



This document has been developed by The Australian National University's (ANU) Research Ethics Office. It has been endorsed by the ANU Animal Ethics Committee (AEC). It is designed to provide guidance regarding current best practice to institutional animal users and carers on the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. It has been prepared in consultation with the Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition 2013.

Document 036: Post approval monitoring V1.0

Background

The *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 2013 (The code)* Section 2.3.17-2.3.23 requires animal ethics committees to have a Post Approval Monitoring (PAM) program.

To facilitate the conduct of a PAM program, the Code allows AECs/Institutions to delegate this responsibility remote to suitably qualified person to monitor animal care and use, including projects and activities conducted at sites (e.g. fieldwork).

General Information

Delegation and Authority

The ANU Animal Welfare Officer (AWO) role represents the AEC and is formally delegated to conduct PAM on its behalf.

The AWO is authorised by the AEC to ensure that animal research projects are proceeding in compliance with legislation and with the decisions of the AEC, as well as in relation to animal welfare matters.

The AWO oversees the welfare of animals used in research and teaching by the university both on and off campus, including fieldwork and collaborative studies, to ensure that animal welfare meets the appropriate standard, and activities proceed in compliance with the Code and ethical approvals.

The University Veterinarians have been appointed as AWOs. The AWOs have been delegated to undertake the following actions on behalf of the AEC, including but not limited to:

1. PAM, both announced and unannounced.
2. Suspension of animal research or teaching where the continuation of the project presents significant and ongoing animal welfare concerns ahead of committee review.
3. Intervening to ensure animal care and welfare in situations where the impact on animals has been, or may be, greater than expected by the AEC approval.
 - a. This intervention may include providing treatment, directing others to provide treatment or humanely killing the animals.
 - b. Where there is an urgent animal welfare concern the AWO may make a minor amendment to an approved procedure. Any change must be reported immediately to the AEC Chair and an amendment submitted for out of session approval by the AEC Executive.

Monitoring

Post-Approval Monitoring (PAM)

The University and the AEC has an obligation under the Code to ensure that approved projects are conducted as described in approved Animal Ethics Applications, to maintain compliance with the Code and protect animal welfare.

The aim of PAM is to foster a positive research culture that promotes collaboration between AWOs/University Veterinarians, the AEC and researchers to ensure best practice approaches to research and to facilitate positive animal welfare outcomes. (e.g. the correction of minor project deviations before they become significant issues that require corrective actions)

Project Identification for monitoring

1. Projects may be chosen at random for monitoring.
2. Projects may be the subject of monitoring if the AEC has flagged concerns with a project that has been approved by the committee.
3. Monitoring may take place where a UAE has occurred.
4. Monitoring may take place at the request of the research group to provide oversight and assistance.

Procedure

Monitoring of projects may be announced or unannounced. Seven days' notice will be provided for announced monitoring. Researchers should be prepared for the possibility of unannounced monitoring visits.

Monitoring may be conducted through one or more of the following processes:

- Desktop audits – Review of protocols, reports, logbooks (where applicable), and monitoring records for compliance and to facilitate suggested changes or improvements.
- Competency assessment - Of people involved in the care and use of animals using the Competency Assessment Framework document submitted with the procedures.
 - For students who are new to the experimental process monitoring should occur soon after the new protocol is approved
- Animal Monitoring - Monitoring of any animals that are part of a specific protocol to ensure that any harm, including pain or distress, is promptly detected and managed.
- Monitoring of Methods - Review of new and existing methods, as well as experimental plans within protocols for suitability.

A monitoring report will be completed and attached to the relevant protocol in REMS.

References and Resources

[Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition. 2013](#)