

- > Next AEC member training day is June 5th
- > Applications open for sponsorship for independent AEC members to attend the ANZCCART conference
- > Get involved with the writing group for a new Online Training Programme for Researchers

Bureau of Animal Welfare Animal Ethics Committee Newsletter

New look Newsletter

Welcome to the 11th Bureau of Animal Welfare (BAW) Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) Newsletter, a forum for discussion on the role and function of AECs in Victoria. You will find the Bureau of Animal Welfare website at www.dpi.vic.gov.au/animalwelfare/ and click on Animals in Research and Teaching.

Please send any comments or queries regarding this newsletter or other AEC matters that you would like to see raised in future newsletters to the Principal Veterinary Officer (PVO), contact details below. If you do not wish to receive this email newsletter in the future, please contact the PVO.

General activity at the Bureau...

Interstate recognition of AECs: In March, state counterparts responsible for the regulation of the use of animals in research and teaching held a productive inaugural meeting. The intention was to agree on a system that would allow institutions or individuals across Australia to use their 'home' AEC to approve and monitor animal use (fieldwork) in another state.

A suitable level of government-regulator review of AECs was agreed by some states. Given adherence to the requirements of the home-state government regulator, and a formal undertaking to monitor the fieldwork, AECs from these states will soon be able to approve interstate fieldwork projects. This agreement will formalise a current practice with some states and create a new arrangement with others.

This does not replace the need for the institution or individual to become licensed to use animals in research or teaching in the state in which the fieldwork will be conducted. It is hoped the new arrangements, when finalised, will streamline the process of working across state borders. Further details will be published as available.

And as a result...

The agreement between the states required the Victorian Bureau to prioritise oversight of AEC Terms of Reference and Operating Procedures, as defined in the Australian Code (2.2.1 and 2.2.10-14, 2.2.48). The Bureau has responded by requesting submission of Terms of Reference for AECs with new licence applications and changes of AEC. Bureau auditors will be observing these documents during licence audits, and we encourage all licensed institutions to review their procedures for currency and content.

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**“Getting it right”:
ANZCCART conference 2007—Melbourne**

The ANZCCART conference is to be held in Melbourne from 10th – 12th July at the Rendezvous Hotel, 328 Flinders St, city.

Session topics will include contemporary and relevant themes such as Pain and Analgesia, Governance and the use of Wildlife. The keynote speaker is Paul Flecknell, renowned expert on

pain and analgesia in laboratory animals.

This is a terrific opportunity for Victorian AEC members, scientists, teachers and others associated with or interested in the use of animals in research and teaching, to come along and learn, debate, discuss and reflect. Go to www.adelaide.edu.au/ANZCCART for more programme and venue information.

STOP PRESS!

Funding for C’s and D’s to attend ANZCCART

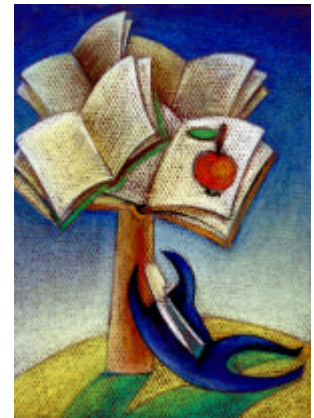
The Bureau will again be sponsoring a number of registrations for Victorian independent AEC members.

The sponsorships include registration for the 3 days of the conference and attendance at the conference dinner. With the conference in Melbourne this year it is anticipated that there will be rigorous competition for the 10 registrations.

To apply for funding from the Bureau, please submit the following by 31st May:

- Your name and contact details
- The AEC(s) of which you are a member
- A short (200 words maximum) paragraph on the reasons you’d like to attend the ANZCCART conference

Submission by email, fax or post will be accepted. Please address to Dani Maver, at the contact details on the back page.



Victorian Animal Use data:

Returns for 2006 have been submitted in a much more appropriate timeframe than last year – congratulations and well done to all licence holders and those who act on their behalf.

BAW AEC member training seminar

Another successful AEC member training day was held at Attwood on 26 March. These free seminars are essential for novice AEC members and also for those wishing to brush up on current thinking and to ‘pick other brains’ on any recurring or thorny issues.

The next seminar is to be held at DPI, 475 Mickleham Rd Attwood on June 5th from 1.30pm – 5.30pm. Melways ref Map 5 (K3). Free parking and afternoon tea provided.

Please contact Alan Fried on 9217 4425 or alan.fried@dpi.vic.gov.au to register. The third and final AEC training day for 2007 will be held on October 4.

CHAIRS COMMITTEE UPDATE

Bringing issues to your Chairs Committee: Please remember this is your opportunity to raise issues, recommendations and concerns to a forum for broader discussion.

Feel comfortable to raise issues (in confidence if desired) to the BAW contacts or to represent your category or institution directly via com-

Online training for researchers

Institutions using animals for research and teaching are required to provide training to animal users in their-legal and ethical obligations (Australian Code 2.1.2 (iii)).

The content and nature of some of this training lends itself to the development

of a generic online course covering the basics of legislation, ethics and risk management.

The Bureau of Animal Welfare and the Chairs Committee are calling for expressions of interest from Victorian institutions in collaborating on

this project.

For a copy of the draft syllabus, and to register your interest, please contact Dani Maver at the contact details over the page.

Expressions of interest close on the 18th May.



Confidentiality agreements for independents

The use of confidentiality agreements by institutions has been raised as a concern by some independent AEC members, who are anxious about the possibility of having to defend themselves in case of an allegation of breach of contract.

The Bureau of Animal Welfare has received legal advice to the effect that there is statutory protection provided to certain volunteers by Part IX of the Wrongs Act 1958 (Victorian) and the Commonwealth Volunteers Protection Act 2003 (Federal). Careful note should be made of the definitions and legal advice should be sought on the interpretation of these Acts.

The Chairs Committee appreciates that governance and commercial security are important to institutions. However, given the extraordinary contribution made by independent AEC members in Victoria, institutions are reminded of their obligations under the Australian Code (2.1.1(x) and

2.2.8), namely that all aspects of confidentiality arrangements be fairly discussed with all members of the AEC, and that provision is made for AEC members to seek advice without breaching confidentiality.

Institutions are advised to seek their own legal advice regarding confidentiality and provide members, particularly independents, with any advice pertaining to their situation, especially the provision of any indemnity.

Use of CO₂ as a euthanasia agent

The Chairs Committee recently examined the report of the Newcastle consensus meeting on the use of CO₂ as a euthanasia agent (available at www.nc3rs.org.uk/CO2ConsensusReport).

The Committee's advice to Victorian AECs approving the use of CO₂ as a euthanasia agent may be found on the Bureau website or by request from the BAW contacts below. Licence nominees and AECs will be advised by email of the Chairs Committee's recommendations.

Submit expressions of interest to the Bureau by May 18th to be part of the Online Training Programme writing group

REDUCTION, REFINEMENT AND REPLACEMENT

Minister's Prize for the 3Rs at the Australian Health and Medical Research Congress

The inaugural Minister's Prize for Excellence in Application of the 3Rs in Research or Teaching was awarded by Chief Scientist, Sir Gus Nossal, at the AHMRC 3Rs symposium in November 2006.

The winner of the Senior Researcher Award was Dr Tony Paolini, of La Trobe University and the Bionic Ear Institute, for his innovation in measuring the effects of auditory stimulation in the brain. Tony's modifications to existing instrumentation mean he collects significantly more data from reduced numbers of animals.

The Junior Researcher Award winner was Dr Carrie Newbold, also of the Bionic Ear Institute, for her development of an in-vitro model for the interface between the cochlear implant and the human tissue of the recipient. Carrie's work entirely replaces animals in one stage of the development of new technologies to assist the profoundly deaf.

World Congress in Japan

The 6th World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences will be held in Tokyo from 21-25 August 2007, offering a unique opportunity for scientists and other professionals from around the world to present their latest research in the field of the 3Rs. For more information, visit <http://www.ech.co.jp/wc6/>. The Bureau has a limited number of hard-copy congress programmes for distribution. Please contact us if you prefer a copy to be mailed out to you.

Alternatives for education – free loan programme from AAHR

The Australian Association for Humane Research has established the Humane Education Loan Program (HELP) to provide students and educators with up to date alternatives to classroom animal dissection and animal experimentation. There are resources providing information on alternatives as well as actual teaching aids such as software, simulation videos and 3D models for specific procedures. Items are suitable for secondary through to specialised tertiary level students. Visit <http://www.aahr.org.au/help/index.php> for details.



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