NSW DPI Animal Welfare Circular

Dear AEC Chairs and Contact Officers

The Animal Research Review Panel is currently developing a guideline document regarding implementing best practice for rehoming animals that have been used in research and/or teaching. The aim of the document will be to provide guidance for establishments and AECs in developing rehoming policies and procedures.

The Panel is seeking information regarding experience with, and attitude towards, rehoming of research animals.

We would appreciate any input, keeping in mind that:

- Genetically modified animals are unable to be rehomed.

- Ethically, animals must only be rehomed when it is in the best interests of the welfare of the individual animal and when it poses no danger to public or animal health, or to the environment.

- Animals may only be rehomed at the conclusion of their use in research projects with the approval of and in accordance with the conditions set out by the approving Animal Ethics Committee.

The type of information we are interested in receiving from establishments includes:

1. Species rehomed.

2. AEC guidelines, procedures or requirements for rehoming / establishment policies developed on rehoming.
3. Factors to consider in rehoming.

4. Success of rehoming, including any case studies of when animals have been successfully or unsuccessfully rehomed.

5. Problems encountered with rehoming.

6. A rough estimate of number of animals of each species which may be suitable for rehoming in a typical year.

7. If and how animals’ wellbeing has been followed up or monitored after rehoming.

8. The kinds of resources that would make rehoming easier to achieve.

In addition, any other suggestions or comments regarding the rehoming guidelines are welcome.

We are aware that information may not be available to address all of the above points and appreciate any time and effort spent responding to this request for information. We would like to reassure you that any information provided is confidential under the Animal Research Act 1985.

Ideally, we would appreciate information to be provided by 31 August 2017 to: cathie.savage@dpi.nsw.gov.au

If AECs would like to discuss this but don’t have a scheduled meeting by this date, we would appreciate information be provided when possible.

Best wishes

Cathie