
POLICY STATEMENT

TOPIC: AEC Request for Video-recorded Footage and Photographs

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 Animal Ethics Committees (AEC) should routinely inspect all animal holding areas at least annually and preferably more frequently. Inspection and monitoring also includes the acquisition, transportation, production, housing, care, use and fate of animals to ensure the highest levels of care and welfare are given to animals used in approved projects. Inspections at remote sites or where access is difficult may be performed by an agent or delegate and can be facilitated or corroborated with photographic or video imaging.

The *AEC Operating Procedures (2017)* provide that monitoring opportunities may include a request for videos or photographs of project activities. For any projects utilising animal housing or holding facilities, dated digital photographs or video footage is required to be submitted on an annual basis in conjunction with annual reports unless otherwise stipulated by the AEC.

Details

The DPIPWE AEC may also request digital photographs or video-recorded footage when it is not possible for AEC members or delegates to inspect fieldwork sites in person, or where remote project activities are novel or unknown to the Committee. Such requests may be imposed as conditions of approval for new projects, or in agreement with project investigators. The AEC may also request that photographs or videos are presented to the Committee at in-session meetings.

Provision of photographs and/or video footage assists the AEC in meeting its monitoring obligations under the Code and serves as an educative tool. Subsequent presentations to the Committee may be seen as an opportunity to meet with and build upon professional relationships with Committee members.

Video footage is not expected to be professionally produced, but is expected to typically demonstrate the execution of certain procedures or project activities as requested by the AEC. More specific details may be worked out in agreement with Chief Investigators.

Consequences of Violation

If the provision of photographs or video footage of activities at remote sites is required as a condition of AEC approval, failure to comply 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.