



**Australian Synchrotron
Animal Ethics Committee
Terms of Reference
AG-7873**

1. Preamble

The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) has established the Australian Synchrotron Animal Ethics Committee (AS-AEC) in accordance with requirements described in the *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (8th edition, 2013)* (the Code).

As a leading research organization, ANSTO leverages great science to deliver big outcomes. At the core of ANSTO's DNA is the commitment to ethical, humane, and responsible use of animals for scientific purpose.

In compliance with its Victorian licencing and accreditation obligations, ANSTO is subject to provisions as outlined in the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* (Vic) and *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2019* (Vic).

These Terms of Reference:

- i) Describe the purpose, scope and structure of the AS-AEC, outlining its roles and responsibilities
- ii) Have been developed in accordance with the Code, Act and Regulation (2.2.18), ensuring proper provisioning of:
 - the AS-AECs responsibilities for ethical review, approval, monitoring and of animal care and use
 - The AS-AEC's Institutional accountability
 - The AS-AEC's mechanisms of reporting; and
 - The composition by which the AS-AEC membership meets the requirements for compliant operation and exercise of function.
- iii) Come into effect upon approval of the AS-AEC and Australian Synchrotron License nominee
- iv) Are to be made publicly available.
- v) Are to be read alongside the AS-AEC operating Procedure.

2. Responsibilities

2.1. Primary Responsibility of the ANSTO AS-AEC

The primary objective and responsibility of the AS-AEC is to ensure that all activities relating to the care and use of animals at ANSTO comply with the Code, Act and Regulation, satisfying all Accreditation and License conditions.

The AS-AEC is to consider Animal Ethics applications (research projects) submitted by researchers intending to use animals for scientific purpose at the Australian Synchrotron.

The objectives of the Australian Synchrotron Animal Ethics Committee are to:

- Support the wellbeing of animals involved in research.
- Promote ethical standards and a high level of scientific integrity when working with animals for scientific purposes.
- Apply Replacement, Reduction and Refinement (the 3Rs) at all stages of animal care and use.
- Promote compliance with the Code and any relevant legislation.

2.2. Responsibilities for ethical review and approval

In execution of its primary responsibility with regard to the ethical review and approval for the care and use of animals for research purposes, the AS-AEC is to:

- i) Review applications for projects and approve only those projects that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the Code (2.3.2 [i][ii]:2.3.5). Consideration as to what is ethically acceptable is to be guided by section 1 of the code. Primarily, the code requires that
 - Respect for animals must underpin all decisions;
 - Methods that replace or partially replace the use of animals must be investigated, considered, and where applicable, be implemented; and
 - Ethical review must balance whether the potential effects upon animal wellbeing is justified by the potential benefits that their use may yield;
- ii) Review applications for activities associated with the care and management of animals in facilities, including procedures applicable to breeding programs integral to the maintenance of an animal line, and approve only those activities that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the Code (2.3.2 [ii]);
- iii) Conduct follow-up review of approved projects or when circumstance triggers additional review and allow the continuation of approval for only those projects and activities that continue to be ethically acceptable and conform to the requirement of the Code (2.3.2 [iii]);
- iv) Monitor the care and use of animals, including housing conditions, practices and procedures involved in the care of animals by inspecting facilities where animals are housed and used for research purposes (2.3.2 [iv]);
- v) Take appropriate actions regarding unexpected adverse events (2.3.2 [v]);
- vi) Take appropriate actions regarding non-compliance (2.3.2 [vi]);
- vii) Review and approve guidelines/procedures pertaining to the care and use of animals (2.3.2 [vii]);
- viii) Provide advice and recommendations to DJPR-AWV (2.3.2 [viii]);
- ix) Report on its operations by providing an annual report to Licence nominee (Clause 2.3.2 [ix]);

- x) Submit annual reports regarding committee operation, function and number of animals used for research purpose as per obligations outlined in the Victorian Act;
- xi) maintain a record of all new applications, renewal applications, final reports and minutes of meetings;

2.3. Responsibilities in providing advice and recommendation to applicants of the committee.

- i) The ANSTO AS-AEC, in ensuring that the use of animals is justified and compliant to the Code, Act and Regulation, is to advise researchers on the general principles of Replacement, Reduction and Refinement (3R's) for all activities involving the use of animals for scientific purpose;
- ii) The AS-AEC shall also, in compliance with the Code, require personnel involved in either the a) review and approval of applications involving the care and use of animals for scientific purpose; or b) Conduct of any procedure relating to either the maintenance, care husbandry or experimental procedure involving the use of animals for scientific purpose; to undertake relevant animal ethics training; and/or undertake training and maintain competency in procedures the individual is listed as responsible for performing in an ethics application.
- iii) The AS-AEC, under delegated authority by the Licence nominee or delegate thereof (AWO), may at any time: Issue, Suspend or Withdraw a Notice of Approval or Specified Animal Breeding Licence (SABL) in response to breaches of the Code, Act and/or Regulation, non-compliance to either the aforementioned legislation or non-compliance with procedure approval in the relevant ethics application, or in response to failure to meet necessary reporting obligations.

2.4. Responsibilities in providing recommendations and advice to the institution

- i) The AS-AEC is to advice and recommendations to ANSTO regarding the care and use of animals for scientific purposes conducted on behalf of the institution, and strategies required ensuring that the requirements of the Code are maintained and that matters affecting animal wellbeing are addressed (2.3.27).
- ii) The AS-AEC is to be consulted during the planning of new facilities that wish to conduct animal research or breeding. Depending on the nature and complexity of the request, guidance from Animal Welfare Victoria (AWV) may be required. All new prescribed animal facilities will require inspection and licencing from the regulator, and endorsement from the AS-AEC before any animal work can begin.
- iii) Facility modification or refurbishment currently holding a Scientific Procedures Premises Licence (SPPL) issued by Animal Welfare Victoria (AWV) must be inspected and approved for use by the AEC prior to housing animals and may be required to undergo a Licence Variation request. The Executive Officer will co-ordinate this request with the regulator, who may wish to conduct an inspection to ensure that the modifications and refurbishments continue to meet the Code's requirements for animal housing (2.1.6[v], 3.2.14, 3.2.17-20) and environmental conditions (3.2.17[i]).

3. Membership

The Code (2013) sets out the composition of the AEC's and describes the responsibilities of the Chairperson and each membership category for quorate operation of ethics committees. The ANSTO AS-AEC must comprise of at least one member from each category (A-D) and maintain at least a 1/3rd composition of category C and D members of total committee vote carrying roles.

3.1. Chairperson

The ANSTO CEO, as per the ANSTO Delegations Manual (AG-1682), is to appoint a senior manager within the organisation to the role of AS-AEC Chairperson. This position is to carry the title, AS-AEC delegate to the CEO. Appointment to the role must satisfy the following requirements:

- i. The Chairperson must hold a senior management position within ANSTO.
- ii. The Chairperson must be independent of (not directly involved in) the care and use of animals for scientific purposes.
- iii. ANSTO must provide the Chairperson with sufficient resourcing to fulfil the role.
- iv. The Chairperson may be appointed in addition to the minimum quorate committee composition of category A-D members, or may be a category member of the committee who fulfills the role of chairperson in addition to the responsibilities and requirements of their category role (2.2-2.2.4)
- v. The committee may appoint a Deputy Chairperson(s) to act in the chairperson role when a scheduled or unexpected absence of the Chairperson occurs. The Deputy Chairperson(s) must be an existing member of the committee and shall be elected to the role by the remaining committee members via consensus.
- vi. In the absence of both Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson(s), the AS-AEC may elect a member who shall act as Chairperson (Title: Acting Chairperson), who assumes the delegated authority of the Chairperson in alignment with committee composition under the code so that a scheduled meeting is not abandoned, until which time either the Chairperson or Deputy chairperson return to their role.

3.2. Category members

The AS-AEC is to comprise of at least one member in each of the following categories:

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| Category A | A person with qualifications in veterinary science that are recognised for registration as a veterinary surgeon in Australia, and with experience relevant to the institution's activities or the ability to acquire relevant knowledge. |
| Category B: | A suitably qualified person with substantial and recent experience in the use of animals for scientific purposes relevant to the institution and the business of the AS-AEC. This must include possession of a higher degree in research or equivalent experience. |
| Category C | A person with demonstrable commitment to, and established experience in, furthering the welfare of animals, who is not employed by or otherwise associated with ANSTO and who is not currently involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes. Veterinarians with specific animal welfare interest and experience may meet the requirements of this category. While not representing an animal welfare organisation in their role on an AEC, the person should, where possible, be selected on the basis of active membership or affiliation and endorsement by such an organisation. |
| Category D | A person not employed by or otherwise associated with the institution and who has never been involved in the use of animals in scientific or teaching activities, either in their employment or beyond their undergraduate education. Category D members should be viewed by the wider community as bringing a completely |

independent view to the AS-AEC and must not fit the requirements of any other category.

- Category The Licence nominee may appoint a person or persons in category "other".
O (Other): These appointments are to assist the AS-AEC in execution of its function. Examples of such appointments may include: Animal facility manager, Animal welfare officer, Subject matter expert (ie biostatistician).

3.3. Conditions of membership and appointment

- i. An incumbent member to the AS-AEC must receive a letter of offer from ANSTO, detailing category of appointment, remuneration etc. The incumbent member must reply to this letter, accepting the position in writing.
- ii. Prior to appointment, all members must acknowledge in writing, the acceptance of the AS-AEC's Terms of Reference, operating procedure, and confidentiality policy of ANSTO.
- iii. Each person nominated to any category must receive approval of their membership from DJPR-Animal Welfare Victoria
- iv. Appointment procedures must include the declaration of any conflicts of interest by an incumbent member and the management of said conflicts of interest in making appointments.
- v. ANSTO is to ensure that AS-AEC members undergo appropriate induction, training and orientation upon accepting a role. ANSTO is to ensure that committee members have ongoing appropriate access to education programs and resources.
- vi. Terms of appointment to the AS-AEC is to be for a period of 3 years, after which time positions in category roles are to be advertised. Incumbents may be reappointed (2.2.18 [iv])

4. Reporting

- i) The AS-AEC Chairperson, AS-AEC Executive officer and the ANSTO AS-AEC licence nominee are to meet at least annually to report on the activities of the AS-AEC.
- ii) The AS-AEC Chair may directly notify or meet with the ANSTO CEO and or AS-AEC licence nominee relating to the AS-AEC or matters there related at other times at his or her discretion.
- iii) The AS-AEC must submit a written report on its operation at least annually to the AS-AEC licence nominee (2.3.28).
- iv) The content of the AS-AEC annual report is align with requirements as per the ANSTO AS-AEC Operating Procedure.
- v) ANSTO must ensure that the AS-AEC s reporting obligations under Victorian Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (POCTA) Act and Regulation are met via the submission of a compliant annual report each calendar year.

5. Acceptance of terms upon application

Upon making an application to the ANSTO AS-AEC, the applicant is understood to have read, understood and accepted the conditions, obligations and requirements as outlined in both the ANSTO AS-AEC Terms of Reference (F-7873) Operating Procedure (AM-5480) and any relevant policy or procedure maintained by ANSTO or the AS-AEC. Failure to comply with legislative requirements, TOR or AS-AEC policy may result in committee refusal to issue Notice of Approval, assess further works, applications and/or amendment until which time the burdened applicant has remedied all issues/overdue items and/or served any period of exclusion etc.