

Animal Welfare Advisory Committee Visit to Dstl Porton Down
2nd March 2005

<u>Attendees</u>	AWAC Members AWAC Secretary Other Members of Dstl Staff	
<u>Agenda Items</u>	<u>Summary</u>	<u>Actions</u>
<u>1. Visit to Centre for Macaques (CFM)</u>	<p>Following the visit, the members said they were impressed by the facility and the way it is run. They noted that the TCL NBC had not met the certificate holder for the CFM.</p> <p>One of the Committee said that the Committee had visited London Zoo, which is an acknowledged leader in terms of training macaques. They may be able to give advice on other subjects too, such as bedding alternatives.</p>	
<u>2. Minutes of the last meeting</u>	<p>Minutes of the last meeting were accepted. There was the following matter arising:</p> <p>Scientific Publication list: TCL NBC said that the 2005 list will be available around the end of April. The committee, with its agreement, will be provided with a filtered list on animal work.</p> <p>A Committee member commented that some journals, which publish articles from Dstl, restrict the amount of information published on methods. This had led to more questions externally. It would help to avoid these questions if Dstl could persuade journals to include more detail on methods used.</p>	
<u>3. Ethics Committee Review</u>	<p>The Committee noted that the Home Office Inspector would try to attend these meetings more frequently.</p> <p>A Committee member commented that the Home Office Animal Procedures Committee sometimes asked for further information, beyond that given in licence applications. As MOD does not publish gaps in capability, this could lead to highly sensitive information being included. TCL NBC said he was in discussion with the Home Office Inspector to ensure that this problem could be managed in such a way that the APC could be satisfied without the disclosure of such sensitive information.</p> <p>Another Committee member said that two meetings of the ERC had been cancelled, which had lengthened the time for feedback on applications. TCL NBC said that Head of Animal Services in Dstl would raise this issue at department management meetings.</p>	
<u>4. Current Research Projects</u>	<p>A Dstl member of staff briefed the Committee on current research projects. She explained that the main thrust of the work is on medical countermeasures. To provide effective countermeasures to biological threats it is necessary to understand the biological sequences of different threat materials. She offered more detailed presentations on</p>	Dstl to arrange visits for future meetings.

	<p>each topic if required.</p> <p>An AWAC member said it would be helpful to have an assessment of the benefits accrued from the use of animals. The committee also suggested making summaries of research available to the public through an improved communication system. Another member suggested it was important to publish examples of this type of work that did not involve animals to demonstrate that alternatives were considered first.</p> <p>ACTION: The Dstl member of staff agreed to provide a high level review and statement on the benefits derived from using animals.</p> <p>Another member asked if Dstl had guidelines or policies on collaborative work involving animals, as he was concerned that partners in such projects should demonstrate similar levels of care for animals. Dstl undertook to provide this.</p> <p>ACTION: Dstl to provide policies on collaborative work involving animals.</p> <p>Finally, the Dstl member of staff briefed the Committee on possible future requirements for a more generic medical countermeasures licence for multiple threats in the marmoset model. The Committee offered some thoughts on this, including generic techniques for obtaining generic licences and the most effective and efficient use of the Ethics Review Committee.</p>	
<p><u>5. Date of next Meeting</u></p>	<p>Wednesday 15th June 2005. The Committee will visit the Experimental Animal House during this meeting.</p>	

AWAC Secretary
1 April 2005