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ASPA e-newsletter: June 2010

New administration

Lynne Featherstone has been appointed as the Minister for Equalities and Criminal Information and also has responsibility for the use of animals in scientific procedures and is Better Regulation Minister for the Home Office.

Coalition Agreement

The key points for ASPA are:

Under 'Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' on page 18 (fourth bullet point):

- ... We will end the testing of household products on animals and work to reduce the use of animals in scientific research. ...

Under 'Business' on pages 9 and 10:

- We will cut red tape by introducing a 'one-in, one-out' rule whereby no new regulation is brought in without other regulation being cut by a greater amount.
- We will end the culture of 'tick-box' regulation, and instead target inspections on high-risk organisations through co-regulation and improving professional standards.
- We will impose 'sunset clauses' on regulations and regulators to ensure that the need for each regulation is regularly reviewed.
- We will give the public the opportunity to challenge the worst regulations.
- We will end the so-called 'gold-plating' of EU rules, so that British businesses are not disadvantaged relative to their European competitors.

We will provide further details on how these measures will be taken forward, including timing, in future Newsletters.

Europe – Revision of Directive 86/609

There has been further steady progress with the revision of Directive 86/609 since the last newsletter both in the UK and Brussels.

Following the February debate, the Commission's proposal was released from scrutiny by the House of Lords in March - just before the general election was called. This completed UK Parliamentary scrutiny - the House of Commons having already considered the proposal - and leaves UK Ministers free to support the revision at the Council of Ministers. In April, the outstanding issues relating to 'comitology' under the Lisbon Treaty were resolved and in May the text was passed to 'jurist-linguists' for legal tidying up and translation into all Member State languages.

Earlier this month the Council of Ministers adopted the revised text as its first reading position and passed the proposal back to the European Parliament (EP) for its second reading. We expect the text to be considered by the EP in plenary session in September. This should clear the way for adoption of the new directive shortly afterwards. This means adoption will be about three months later than we had expected, but this should not have a major impact on the timetable for transposition into UK legislation – more on this in a future newsletter. Final implementation is still scheduled for 1 January 2013.

Summary report on the public consultation on the revision of EC Directive 86/609

Our summary report on the public consultation on the revision of EC Directive 86/609 has been posted on the Home Office website and can be read in full at:-

<http://tna.europarchive.org/20100413151426/http://scienceandresearch.homeoffice.gov.uk/animal-research/legislation/summary-report.html>

ASPA IT strategy

Work is progressing in testing various software systems and in remapping our business processes to optimise them to the future IT system. This is starting to involve stakeholder consultation with, at this stage, a limited number of establishments representing the key user groups and sectors. The aim of this consultation is to ensure that, as far as possible, any new ways of working lead to an improved experience for all licence and certificate holders as well as ourselves.

However, as you will also be aware, with the change of government there may be changes to the funding and timing of IT projects. The potential consequences of this, if any, for our project are not yet fully known. Despite this uncertainty our vision, as described in the February 2010 newsletter, is unchanged and we now aim to start to roll out the new system in 2012.

Science and Research - Research and testing using animals website

Please note that with the change of administration the content of our website apart from the application forms has now been archived and are available on the National Archives and can be accessed through:-

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/animal-research/>

Animal Transfer Authorities

The new project licence application form facilitates the acquisition of genetically altered rodents by incorporating authorities within Section D, subject to a number of qualifications. As part of Better Regulation these authorities have now been extended to include general authorisation, subject to the same qualifications, to acquire "normal" rodents from non-designated establishments, and to both acquire and to transfer to establishments outside the UK, genetically altered zebra fish and genetically altered xenopus.

Project licence holders can now apply for an amendment to have the new revised text added to their existing licence(s) following the normal amendment procedure. ERP approval is not required for these amendments. The project licence application form will be updated shortly.

Sponsorship of Personal Licence Applications

Sections 19-22 of the Personal Licence Application form should be completed for first time applicants and for those who have held a licence that has been revoked five or more years previously.

Letters of endorsement from the Certificate Holder (or agreed delegate) should accompany applications for change in primary availability and requests for secondary availability. Applications to amend personal licences do not routinely require sponsorship.

Annual Statistics 2009

The annual bulletin *Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals 2009* is planned for publication towards the end of July, as usual. Thanks are due to

licensees and others involved in the collection process for their ongoing assistance in providing returns and dealing with follow up queries about data provided, to ensure that the data in the annual bulletin is as accurate as possible.

The National Cancer Research Institute - Guidelines for the welfare and use of animals in cancer research

“The National Cancer Research Institute “Guidelines for the welfare and use of animals in cancer research” have been published in the British Journal of Cancer <http://www.nature.com/bjc/journal/v102/n11/full/6605642a.html>

They replace the UKCCR Guidelines first published in 1988 and revised in 1997, and take account of progress with animal welfare and cancer research since the earlier publications.

The new guidelines do not specifically target the UK regulatory system as the former did, but give a broader guide to the principles that should govern use of animals in cancer studies. They do not provide detailed end points for use in protocols in project licence applications, but rather give guiding principles for good experimental design. UK project licence holder should either follow the advice given on good practice, or be prepared to explain and justify why they do not.

It is expected that the new guidelines will be read, referenced and used by licence holders carrying out cancer research (and may inform the activities of local Ethical Review Committees), but they do not substitute for specific end points tailored to individual studies that should be detailed in project licences for individual studies.

Guiding principles on good practice for local Ethical Review Processes

The document ‘Guiding principles on good practice for local Ethical Review Processes’ is finally complete and is available to download from either the RSPCA or LASA websites. The document was developed through a joint project between the Research Animals Department of the RSPCA and LASA’s Education, Training and Ethics Section with considerable input from people involved in various roles related to the ERP. The overall goal was to help with the interpretation of each of the 7 ERP functions by exploring in more detail the purpose of each, and the most efficient way of implementing them in practice.

Please visit www.rspca.org.uk/ethicalreview or www.lasa.co.uk to download a copy.

LASA Home Office Liaison Forum: Inaugural Meeting

Following consultation with LASA members regarding the possibility of establishing a forum for Home Office liaison officers the inaugural meeting was held Wednesday 17th February 2010. The meeting was extremely well supported with over 40 attendees present along with representatives from the Home Office, LASA Council and the Certificate Holders’ Forum.

The Home Office Liaison Forum will now be formally constituted as a specialist section of LASA. For further details of the HOLO Forum, please contact the LASA Secretariat: lasa@btconnect.com or visit the LASA website www.lasa.co.uk.

NC3Rs

The latest NC3Rs newsletter can be found at:-
<http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/news.asp?id=15>

Institute for Laboratory Animal Research

ILAR (the Institute for Laboratory Animal Research – a division of the US National Academy of Sciences) publishes its *Journal* quarterly and each edition covers an issue of current interest in laboratory animal research. The most recent edition is on ***Disaster Planning and Management***. The complete list of topics can be found at:- http://dels-old.nas.edu/ilar_n/ilarjournal/online_issues.shtml

The Home Office Research and testing using animals website provides practitioners with guidance on licence applications and related legislation

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/animal-research/>

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