

**Animal Welfare Advisory Committee Visit to Dstl Porton Down**  
**15 June 2005**

<u>Attendees</u>	<b>AWAC Members</b> <b>AWAC Secretary</b> <b>Other Members of Dstl Staff</b>	
<u>Agenda Items</u>	<u>Summary</u>	<u>Actions</u>
<b>1. <u>Minutes of the last meeting</u></b>	<p>Minutes of the last meeting were accepted.  There was the following matter arising:</p> <p><b>Benefits Statement:</b> A Dstl member of staff said that she and a colleague had been working on the statement requested by AWAC. This would be issued in draft in next few weeks. An AWAC member suggested Dstl may wish to consider following the format used by the Nuffield Council in its report.</p>	
<b>2. <u>Ethics Committee Review</u></b>	<p>A Dstl member of staff said that we are still waiting for MOD to rule on the issue of licence applications to AWAC members of the ERC. There followed discussion on the timing of ERC meetings and the fact that some meetings had been cancelled due to there being no new applications to discuss. An AWAC member suggested moving towards more generic licence applications, which would allow extended work programmes. A Dstl member said there are two licence applications currently in draft. The AWAC member asked if he could speak to the staff drafting them to understand their experience of using the new forms.</p> <p>The Chairman said he was aware that a new chairman of the ERC had been appointed. Dstl representatives undertook to notify AWAC who had made the decision and when the appointment would become effective. The Committee asked that the new chairman of the ERC attend the next AWAC meeting.</p> <p>The Chairman asked if the ERC produced minutes of its meetings. Dstl confirmed that it does. All agreed that feedback at all stages of a project is important and inputs from groups such as AWAC and ERC are crucial. The Dstl members agreed to raise the issue of feedback mechanisms with the TCL NBC.</p>	
<b>3. <u>Freedom of Information</u></b>	<p>A Dstl member of staff reported that Naturewatch had submitted a RFI on licences for work with primates. An AWAC member asked for a summary of RFIs concerning animals to be reviewed at the next meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Dstl to provide list of RFIs concerning animals for next meeting.</b></p> <p>An AWAC member suggested that it would be good if Dstl recorded all visits made to animal facilities and asked visitors for comments – what the visitor felt was good or bad about the facilities. This would be</p>	

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	helpful to demonstrate that Dstl is open to ideas and suggestions for improving facilities. A Dstl representative said that they thought this a good idea and would give it careful consideration.	
4. <b><u>Date of next Meeting</u></b>	<b>21 September 2005 followed by a meeting of the ERC on the morning of 22 September and the ACUC in the afternoon.</b> <b>NOTE: Following the meeting it was agreed to hold the AWAC meeting on 22 September.</b>	
5.	Following the formal meeting, the Committee visited the Experimental Animal House. No specific recommendations arose from this visit.  An AWAC member gave a presentation to Heads of Science Groups on research ethics.	

AWAC Secretary  
8 July 2005