

Alfred Research Alliance

# **Animal Ethics Governance and Policy Committee**

## **Terms of Reference and Operating Procedures**

Approved by the Alfred Research Alliance  
Animal Ethics Governance & Policy Committee

Date: November 2018

1. **DEFINITIONS 1.1 – 1.11**
2. **FUNCTION of the COMMITTEE**
  - 2.1 Establishing provisions for the Committee
3. **RESPONSIBILITY of COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
  - 3.1. Confidentiality
  - 3.2. Conflict of Interest
4. **MEMBERSHIP and TERM OF OFFICE**
  - 4.1. Term of Office
  - 4.2. Number and Category of Members
5. **NOMINATION and APPOINTMENT of MEMBERS**
  - 5.1. Nomination of category A to D members
  - 5.2. Chairperson
6. **EXECUTIVE OFFICER SERVICING**
7. **BUSINESS OPERATIONS**
  - 7.1. Induction of members
  - 7.2. Conduct of Meetings
  - 7.3. Meeting Frequency and Documents
  - 7.4. Attendance at meetings
  - 7.5. Governance Procedures
8. **INSURANCE OF MEMBERS**
9. **REVISION OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

## 1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 "Animal Ethics Committee (AEC)" shall mean an AEC, as outlined in the '*Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*' under Part 3 of *The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 and Regulations 2008*.
- 1.2 "Committee" shall mean the "The Alfred Research Alliance AEC Governance and Policy Committee".
- 1.3 "Department" shall mean Animal Welfare Victoria, Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources.
- 1.4 "Member" shall mean a person appointed to the Committee by the organisation.
- 1.5 "Proposal" shall mean that as defined in *The Australian Code*, "a written application to carry out a project for consideration by an AEC".
- 1.6 "Project" shall mean that as defined in *The Australian Code*, "a 'scientific activity' or activities that form a discrete piece of work. A project cannot commence until it has been approved by the AEC".
- 1.7 "Scientific procedures" shall be defined as in Part 3 of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986*.
- 1.8 "*The Australian Code*" shall mean the current edition of *The Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*, mandatory under Part 3 of *The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 and Regulations 2008*.
- 1.9 *The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 and Regulations 2008* shall mean that as located at [www.dpi.vic.gov.au/animalwelfare/](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/animalwelfare/)
- 1.10 "Licence Holder" shall mean Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute, The Burnet Institute, Central Clinical School Monash University, Alfred Health, Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA) and AMREP AS Pty Ltd.
- 1.11 "Quorate meeting" shall mean a meeting at which at least one member from each of categories A to D as defined in *The Australian Code* is present and the independent members (cat C and cat D) comprise one-third of the numbers present.

## 2. FUNCTION OF THE GAP COMMITTEE

The primary function of this Committee is to facilitate consistent operation across the two AECs in accordance with The Australian Code and relevant Victorian Legislation, on behalf of Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute, The Burnet Institute, Central Clinical School Monash University, Alfred Health, Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA) and AMREP AS Pty Ltd.

- 2.1 The committee will:
  - 2.1.1 Determine and approve policies for the operation of AECs A and B
  - 2.1.2 Communicate relevant decisions to the AECs, animal users animal licence holders, AMREP AS board, Alfred Research Alliance Council and any other stakeholders
  - 2.1.3 Review reports on post-AEC approval monitoring of project compliance
  - 2.1.4 Monitor compliance of all activities with regulatory requirements including education and training of applicants to the AECs and AEC members and annual inspections of all animal facilities
  - 2.1.5 Monitor the performance of AECs A and B and make recommendations for improvements

- 2.1.6 Serve as the first point of contact for the resolution of disputes involving AEC members and/or applicants to the AEC that cannot be resolved at the AEC level
- 2.1.7 Monitor the AECs review of guidelines for the care of animals that are bred, held and used for scientific purposes on behalf of licence holders

### 3 RESPONSIBILITY OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The primary responsibility of members is to ensure consistency in the operation of the AECs in accordance with the requirements of *The Australian Code*.

#### 3.1 Confidentiality :

- 3.1.1 Intellectual property interests of the institution, individual privacy and maintenance of commercial-in-confidence obligations may be the subject of confidentiality and *in camera* policy may be applied during meetings. Members may be required to sign a confidentiality agreement.

#### 3.2 Conflict of Interest:

- 3.2.1 A member with any direct or indirect interest in any matter of business before the committee, which may be construed as pecuniary or other gain, shall declare that interest to the committee. The chair shall decide what action to take.

### 4 MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE AND TERM OF OFFICE

#### 4.1 Term of Office

Although the term of office of each member will vary, the general expectation is that a member will sit on the committee for at least 12 months. Current members may be reselected.

#### 4.2 Number and Category of Members:

- 4.2.1 The membership of the committee shall comprise members who have a genuine interest and commitment to the ethical use of animals for scientific procedures or teaching.
- 4.2.2 The composition of the GAP committee will be similar to but not restricted to that required for an AEC as defined in *The Australian Code*.
- 4.2.3 There will be at least one nominated representative of the License Holders who may also fill the role of an A or B category member.
- 4.2.4 The chairperson of AEC A and AEC B will be a member of the GAP committee.
- 4.2.5 Before appointment, all members should acknowledge in writing their acceptance of the terms of reference of the committee and any requirements for confidentiality, including how outside advice may be sought.

### 5 NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

#### 5.1 Nominations of Category A to D members.

- 5.1.1 Members drawn from the AMREP AECs or staff of licence holders or elsewhere shall be appointed by the chair in consultation with License Holders.

#### 5.2 Chairperson;

- 5.2.1 licence holders will appoint a Chairperson able to consider impartially governance and policies pertaining to AECs A and B and the committee, to communicate, to negotiate and resolve conflict and to understand the relevant ethical and animal welfare issues.

The Chairperson must accept the agreed terms of reference as a condition of appointment.

The chairperson will;

- 5.2.2 Ensure that the AEC operates in accordance with the principles and requirements of *the Australian Code*, the relevant policies of the institution and the agreed AEC procedures.
- 5.2.3 Ensure that proposals are considered by the AEC and the outcomes conveyed to trainers/supervisors/teachers in a timely manner,
- 5.2.4 Advise institutional management regarding the level of resourcing required by the AEC;
- 5.2.5 Represent the AEC in any negotiations with management;
- 5.2.6 Oversee all requirements of the AEC to report and review its operations as outlined in the Code.
- 5.2.7 In the absence of the Chairperson at any meeting of the Committee, the members present shall appoint one of their members as acting Chairperson at that meeting.
- 5.2.8 Members are required to declare any conflict of interest that could affect their objectivity in making a decision. The Chair may exclude any such member from decision-making processes related to a matter which may be construed as pecuniary or other gain.

## 6 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Executive Officer of the AECs will support the committee, and ensure all relevant documents are distributed to members before each meeting in a timely manner.

## 7. BUSINESS OPERATIONS

### 7.1 Induction of new members

New members should be given copies of minutes from the last 3 meetings held and a copy of the terms of reference.

### 7.2 Conduct of Meetings:

Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the operating procedures established by the committee under these Terms of Reference.

### 7.3 Meeting Frequency and Documents:

#### 7.3.1 Meetings:

The time and venue shall be determined by the chairperson. The Committee will hold at least 3 meetings per year.

#### 7.3.2 Meeting agenda and relevant documents:

The Executive Officer shall circulate an agenda setting out standing business before the committee and all relevant documentation. Actions from meetings will function through use of email and teleconferences out-of-session, and meet in person as necessary.

#### 7.3.3 Meeting minutes:

The Executive Officer will maintain and circulate to members as soon as practicable after each meeting, minutes of the meeting, which will be confirmed at the subsequent meeting of the Committee.

#### 7.3.4 Newsletter:

A newsletter will be emailed to users as needed to update them on GAP Committee progress.

#### 7.4 Attendance at meetings:

7.4.1 Any duly convened meeting at which a minimum of 5 members consisting of the AEC A and B chair, 1 external member and 1 licence holder are in attendance shall be competent to consider and resolve any business of the Committee and shall have and may exercise all the functions of the Committee.

#### 7.5 Grievance Procedures:

The following grievance procedures will be adopted if there is dissent:

7.5.1 In the case of dissension within an AEC that cannot be resolved by the chairperson on behalf of the Committee, may:

7.5.1.1 Attempt to resolve the matter with the dissenting person(s).

7.5.1.2 Seek an opinion from the license holder(s).

7.5.1.3 Place the matter for resolution before the license holder at a formal meeting.

### 8. INSURANCE OF MEMBERS

Under 14 (3) of the Accident Compensation Act 1985, an appointed member of the Committee is deemed to be an employee of the Crown while attending meetings or while undertaking any directed or approved activity on behalf of the Committee. Cover is afforded by WorkCover.

### 9. REVISION OF TERMS OF REFERENCE AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

These Terms of Reference and operating procedures will be reviewed annually or as necessary in response to changes in the legislation, institutional policy or concerns expressed by members of this Committee.