

**Animal Welfare Advisory Committee Visit to Dstl Porton Down**  
**5<sup>th</sup> August 2004**

<u>Attendees</u>	<b>AWAC Members</b> <b>AWAC Point of Contact (POC)</b> <b>Dstl Certificate Holder</b> <b>Dstl Head Animal Services</b> <b>Other Members of Dstl Staff</b>	
<u>Agenda Items</u>	<u>Summary</u>	<u>Actions</u>
<b><u>1. Minutes of the last meeting</u></b>	<p>Minutes of the last meeting were accepted and all actions were closed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues associated with the organisation and attendance at specific animal user group meetings were raised following the review of ERP minutes for the Jul 03 – Jul 04 period. Other points were raised; details to be forwarded to Dstl.</li> <li>• It was agreed that Minutes would be taken by the AWAC secretary at future meetings and a copy passed to Dstl.</li> <li>• <u>AWAC response to press release</u>. The Dstl Corporate advisor is collating the report, which will be ready in Sep 04.</li> <li>• All correspondence to go through AWAC Secretary, except Licence Documents, which will be sent directly.</li> <li>• Dstl said that the last Ethical Review meeting was very well attended and an article is to go into the in-house magazine explaining the process. An ERP secretary is to be appointed to ensure continuity.</li> <li>• AWAC reviewed minutes of ACUC and animal user group meetings prior to this meeting.</li> </ul>	<p><b>AWAC to submit a list of comments &amp; questions to Dstl, who will feedback at next meeting.</b></p> <p><b>AWAC to circulate full contact information.</b></p>
<b><u>2. Re-structuring of Animal Services</u></b>	<p>The Dstl Group Leader explained the re-structuring of the Animal Services Unit. The new structure aims to empower workers and enable more career progression. Supervisors who have animal care roles will be enrolled on the next official NACWO training course in Sep/Oct 04.</p>	<p><b>New unit supervisors to meet AWAC at next visit.</b></p>
<b><u>3. Environmental Enrichment Programme</u></b>	<p>Dstl said that an informal programme of toy monitoring had recently started in the Centre for Macaques (CFM). Visual barriers are also being introduced to prevent fighting. An AWAC member said that the issue of systematic assessment of toy use in the long term has yet to be thoroughly addressed however there are known validated methods currently in place and recommended that the reviews on these were read by the new supervisors.</p>	
<b><u>4. Evaluation of Quality Systems for Animal Units</u></b>	<p>Following publication of the report of the FELASA Working Group on evaluation of quality systems for animal units, an AWAC member initiated a discussion about the possible benefits to Dstl of achieving AAALAC accreditation. The Certificate Holder said that he believed that Dstl's current ISO9000 quality accreditation, coupled with the GLP/GMP accreditation of selected animal laboratories and the oversight by AWAC, worked well. He said he was reluctant to introduce a further scheme within Dstl's matrix management structure. Discussion then focussed on the benefits of groups conducting a self-assessment exercise. This already happens as part of a formal Technical Assessment in other parts of Dstl's business. It was agreed that the Head of Animal Services would consider how this might be adapted for use in the Animal Services Unit.</p>	<p><b>Dstl to discuss feasibility of utilising self-assessment review and feedback at next meeting.</b></p>

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<b><u>5. Dstl Induction Material</u></b>	<p>A presentation entitled 'Animals in Defence Research' which is given at corporate and staff inductions, was shown to the Committee for feedback. It was stressed that the Dstl corporate induction process is currently under review so the presentation given was liable to change. The Committee made the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mice usage slide to be nearer the beginning of the presentation.</li><li>• A slide showing past successes could be incorporated.</li><li>• A slide showing the comparison of animals used in Defence research compared to that used in the food industry could be incorporated.</li></ul> <p>An AWAC member asked what feedback mechanisms are in place for staff with specific concerns. Dstl said that if staff are not happy about a certain area they are encouraged to address their concerns to a NACWO, the NVS or their line manager.</p>	
<b><u>6. Date of next Meeting</u></b>	<b>Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> November at 9.30am.</b>	

AWAC Secretary  
18<sup>th</sup> August 2004