away Day.
ASC 21 8	Secretariat to circulate the ALB conference report to committee members.