

The **ASC**  
Animals in Science Committee

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Chair: Dr John Landers  
Secretary: Dr Martin Whiting  
14th Floor Lunar House,  
40 Wellesley Road, Croydon CR9 2BY  
Email: [asc.secretariat@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:asc.secretariat@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)  
ASC Secretariat tel: 020 8196 4669

Baroness Williams of Trafford

21 November 2017

Dear Minister,

**Report in response to Ministerial Commission of the ASC: Review of harm-benefit analysis in the use of animals in research.**

The Animals in Science Committee (ASC) are pleased to respond to the commission they received from Norman Baker in his letter of August 2014. In this commission, the ASC were asked to review, and advise on, the process of Harm Benefit Analysis (HBA) which forms part of the procedure by which applications for licences to conduct research under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act are considered. The ASC have now completed their review and have produced a detailed report.

The comprehensive nature of the topic meant the committee found it necessary to consider matters wider than the original commission and have therefore provided twenty seven recommendations for implementation by those that regulate the use of animals in science and the wider scientific community. The ASC will, in due course, delineate these recommendations to provide a subset specifically for consideration by the Regulator.

The current substantial, and internationally relevant, report is intended to focus scientists' minds on the importance of considering animal welfare throughout the entirety of the animals' lives within the research environment. In preparing their report the committee drew upon:

- international policy discussions on HBA;
- recent academic literature on key aspects of HBA;
- a review of past project licence applications; and
- new ASC research on the identification and assessment of benefits.

This ambitious analysis incorporates some issues which, the Committee believes, have not always received the attention they deserve, and concludes that the HBA remains a legitimate ethical framework for evaluating the use of animals in research and testing. The report points to a number of potential enhancements to the HBA process, identifying new learning resources, and emphasising the importance of dialogue and ongoing review in order to illuminate potential changes in harms and benefits over the course of a research project. As such, a continuing HBA process can help determine the point at which any given project, procedure, animal model or research trajectory may no longer be ethically justified.

This report is presented to you for your consideration. I will, of course, be very happy to discuss any aspect with you.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr John Landers**  
Chair, Animals in Science Committee