**NSW DPI Animal Welfare Circular**

Dear AEC Chairs and contact officers,

For information:

1. **Form L: Animal use statistics 2017**
   Form L: Animal use statistics 2017 has been published on the Animal Ethics Infolink website. 
   https://www.animalethics.org.au/forms

   The form collects information on the use of animals for research and teaching in NSW for the 2017 year. Form L is required to be completed and returned to NSW Department of Primary Industries by 31 March 2018 (with the exception of establishments and individuals using the Secretary's Animal Ethics Committee).

   There have been some changes to Form L from previous years, which are explained in the Form.

   The most significant change is the development of the **NSW Animal Use Statistics Excel Spreadsheet Template**, which is published separate to the Form L. The template is designed to facilitate reporting and to reduce errors. The use of the template is not mandatory but is strongly encouraged.

   Additional changes include:
   * Use of letters at the front of the reporting code numbers. Although not mandatory for reporting for the 2017 year, the use of the alphanumeric codes is strongly encouraged, as a means to reduce reporting errors, and will be mandatory from 2018.

   * The definition of Procedure 4 Minor surgery with recovery has been changed from “Animal is rendered unconscious under controlled circumstances.” to “Animal is given appropriate regional or general anaesthesia…”. This is to take into account situations where the best outcome for the welfare of the animal is to carry out minor surgery using local or regional anaesthesia rather than general anaesthesia. Data collected using the old definition will be accepted for the 2017 reporting but for the 2018 reporting onwards the new definition must be used.

   * Appendix 3 has been added to give guidance on ensuring accuracy in completing Form L.

   * Additional specific guidance has been included for wildlife surveys, observational studies and field studies to avoid over-reporting.

2. **Aquatic symposium**

   A symposium on aquatic animals is to be held from 31 January to 2 February 2018 at the University of NSW.

   The main theme of this event is fish health and welfare. The symposium covers aquatic species in research, wild and public aquariums with a special focus on laboratory zebrafish during the second day of the symposium.

   The following expert speakers have been confirmed:

   - **Professor Craig Johnson** will be speaking about fish pain
   - **Dr Marcus Crim** presenting advances in zebrafish health monitoring
   - **A/Prof Colum Brown** speaking about fish intelligence and sentience
   - **Dr Richmond Loh** speaking about diseases of freshwater fish
or more information please refer to the symposium website: [https://research.unsw.edu.au/aquatics-symposium-2018](https://research.unsw.edu.au/aquatics-symposium-2018)

3. **NHMRC Best practice methodology guideline**
The NHMRC has published a new guideline: [Best practice methodology in the use of animals for scientific purposes](https://research.unsw.edu.au/aquatics-symposium-2018)

4. **NHMRC 3Rs project**

5. **NHMRC revocation of guidelines**
Three NHMRC guideline documents have been revoked by the NHMRC:


6. **Humane Research Australia - potential funding for research into alternatives - Victoria only**

7. **Christmas closure**
NSW Department of Primary Industries Animal Welfare will have only emergency staffing over the period 25/12/17 until 8/1/18. The animal welfare email inbox (animal.welfare@dpi.nsw.gov.au) will not be monitored over this period. NSW Department of Primary Industries can be contacted via the head office reception 02 6391 3100

With Best Wishes for the Christmas season,

Lynette

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