
Summary Minutes: AWERB: PPL review meeting

Status: Final

Meeting held: Wednesday 09 October 2024 at 10am

Present: 12 plus in in attendance, 4 by invitation and 15 apologies

1 **STUDY REQUEST: RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW**

AWERB received an update on a study request that had originally received approval in January 2020 and was still ongoing. The researcher had been invited to this meeting to provide an update on how well the model was working, what they had found to date and the next steps in their research programme. The project involved research focusing on evaluating dermal countermeasures to chemical contamination. The majority of their research had resulted in high impact work and was very valuable.

To date it had not been possible to use skin from abattoir killed pigs or from pigs used in other experimental procedures due to the size of pig that was ideal to supply the skin for these studies (25 kg pigs). Non-animal alternatives were being discussed but to date none had proved acceptable.

It was noted though that the focus of the work was moving away from academic research and generating new information and new knowledge so future collaboration would need future discussion. In particular, future use of skin from larger pigs used in other experiments would be explored to see if larger pigs could in these studies.

2 **NEW PROJECT LICENCE APPLICATION**

A project licence holder (PPLH) and colleague were welcomed to the meeting. The PPLH was wanting to apply for a new project licence to replace one that was due to expire in spring 2025. The licence related to research they were doing to repair damaged mitochondria to prevent neonatal brain injury. A brief presentation was given on the background of the science and the research they were planning to continue, which was focusing on how to restore mitochondrial functions.

The following was noted:

- Following refinements that had been made, the time that animals were kept under anaesthesia had been shortened to between 12 to 15 minutes.
- Neonatal mice would be used, so the grimace scale could not be used to monitor the animals for pain and distress. A pain scoring method would be used instead. Information on this needed to be provided.
- The current licence used a standard hypoxia protocol. An egg incubator was now being used in place of a water bath as that keeps the temperature much more constant and reduces the risk of any kind of condensation affecting the pups. Developments by other establishments that used this model were closely followed to see if they made any changes to the process.
- The licence mentioned behaviour tests, however they were vague, so making it difficult for a harm/benefit analysis to be done. Information detailing how often the tests were being done; how many per day and recovery days were needed along with age guidelines.

- There were discrepancies between some of the humane end points and the descriptions in the animal experience. These needed to be reviewed to make sure they were consistent.

AWERB concluded that further information was needed to properly evaluate the project licence, particularly the behaviour tests. Once received, this would be recirculated to AWERB to review.

3 MINUTES

It was noted that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2024 were still being drafted and would be reviewed at the next meeting.

4 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

This was scheduled for 6th November. It would be a PPL review meeting.

Secretary

19 November 2024