



National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

NAEAC is a statutory committee, established under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and supported by the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). NAEAC's role is to advise the Minister for Primary Industries on welfare issues arising from the use of live animals in research, testing and teaching (RTT). Its other functions include giving advice on the codes of ethical conduct that govern live animal use in RTT and providing information to the bodies that administer the codes (animal ethics committees). NAEAC holds four quarterly general meetings each year and special meetings when required.

Selected items discussed at the 11 February 2014 general meeting included the following:

- **Deputy Chairperson:** The Animal Welfare Act 1999 requires NAEAC to elect one of its members as its deputy chairperson, at its first meeting each year. Dr Peter Larsen, from the University of Otago, Wellington, who is the Royal Society of New Zealand nominee on the committee, was elected to the role of deputy chairperson for 2014.
- **New Strategic and Operational Plans:** The committee adopted a new Strategic Plan for 2014-2019, developed out of an externally-facilitated strategic planning exercise held in August 2013. The committee's Operational Plan for 2014, which was also adopted at the meeting, details how the committee will progress its strategic objectives for the current year.
- **Mini-tutorial:** A mini-tutorial on the minimal anaesthesia method for pain research was given by NAEAC member Professor Craig Johnson.
- **NAEAC occasional paper series:** NAEAC's statutory role includes providing information and advice to the animal ethics committees (AECs) that approve and monitor projects using animals in RTT. One of the ways in which NAEAC does this is by publishing 'Occasional Papers' on topics of relevance to AECs and their work. The tenth paper in this series – *How to improve housing conditions of laboratory animals: the possibilities of environmental refinement* - has recently been released.
- **NAEAC Three Rs Award for 2014:** The NAEAC Three Rs Award is made annually to an individual or organisation who/which has excelled in the implementation of the principles of the Three Rs (replacement, reduction and refinement) in the use of animals in RTT. An update was provided on planning for the 2014 Three Rs Award, including sponsorship arrangements.
- **NAEAC research proposal:** NAEAC is conducting a piece of research looking into how AECs go about making their decisions. It is anticipated that preliminary results will be available for discussion at the next general meeting.
- **Discussion of arrangements for AEC site visits in May:** Site visits are set up to familiarise committee members with the institutions carrying out animal-based RTT and also to draw attention of the selected institution(s) to the role of NAEAC. At its meeting, NAEAC discussed arrangements to visit various Wellington-based institutions.