

DAF ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEES ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

For the period 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019

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.

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1 AEC Membership as at 1 July 2019

Table 1 – AEC membership summary

Category	Number	Organisation
Category A member (veterinary science)	6	3 x DAF, 3 x External
Category B member (research)	6	1 x DAF, 5 x External
Category C member (animal welfare)	4	All External
Category D member (general community)	5	All External
Animal carer	1	DAF
Total	22	

2 Meetings and inspections

Table 2 – AEC meetings and inspections

AEC	Ordinary meetings	Special meetings	Site inspections
Staff Access	11	0	17
Community Access	10	2	11

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 3 – Applications considered during 2018/19 by AEC decision outcome

	Number
Approved	43
Approved with Conditions	92
Deferred subject to modification as at 30 June 2019	2
Not approved	0
Other (e.g. withdrawn)	0
TOTAL	137

Table 4 – Applications considered during 2018/19 by Project Purpose

	Number	Percentage
The understanding of human or animal biology	6	4.4%
The maintenance and improvement of animal or human health and welfare	18	13.1%
The improvement of animal management or production	7	5.1%
The achievement of educational objectives	11	8.0%
Environmental study	93	67.9%
Not allocated	2	1.5%
TOTAL	137	

Table 5 – Applications considered during 2018/19 by Project Category

	Number	Percentage
Observational studies involving minor interference	10	7.3%
Animal unconscious without recovery	4	2.9%
Conscious intervention (minor) without anaesthesia	109	79.6%
Operative procedures (minor) with recovery	7	5.1%
Surgery with recovery	2	1.5%
Minor physiological challenge	1	0.7%
Major physiological challenge	0	0%
Death as an end point (not euthanasia)	2	1.5%
Not allocated	2	1.5%
TOTAL	137	

In addition to assessing 137 new applications throughout 2018/19, DAF AECs reviewed and assessed 534 reports on animal use from existing applications. This included 298 annual reports, 152 completion reports and 84 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 133 amendment requests were assessed by the DAF AECs.

4 Number of animals used for scientific purposes*

Table 6 – 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	851,616	Birds:Poultry (stock animals)	2,080,220
Birds:Exotic captive	6	Amphibians:Amphibians	851,616
Birds:Exotic wild	310	Other native mammals:Native Mammals	843,547
Birds:Native captive	157	Birds:Native wild	308,413
Birds:Native wild	308,413	Fish:Aquatic Animals	296,197
Birds:Poultry (stock animals)	2,080,220	Turtles and tortoises:Reptiles	76,363
Camels:Exotic Feral Mammals	3	Cattle:Domestic Mammals	20,436
Cats:Domestic Mammals	1,095	Cattle:Exotic Feral Mammals	14,182
Cats:Exotic Feral Mammals	696	Macropods:Native Mammals	13,089

Ranking by animal group		Ranking by number of animals	
Animal group	Number of animals	Animal group	Number of animals
Cattle:Domestic Mammals	20,436	Lizards:Reptiles	6,918
Cattle:Exotic Feral Mammals	14,182	Native rats and mice:Native Mammals	5,787
Cephalopods:Aquatic Animals	4	Possums and gliders:Native Mammals	5,787
Dasyurids:Native Mammals	1,438	Pigs:Domestic Mammals	5,341
Dogs:Domestic Mammals	2,313	Pigs:Exotic Feral Mammals	2,617
Fish:Aquatic Animals	296,197	Dogs:Domestic Mammals	2,313
Goats:Domestic Mammals	6	Whales and dolphins:Native Mammals	2,242
Goats:Exotic Feral Mammals	506	Sheep:Domestic Mammals	2,117
Guinea Pigs:Lab Mammals	52	Dasyurids:Native Mammals	1,438
Hares:Exotic Feral Mammals	63	Cats:Domestic Mammals	1,095
Horses:Domestic Mammals	291	Rabbits:Exotic Feral Mammals	1,009
Horses:Exotic Feral Mammals	322	Snakes:Reptiles	906
Koalas:Native Mammals	294	Cats:Exotic Feral Mammals	696
Lizards:Reptiles	6,918	Goats:Exotic Feral Mammals	506
Macropods:Native Mammals	13,089	Wild dogs and foxes:Exotic Feral Mammals	348
Mice:Exotic Feral Mammals	97	Horses:Exotic Feral Mammals	322

Ranking by animal group		Ranking by number of animals	
Animal group	Number of animals	Animal group	Number of animals
Mice:Lab Mammals	170	Birds:Exotic wild	310
Monotremes:Native Mammals	132	Koalas:Native Mammals	294
Native rats and mice:Native Mammals	5,787	Horses:Domestic Mammals	291
Other domestic mammals:Domestic Mammals	9	Mice:Lab Mammals	170
Other exotic feral mammals:Exotic Feral Mammals	76	Birds:Native captive	157
Other native mammals:Native Mammals	843,547	Monotremes:Native Mammals	132
Other reptiles:Reptiles	69	Mice:Exotic Feral Mammals	97
Pigs:Domestic Mammals	5,341	Other exotic feral mammals:Exotic Feral Mammals	76
Pigs:Exotic Feral Mammals	2,617	Other reptiles:Reptiles	69
Possums and gliders:Native Mammals	5,787	Hares:Exotic Feral Mammals	63
Rabbits:Exotic Feral Mammals	1,009	Guinea Pigs:Lab Mammals	52
Rats:Exotic Feral Mammals	36	Rats:Exotic Feral Mammals	36
Rats:Lab Mammals	8	Other domestic mammals:Domestic Mammals	9
Sheep:Domestic Mammals	2,117	Rats:Lab Mammals	8
Snakes:Reptiles	906	Birds:Exotic captive	6
Turtles and tortoises:Reptiles	76,363	Goats:Domestic Mammals	6

Ranking by animal group		Ranking by number of animals	
Animal group	Number of animals	Animal group	Number of animals
Whales and dolphins:Native Mammals	2,242	Cephalopods:Aquatic Animals	4
Wild dogs and foxes:Exotic Feral Mammals	348	Camels:Exotic Feral Mammals	3
Total	4,545,288	Total	4,545,288

*Animal use figures relate to the 2018 animal use statistic report submitted by the DAF AECs 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.

Two cases of possible non-compliance by applicants were reported to the Animal Ethics regulators during the reporting period.

No emergencies or grievances were recorded in the reporting period. A complaint regarding companies using animals for scientific purposes without AEC approval was received by the AEC and was reported to the Animal Ethics regulators.

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

Four training opportunities were provided to DAF AEC members with seven members attending at least one opportunity.

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: 12 December 2019