



RESEARCH GOVERNANCE UNIT
St. Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne)
Caritas Christi Hospice
St. George's Health Service
Prague House

FIELDWORK NOTIFICATION

Statement of Intent and Outcomes

The St Vincent's Hospital (Melbourne) Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) is committed to fulfilling the governing principles of the *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes* (2013) *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* and the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) guidelines, by ensuring researchers who wish to conduct animal research at premises which are not included on the scientific procedures premises licence, can do so without having to seek a formal variation to the licence, or additional ethical review.

Definitions

DEDJTR: Department of Economic Development Jobs Transport and Resources (formerly Bureau of Animal Welfare and Department of Environment and Primary Industries)

Scientific purposes: all activities conducted with the aim of acquiring, developing or demonstrating knowledge or techniques in all areas of science, including teaching, field trials, environmental studies, research (including the creation and breeding of a new animal line where the impact on animal wellbeing is unknown or uncertain), diagnosis, product testing and the production of biological products.

SPPL: Scientific Procedures Premises Licence

Procedure

Organisations or individuals wishing to conduct scientific procedures with animals in Victoria must hold a licence issued by the Manager DEDJTR that authorises the work. Scientific Procedures may be authorised by a Scientific Procedures Premises Licence (SPPL) or a Scientific Procedures Fieldwork Licence (SPFL) depending on the type of use of the location where the work will be conducted.

All practices carried-out under the licence must be in compliance with the *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes* (2013), the *Victorian code of practice for the housing and care of laboratory mice, rats, guinea pigs and rabbit* and the *Code of practice for the use of animals from municipal pounds in scientific procedures*.

All project applications submitted to the AEC for review must nominate a Scientific Procedures Premises Licences (SPPL) under which the research will be carried-out. All research must be conducted in the facilities listed under the nominated SPPL. If scientific purposes are to be conducted at locations not listed on the licence or locations listed another licence, they are considered to be fieldwork and a Fieldwork Notification form must be submitted.

Fieldwork Notification must be approved by the AEC of the institution from which the researcher is associated. As the fieldwork application involves the use of a Scientific Premises licensed under a SPPL held by another institution, the AEC of the premises may also wish to approve the fieldwork. It is the responsibility of the researcher to clarify these requirements prior to commencing scientific procedures at any other site.

The purpose of fieldwork is to reduce the duplication of ethical review, and to clarify the reporting requirements for organisations.

Submission Process – St Vincent’s Hospital (Melbourne) Researchers

Researchers based at St Vincent’s Hospital (Melbourne) or affiliated Institutes who wish to undertake fieldwork at a location not included on the Scientific Procedures Premises Licence must submit a Fieldwork Notification form to the AEC for review and approval.

The Fieldwork Notification Form may be attached to either an AEC project application or amendment form. Fieldwork notification associated with a project application will be reviewed by the AEC at a quorate meeting. However, if the fieldwork forms part of an amendment, the Fieldwork Notification form should accompany an application for amendment which will then be reviewed by either AEC at a quorate meeting (for modifications) or by AEC Executive (for minor changes).

All animals which are used at the fieldwork site must be included and reported as part of the original project. These numbers should not be reported under any other project, or by any other organisation.

Submission Process – External Researchers

External researchers who wish to undertake fieldwork at facilities listed on a SPPL where St Vincent’s Hospital (Melbourne) AEC is responsible must submit a fieldwork notification form to their institutional AEC for review and approval. Once approval has been granted, a copy of the approval letter, the Fieldwork Notification form, and a letter of support from the relevant facility manager at St Vincent’s must be submitted to the St Vincent’s Hospital AEC. Once received, the AEC will issue a formal letter confirming the conduction of fieldwork, and reiterating the requirements for reporting. All animals used at organisations on the St Vincent’s campus as part of a fieldwork application must be reported as part of the original project, and should not be reported by the St Vincent’s campus organisations.

As a matter of courtesy and accountability, the Research Governance Unit may forward a copy of the approval letter and the Fieldwork Notification form to the fieldwork site at which the research will be conducted.

Associated Procedures/Instructions

- 1.3 – Scientific Procedures Premises Licence (SPPLs)
- 2.1 – New Project Applications
- 2.2 – Project Amendments
- 4.5 – Committee Executive

Reference Documents

- Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes (2013)
- Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)

- Victorian code of practice for the housing and care of laboratory mice, rats, guinea pigs and rabbits (2004)
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986
- Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2008
- Code of practice for the use of animals from municipal pounds in scientific procedures.

Authorized by:



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