

London AWERB Hub Meeting

7th October 2020

[Meeting conducted online]

Previous Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 26th February 2020, were approved and authorised for publication on members' websites.

Matters Arising

The second training workshop for AWERB members is on hold due to the ongoing Covid 19 outbreak.

Report from NC3Rs Manager

[REDACTED]

3Rs advice for project licence applicants section of the NC3Rs website. This guidance was penned by Regional Programme Managers, based on their experience of working with PPL applicants. The guidance is located at <https://nc3rs.org.uk/3rs-advice-project-licence-applicants>

A number of new e-learning modules had also been added to the website. These were made in conjunction with FLAIRE Learning <https://nc3rs.org.uk/e-learning-resources>

The Pan-London 3Rs symposium was originally planned to take place in April 2020. The decision had just been made to move to an online presentation, with details still being worked on. **ACTION: [REDACTED] to pass on details of a recent [REDACTED] symposium.**

Update on the Forced Swim Test

[REDACTED] reported that [REDACTED] 3Rs Committee has compiled a list of actively discouraged procedures, which would state that the FST could not be used as a model of depression, but is acceptable as a behavioural screen to test new compounds for their potential use as antidepressants. UAR are working on a fact sheet to outline where the test is used and what it is useful for. The document should be published 15/10/20 (15/10/20)

[Note added to Minutes: The factsheet has now been published on the UAR website:

Few issues of transporting animals had been experienced, once it was made known that they were for medical research. Developments in gel and food packs seem to enable longer journey times, but care should be taken not to allow conditions that wouldn't have been acceptable previously.

China is no longer exporting NHPs for use in research.

A reminder was given that transport of gametes is preferable to live exports.

Alternatives to Caesium Irradiators

[XX] reported on the concerns about the use of Caesium 137 in irradiators, as outlined in Paper 1. The isotope has the potential of terrorist misappropriation if not disposed of correctly, due to its moderate half-life and high energy decay. X-ray emitters or cobalt 60 are possible alternatives, but not full replacements.

Horseshoe Crabs

[XX] reported on the use of horseshoe crab blood in endotoxin tests, see Paper 2. Bleeding crabs is not a terminal procedure, but it is unclear what proportion of released animals survive. 500,000 crabs were used for this purpose in 2018, and are overlooked in legislation and protections.

Brexit Matters

Many establishments reported that the ongoing Covid situation had depleted stockpiles of PPE intended to cover any disruption to supply caused by Brexit.

Date of next Meeting

The exact date of the next meeting, most likely in February 2021, will be announced in due course.