

DAF ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

**For the period 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022**

This publication has been compiled by Lex Turner, Agri-Science Queensland, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

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## Summary

In Queensland, the use of animals for scientific purposes is regulated by both the ***Animal Care and Protection Act 2001*** [the Act] and the ***Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes*** [the Code]. The Act requires that prior to the use of an animal for scientific purposes, a person must be registered as a scientific user and must gain the approval of an Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) constituted under the Code.

During the reporting period, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (DAF) maintained two AECs, the Staff Access (SA) AEC and the Community Access (CA) AEC.

The Staff Access AEC dealt predominantly with applications from departmental staff who sought to conduct activities at departmental sites, co-operator (for example, private landholder) sites and collaborator (for example, university) sites. The Staff Access AEC also considered applications from external applicants wishing to conduct an activity involving the use of animals on a departmental site.

The Community Access AEC dealt predominantly with applications from non-departmental investigators who sought to conduct scientific activities involving the use of animals in Queensland and by departmental staff who sought to conduct fish and pest animal related activities.

## Contents

1	AEC Membership as at 1 July 2022 .....	1
2	Meetings and inspections .....	1
3	Applications .....	1
4	Number of animals used for scientific purposes* .....	3
5	Other AEC compliance requirements.....	6

## Table of tables

Table 1 – AEC membership summary .....	1
Table 5 – AEC meetings and inspections .....	1
Table 6 – Applications considered during 2021/22 by AEC Decision Outcome .....	2
Table 7 – Applications considered during 2021/22 by Project Purpose .....	2
Table 8 – Applications considered during 2021/22 by Project Category .....	2
Table 9 – Number of animals by key groups and in order of number.....	3

# 1 AEC Membership as at 1 July 2022

*Table 1 – AEC membership summary*

Category	Number	Organisation
Category A member (veterinary science)	6	1 x DAF, 5 x External
Category B member (research)	7	2 x DAF, 5 x External
Category C member (animal welfare)	5	All External
Category D member (general community)	8	All External
Animal carer	1	DAF
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	

## 2 Meetings and inspections

*Table 5 – AEC meetings and inspections*

AEC	Ordinary meetings	Special meetings	Site inspections
Staff Access	10	0	13
Community Access	11	3	5

In addition to dealing with business during meetings, each AEC has an Executive which may consider minor amendments to approved projects, adverse event reports and other matters out of session. The Executive cannot approve new applications.

All Executive decisions are ratified at the next meeting of the AEC.

## 3 Applications

DAF AECs consider project applications lodged by DAF staff, staff from other departments, and a range of external entities including local authorities, small companies and individuals whose activities (e.g. teaching, wildlife surveys, product efficacy trials, trials for product registration and workshops to demonstrate techniques) require AEC approval. The external applicants have found it impractical to establish their own AECs and difficult to access other institutions' AECs. The Act requires that all applicants be registered as scientific users or be retained by a registered scientific user. The Register of Scientific Users is maintained by Animal Biosecurity and Welfare [ABW], Biosecurity Queensland.

**Table 6 – Applications considered during 2021/22 by AEC Decision Outcome**

Applications considered during 2021/22	Total
Approved	41
Approved with Conditions	109
Deferred subject to modification as at 30 June 2022	2
Not approved	0
Other (e.g. withdrawn)	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>152</b>

**Table 7 – Applications considered during 2021/22 by Project Purpose**

	Number	Percentage
The understanding of human or animal biology	1	0.7%
The maintenance and improvement of animal or human health and welfare	23	15.1%
The improvement of animal management or production	9	5.9%
The achievement of educational objectives	13	8.6%
Environmental study	104	68.4%
Not allocated	2	1.3%
<b>TOTAL CONSIDERED</b>	<b>152</b>	

**Table 8 – Applications considered during 2021/22 by Project Category**

	Number	Percentage
Observational studies involving minor interference	8	5.2%
Animal unconscious without recovery	11	7.2%
Conscious intervention (minor) without anaesthesia	118	77.6%
Operative procedures (minor) with recovery	9	5.9%
Surgery with recovery	1	0.7%
Minor physiological challenge	1	0.7%
Major physiological challenge	0	
Death as an end point (not euthanasia)	2	1.3%
Not allocated	2	1.3%
<b>TOTAL CONSIDERED</b>	<b>152</b>	

In addition to assessing 152 new applications throughout 2021-22, DAF AECs reviewed and assessed 641 reports on animal use from existing applications. This included 349 annual reports, 161 completion reports and 131 adverse event reports which are required by both the Act and Code and comprises the statutory monitoring obligations of the AECs. The DAF AECs also had responsibility for the ongoing monitoring of active projects by inspecting sites and projects and obtaining other information as needed.

DAF AECs are also required to assess amendment requests to approved projects. Amendment requests may range from minor to major alterations to a project's approval. Throughout the reporting period 183 amendment requests were assessed by the DAF AECs.

## 4 Number of animals used for scientific purposes\*

**Table 9 – Number of animals by key groups and in order of number**

Ranking by animal group		Ranking by number of animals	
Animal group	Number of animals	Animal group	Number of animals
Amphibians:Amphibians	13685	Fish:Aquatic Animals	1085252
Birds:Exotic wild	4561	Other native mammals:Native Mammals	4081173
Birds:Native captive	103	Birds:Native wild	330999
Birds:Native wild	330999	Birds:Poultry (stock animals)	283609
Birds:Poultry (stock animals)	283609	Cattle:Domestic Mammals	45751
Camels:Exotic Feral Mammals	4	Turtles and tortoises:Reptiles	34418
Cats:Domestic Mammals	760	Amphibians:Amphibians	13685
Cats:Exotic Feral Mammals	963	Macropods:Native Mammals	13625
Cattle:Domestic Mammals	45751	Lizards:Reptiles	6841

Ranking by animal group		Ranking by number of animals	
Animal group	Number of animals	Animal group	Number of animals
Cattle:Exotic Feral Mammals	601	Birds:Exotic wild	4561
Cephalopods:Aquatic Animals	7	Native rats and mice:Native Mammals	4550
Dasyurids:Native Mammals	736	Mice:Exotic Feral Mammals	3323
Dogs:Domestic Mammals	2686	Possums and gliders:Native Mammals	2739
Fish:Aquatic Animals	10855252	Dogs:Domestic Mammals	2686
Goats:Domestic Mammals	60	Sheep:Domestic Mammals	2177
Goats:Exotic Feral Mammals	588	Koalas:Native Mammals	1293
Guinea Pigs:Lab Mammals	41	Pigs:Exotic Feral Mammals	1207
Hares:Exotic Feral Mammals	130	Cats:Exotic Feral Mammals	963
Horses:Domestic Mammals	254	Snakes:Reptiles	862
Horses:Exotic Feral Mammals	117	Cats:Domestic Mammals	760
Koalas:Native Mammals	1293	Dasyurids:Native Mammals	736
Lizards:Reptiles	6841	Rabbits:Exotic Feral Mammals	697
Macropods:Native Mammals	13625	Cattle:Exotic Feral Mammals	601
Mice:Exotic Feral Mammals	3323	Goats:Exotic Feral Mammals	588
Mice:Lab Mammals	80	Wild dogs and foxes:Exotic Feral Mammals	553



Ranking by animal group		Ranking by number of animals	
Animal group	Number of animals	Animal group	Number of animals
Monotremes:Native Mammals	268	Whales and dolphins:Native Mammals	440
Native rats and mice:Native Mammals	4550	Rats:Exotic Feral Mammals	377
Other domestic mammals:Domestic Mammals	31	Other reptiles:Reptiles	318
Other exotic feral mammals:Exotic Feral Mammals	216	Monotremes:Native Mammals	268
Other native mammals:Native Mammals	4081173	Horses:Domestic Mammals	254
Other reptiles:Reptiles	318	Other exotic feral mammals:Exotic Feral Mammals	216
Other:Aquatic Animals	2	Hares:Exotic Feral Mammals	130
Pigs:Exotic Feral Mammals	1207	Horses:Exotic Feral Mammals	117
Possums and gliders:Native Mammals	2739	Birds:Native captive	103
Rabbits:Exotic Feral Mammals	697	Rats:Lab Mammals	94
Rats:Exotic Feral Mammals	377	Mice:Lab Mammals	80
Rats:Lab Mammals	94	Goats:Domestic Mammals	60
Sheep:Domestic Mammals	2177	Guinea Pigs:Lab Mammals	41
Snakes:Reptiles	862	Wombats:Native Mammals	32
Turtles and tortoises:Reptiles	34418	Other domestic mammals:Domestic Mammals	31
Whales and dolphins:Native Mammals	440	Cephalopods:Aquatic Animals	7

Ranking by animal group		Ranking by number of animals	
Animal group	Number of animals	Animal group	Number of animals
Wild dogs and foxes:Exotic Feral Mammals	553	Camels:Exotic Feral Mammals	4
Wombats:Native Mammals	32	Other:Aquatic Animals	2
<b>Total</b>	15,696,223	<b>Total</b>	15,696,223

\*Animal use figures relate to the 2021 animal use statistic report submitted by the DAF AEC to Biosecurity Queensland.

## 5 Other AEC compliance requirements

Comments from the AEC members regarding any administrative or other difficulties experienced and any comments regarding matters that may affect the DAF ability to maintain compliance with the Code were collated and reported to the DAF Director-General.

Five cases of possible non-compliance by an applicant were reported to the Animal Ethics regulator during the reporting period.

No emergencies or grievances were recorded in the reporting period. One complaint was received by the AEC during the reporting period. The complaint related to conditions at an animal facility. The complaint was considered by Biosecurity Queensland. No AEC action was considered necessary.

The DAF AEC maintained its membership in compliance with the Code during the reporting period.

No training opportunities were provided to DAF AEC members during the year.

This report has been prepared for the Director-General, DAF in accordance with Section 2.3.28 of the *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes*.

  
**Staff Access AEC Chair:**  
**Lex Turner**

  
**Community Access AEC Chair:**  
**Lex Turner**

**Principal Animal Ethics Officer:**  
  
**Lex Turner**

**Date: 21 December 2022**