
TOPIC: AEC Investigator Training

DATE: February 2017

Introduction and Responsibilities

The *Australian code of practice for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, 8th Edition, 2013* (the Code) requires that each institution ensures that its investigators are aware of their responsibilities under the Code, including through the provision of educational programs, continuing training and workshops.

The Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) offers animal ethics training sessions to all internal and external Chief Investigators of projects approved by DPIPWE's Animal Ethics Committee (AEC).

The training sessions are designed to provide an overview of Investigators' responsibilities under the Tasmanian *Animal Welfare Act 1993* (the Act) and the Code, the AEC's policies and procedures and the various forms Investigators are required to use. They also highlight the importance of the legislation in setting the governing principles for scientific research involving animals. Participants are encouraged to think from the AEC's perspective and to use sections of the Code to resolve a number of mock scenarios.

The training sessions are also seen as an opportunity for Investigators to liaise and network with AEC members and the executive, as well as other AEC Investigators.

Details

To ensure that all AEC users are familiar with their responsibilities and obligations as outlined in the Code, it is a requirement that all new, prospective Chief Investigators (i.e. those who have not previously led an AEC-approved project) attend an AEC training session prior to the submission of their first application, or by agreement, as soon as practicable. This requirement may be waived by exception at the discretion of the AEC.

It is recommended that all Chief Investigators who access the DPIPWE AEC attend an AEC training session at least every two years to ensure they are aware of any important changes to guidelines and processes that might affect them. Institutions that access the DPIPWE AEC are encouraged to train a pool of Investigators to lead AEC projects.

Investigators who have been the subject of non-compliance investigation may be required to attend an AEC training session to comply with action taken by the Committee in response to non-compliance incidents or in accordance with additional conditions of approval. This must be agreed upon in conjunction with an Investigator's Manager.

All investigators who attend an AEC training session will receive a certificate to acknowledge their attendance. The AEC Executive Officer will also maintain a register of Investigators who have attended AEC training.

The DPIPWE AEC has committed to providing a minimum of two training opportunities per year with at least one being held in Hobart and one in Launceston to provide ample opportunity for all investigators to attend. Additional AEC training sessions will be provided on a needs basis, subject to available resources.

Who it affects

It is mandatory for all Chief Investigators who access the DPIPWE AEC to attend and it is recommended that Associate Investigators attend.

Consequences of Violation

The AEC may refuse to approve an application if a newly-nominated Chief Investigator has not registered to attend an AEC Training session at the first available opportunity.

If attendance is required as a condition of AEC approval, failure to attend may result in suspension or withdrawal of AEC approval. Further action may be taken by the AEC in accordance with the provisions of the AEC Compliance Policy.