

New South Wales AEC Members' Forum

Summary report of the workshop held 8 April 2025



About Understanding Animal Research Oceania

www.uaroceania.org

Understanding Animal Research Oceania (UAR Oceania) is an Australian non-profit organisation that explains why animals are used in medical and scientific research. We support greater understanding of how and why animals are used in medical, veterinary, scientific and environmental research in the Oceania region.

UAR Oceania works to help everyone understand how society benefits from the humane use of animals in research, and works with the scientific sector to ensure that when research uses animals, it meets the high standards of ethical conduct expected by the international research community and the public. We support the life-sciences community across Oceania to be open, courageous and credible in the way it approaches and discusses research, drawing together research organisations, industry associations, professional bodies, charities and others.

For further information or to join UAR Oceania please contact ajlear@uaroceania.org

About the AEC Members' Forum

UAR Oceania, in collaboration with The University of Sydney, has created the AEC Members' Forum which provides a platform for AEC members from across a specified region to meet face to face and discuss key and current issues that they may encounter or need to take decisions on as part of their AEC role.

While all AEC members undergo training for their position, science does not stand still, and neither do the related policy issues. The Forum provides space for AEC members to meet their counterparts from other committees and institutions, deliberate on topics that are emerging, changing or which can be challenging, and to discuss the roles of the AECs. The sessions are participatory and focused on knowledge building and sharing among AEC members.

The aim of the Forum is to strengthen the understanding and networks of AEC members and to support their deliberations on their committees. It does not replace AEC member training required by regulatory authorities, including that provided through ANZCCART's ComPass programme.

If you are interested in holding an AEC Members' Forum in your region, please contact ajlear@uaroceania.org.

Disclaimer

Opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily represent the views of all participants at the event, Understanding Animal Research Oceania, The University of Sydney or any other AEC Members' Forum partner.

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All web references were accessed in April 2025.

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Executive Summary

This report presents the discussions and findings from a forum focusing on various aspects of animal ethics and research methodologies. The discussions topics were: Competency and Animal Ethics Committees, Inclusivity in Ethics Committee Meetings, The 3Rs (Reduction, Replacement, Refinement), A Framework for Facility Inspections, The Role of ARRPP in Policy.

Discussion 1, on Competency and Animal Ethics Committees, led by Professor Michael D'Occhio, highlighted the difficulties of determining and assessing competency. He outlined the moral and ethical foundations for ensuring competency in using animals for teaching and research, arguing that competency is a moral obligation. The presentation stressed that competency must include not only technical skills and knowledge but also empathy and respect as core principles underpinning animal welfare obligations, influencing training standards and institutional responsibilities.

Discussion 2 focused on Inclusivity in AECs. Bella Lear considered the role of each category of member on an animal ethics committee, the factors that lead certain individuals and groups to dominate, and when that might be problematic for the committee role. She invited participants to see inclusion as addressing balance in social groups and shared a selection of facilitation tools for giving voice to quieter participants. Participants discussed inclusive practices used within their own AECs.

Discussion 3 saw Karen Brennan follow last year's 3Rs discussion by sharing further details about the 3Rs award programme at University of New South Wales. Her presentation included insights from a recent national survey, which revealed that despite high awareness of the 3Rs among researchers and ethics committee members, barriers remained, including incomplete understanding of refinement and limited familiarity with alternative models. She highlighted features from UNSW's 3Rs grant scheme, which has allowed researchers to use and test emerging technologies to reduce, replace and refine animal use.

In Discussion 4, Georgia Teasdale-Twyford discussed the inspection of animal facilities as a critical component of animal ethics committee responsibilities. She highlighted the dual role of inspections in compliance monitoring and in strengthening relationships between researchers, facility staff, and committee members. The session introduced the University of Sydney's new online inspection database, a tool designed to improve tracking, automate reporting, and streamline the inspection process.

Discussion 5 was led by Professor Jacqueline Phillips, Chair of NSW Animal Research Review Panel (ARRP). She outlined the panel's role in overseeing compliance with the Animal Research Act and supporting AECs. ARRPP evaluates applications, conducts inspections, investigates complaints, and provides guidance on the implementation of legislation and the Australian Code. It aims to strengthen institutional practices and uphold animal welfare across research and teaching.

Welcome

The meeting was opened by Dr Susan Maastricht, Director of Research Integrity and Ethics Administration at The University of Sydney, and Director at Understanding Animal Research Oceania.

Dr Maastricht welcomed speakers and participants to Eora Country of the Gadigal people, on whose lands the meeting took place. She continued to welcome them to the first AEC Forum, developed as a collaboration between The University of Sydney and UAR Oceania, to provide a place where AEC members could meet, discuss and learn more about their duties in supporting the ethical and correct treatment of animals in scientific research.

AEC Forum aims to generate discussion and debate around key topics which create sticking points or uncertainty for AEC members, raising awareness of these topics and suggesting new ways to approach them.

Discussion 1

Ensuring Competency in Animal Research

This session presented competency in using animals for scientific research and teaching as a moral obligation. Professor D'Occhio argued that competency is not only part of institutional requirements, but is an ethically essential component of research, necessitated by animal sentience. The recognition of animals as beings capable of experiencing both pleasure and suffering places a responsibility on researchers and institutions to ensure all those who work with animals are not only technically skilled, but also ethically and attitudinally competent.

Considering different types of competencies such as knowledge, technical skills, and attitude, Prof D'Occhio stressed that attitudinal competence, including empathy and respect for animals, is the most neglected. He drew on examples from the University of Melbourne and international frameworks to highlight how a culture of care and formal attitudinal training can both enhance ethical decision making and animal welfare.

The current Australian Code is ambiguous regarding responsibilities for ensuring competency and the discussion considered the benefits of a more unified, national approach for Australia, achieved through a revised Code or a national competencies guide, similar to the existing NHMRC frameworks for clinical trials. The discussion emphasised the need for competency development to be institution-wide, and not left to individuals, and considered how this could be supported by clearer designation of trainers and assessors, ongoing reassessment, and improved consistency between institutions.

Positioning sentience as the ethical foundation for competency, Prof. D'Occhio encouraged its explicit inclusion in the revised Code, noting international legislative shifts such as the UK's Animal Sentience Act, and previous hesitancy to use the term in Australia, where it has been seen as politically charged. Recent adoption of sentience-based legislation and education worldwide was seen as a precedent that Australia should follow. Supporting competency could come from aligning training and developing institutional culture to ensure full understanding of ethical responsibilities, thereby supporting staff to achieve and maintaining competency when working with sentient animals.

In discussion, participants considered key challenges and opportunities in assessing and fostering competency across institutions, including reflection on the difficulty of evaluating attitudinal competence, such as empathy, respect, and ethical awareness, compared to technical skills or knowledge. Some contributors noted the lack of frameworks for formally assessing attitudes and the risk of relying on superficial checklists.

Given the strong influence of organisational culture on ethical behaviour. Culture of care programmes and structured "train-the-trainer" initiatives were identified as particularly effective ways to embed ethical competencies. The diversity of cultural backgrounds among researchers, which can lead to differing views on animals, was seen as both a challenge and an opportunity, reinforcing the importance of shared language and intentional communication about animal care values.

Difference between three and eight steps in competence

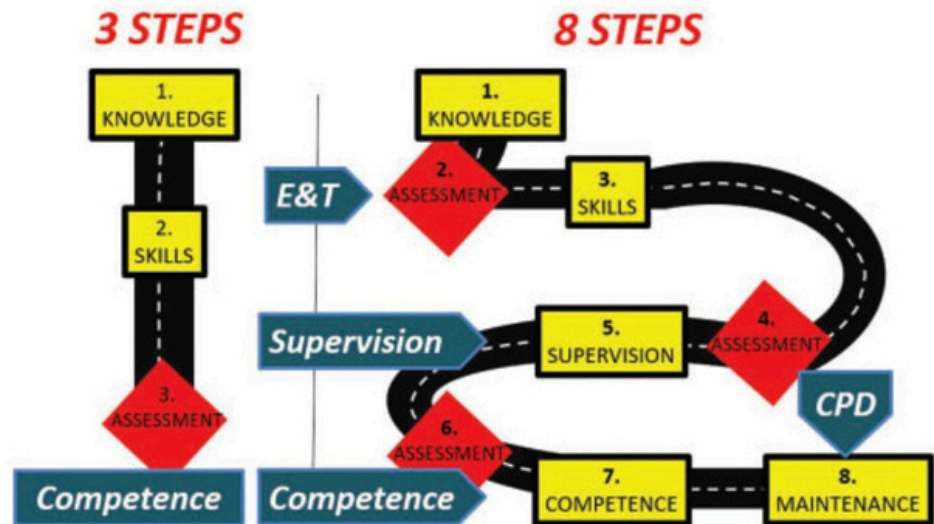


Figure 1. An eight step competency framework for European Science

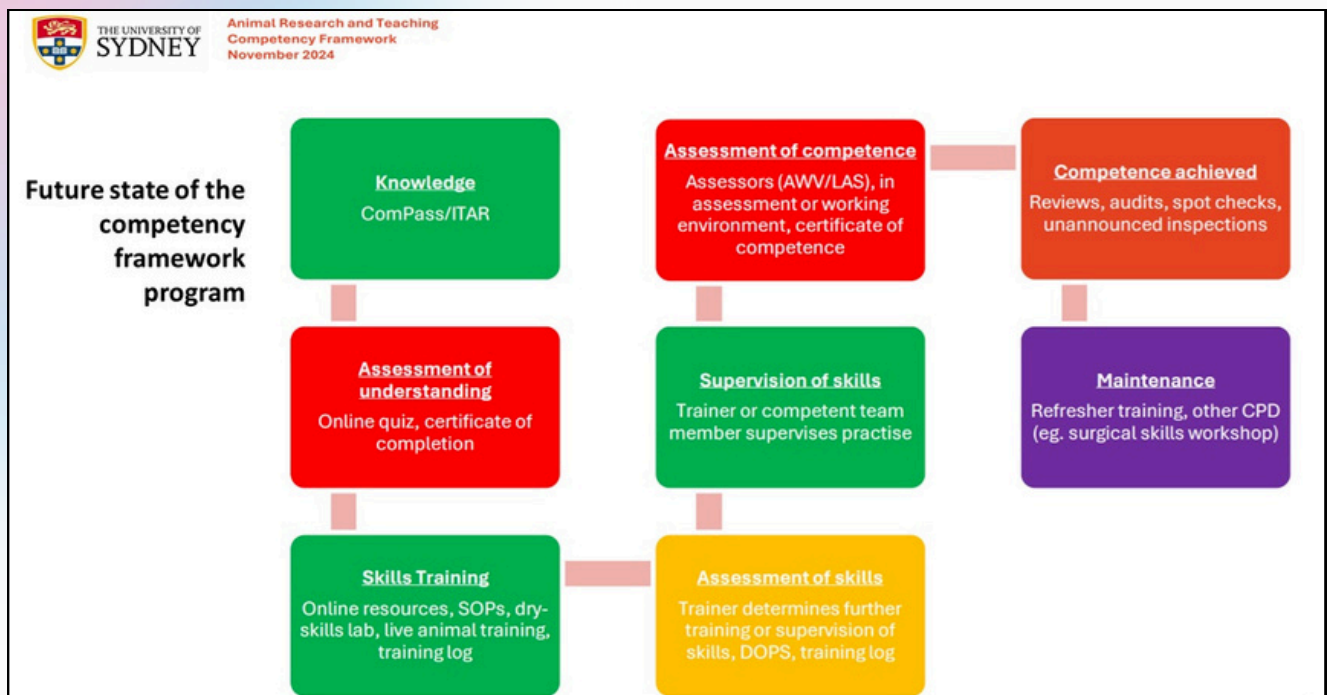


Figure 2. Development of a competency framework at The University of Sydney

Discussion 2

Inclusivity and Animal Ethics Committees

This session was led by Bella Lear, Chief Executive of Understanding Animal Research Oceania who has previously worked on facilitation and training frameworks for science and education.

Bella spoke about how to create inclusive discussions, where all categories of AEC members are able to contribute freely and meaningfully, inviting the group to begin discussions by considering why some AEC members may find it more difficult to speak up and share their thoughts during committee meetings.

In groups outsiders can find it more challenging to raise their voices and be heard, and we are all relative outsiders in some situations, which makes us more subject to:

- Group power dynamics
- Conscious biases
- Unconscious biases
- Imposter syndrome
- Norming behaviours

Bella explained that “inclusion” can relate to anyone in a role that makes them a relative outsider, and for animal ethics committees that can mean lay and welfare representatives: categories C and D. The function of these categories is to challenge the committee to consider the societal view, but challenging those with greater technical knowledge can be difficult, and it can be argued that as they develop technical knowledge, members are no longer truly “lay” representatives.

Having presented some of the key problems for inclusivity on animal ethics committees, Bella shared some thoughts for strategies that can support deliberation and respectful challenge among groups. These were structured around principles of:

- Warming up the group
- Setting aside time for deliberation
- Allowing Cs and Ds to discuss the harm-benefit as a subgroup and feed back

The discussion that followed focused on tried-and-tested strategies among ethics committees for giving all members a chance to be heard: those that have worked and those that have not. Participants also considered the influence, advantages and disadvantages of lay chairs for animal ethics committees.

Supporting category C and D participation

✓ Successful Strategies

- Ask for C/D opinions directly; assign them as secondary reviewers.
- Present each application formally to the committee.
- Include C/D members in pre-review triads with an academic and a vet.
- Chairs should affirm the value of C/D contributions and clarify questions.
- Rotate members frequently to expose them to varied applications.
- Summarise C/D comments to ensure their input is recorded.
- Acknowledge their role in addressing public misinformation.

⚠ Unsuccessful or Problematic Approaches

- Spokespeople dominating or lay voices being dismissed.
- Committees dominated by Category B researchers.
- Zoom-only meetings reduce engagement.
- Audit-style tours offer little meaningful interaction.
- Researcher frustration with basic C/D questions.

💡 Enhancing Balance: Lay or External Chairs



- Less biased, independent of institutional politics.
- Represent broader community values.



- May lack technical knowledge.
- Hard to recruit without pay.
- Conflicts with established researcher-led norms.



- Government officials have been effective chairs.
- Chair effectiveness depends more on skill than background.

🔄 Structural Ideas

- Rotate members every 3–4 years.
- Assign specific roles to C/Ds (e.g., lay summary review).
- Mix groups and ensure diverse representation.
- Recognise value in all contributions, even anecdotal.

Figure 3. Inclusivity discussion outputs

Discussion 3

Application of the 3Rs at UNSW

The UNSW 3Rs Grant Scheme is a university-funded initiative designed to support projects that aim to replace, reduce, or refine the use of animals in scientific research. Established through the University's Research Infrastructure Strategy and inspired by the former Director of Animal Services, Malcolm France, the scheme is unique in Australia for providing seed funding to new projects whose primary goal is to advance the 3Rs. Unlike many other 3Rs-focused programmes, which offer recognition for work already completed, this scheme takes the risk of investing in early-stage research with potential for long-term impact.

Now in its sixth year, the scheme has funded 15 projects, including infrastructure support for the university's organoid core facility, and awards of between \$20,000 and \$100,000 for individual researchers. Projects are assessed by a panel that includes representatives from across UNSW faculties, a lay member committed to animal ethics, and subject experts as needed. Evaluation criteria include scientific quality, 3Rs relevance, novelty, feasibility, and alignment with institutional values such as tissue sharing and bio-banking.

The majority of funded projects (60%) focus on replacement, with the remainder split equally between reduction and refinement. Examples include a project using 3D-printed blood vessels to study renal and cardiovascular disease, and a soft robotic heart model already published in *Science Robotics*. Others include open-source *in silico* models of the nervous system, the reuse of scavenged tissue from other animal studies for 3D culture scaffolds, and a blood-brain barrier model developed on a microfluidic chip. One \$20,000 grant enabled the creation of preliminary data that secured significant external funding from Cancer Australia to support human tumour development.

The scheme has also helped to stimulate interdisciplinary collaboration and greater awareness of alternative methods. For example, one funded project brought together engineers and biologists to develop recycled tissue scaffolds, while another applied artificial intelligence to protein modelling in ways that directly replaced the need for animal studies.

Challenges encountered include difficulty comparing highly technical organoid and 3D cell culture proposals, occasional misunderstanding of 3Rs definitions, particularly between reduction and refinement, and unavoidable delays due to issues like access to patient tissue. Despite these challenges, the return on investment has been strong, and UNSW continues to refine the application process to improve clarity and impact reporting, and support this model for ethical innovation in biomedical research.

3Rs- key drivers

Replacement

*of animals with other methods or
with less sentient organisms*

Development of alternative/ non-animal methods to
replace use of animal models using novel technologies

National strategies R&D medical product development

Animal ethics committee review process
Use of power analysis in calculation of numbers
Tissue sharing and biobanks

Reduction

*in the number of animals used to
achieve outcomes*

Refinement

*of techniques used to minimise the
adverse impact on animals*

Animal ethics committee review process
Education and training

Figure 4 Drivers for the 3Rs at NSW research insititutions

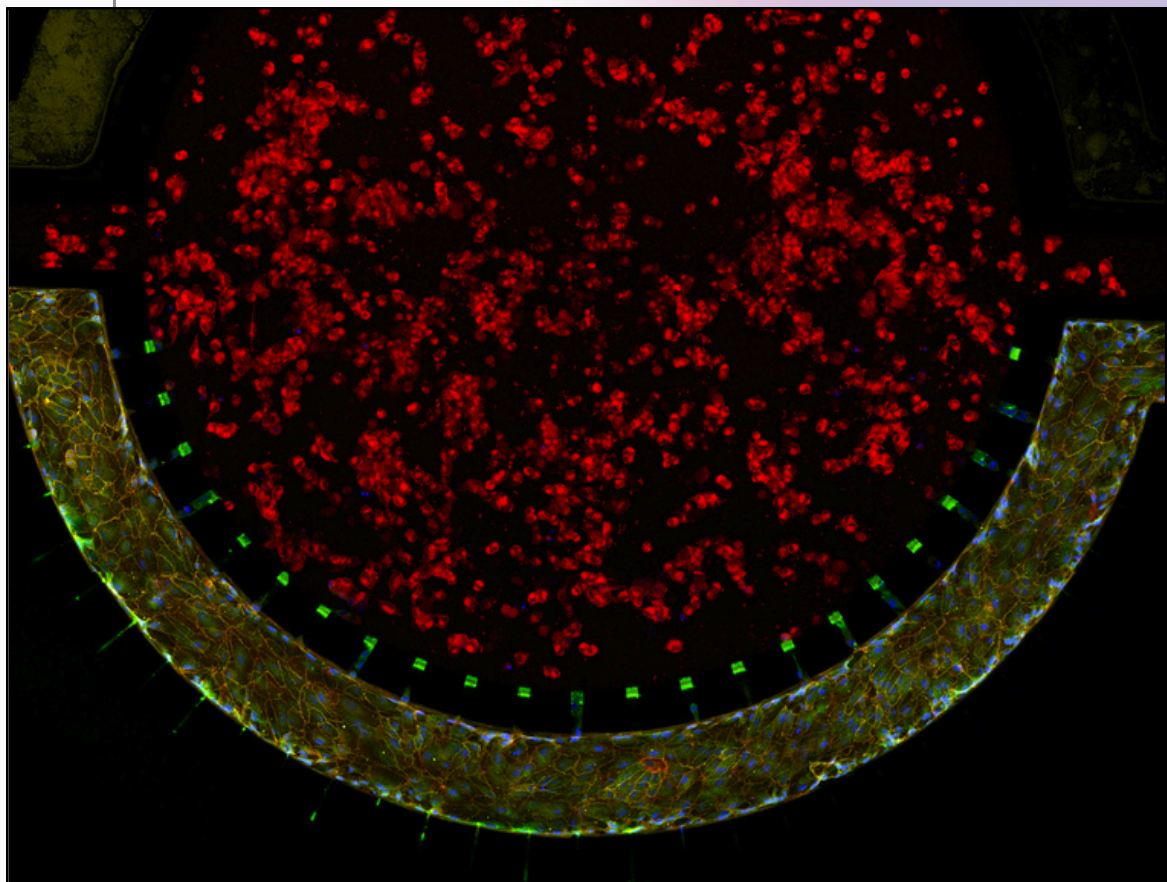


Figure 5. Image of the microfluidic device, composed of a tissue chamber with the tumour and an adjacent mature and functional blood vessel. Dr G.Silvani

Discussion 4

Facility Inspections Database

Dr Georgia Teasdale-Twyford, Animal Welfare Head at the University of Sydney, shared insights into best practices for facility inspections by Animal Ethics Committees (AECs), drawing on her experience modernising the university's inspection processes. Her presentation highlighted the purpose, challenges, and opportunities associated with inspections and introduced a new digital inspection tool developed to improve consistency, tracking, and engagement.

Inspections are a clear requirement under the Australian Code, particularly for Category C and D AEC members. Dr Teasdale-Twyford stressed that broader participation across researchers, facility managers, vets, WHS officers, and AEC staff, builds stronger understanding and rapport. She emphasised that inspections not only serve a compliance function but also strengthen the connection between AECs and researchers. They allow committee members to observe conditions first-hand, validate protocol implementation, and advocate for improvements in infrastructure and welfare.

A key theme was the importance of confidence and preparedness, especially when inspecting unfamiliar species or environments. Georgia outlined the foundational elements of good inspections: suitable housing that supports the animal's health and natural behaviour; robust enrichment; appropriate husbandry practices; adequate food and water; staff training; and biosecurity. She encouraged inspectors to speak directly with staff and researchers to better understand daily practices and challenges.

The University of Sydney has developed a centralised online inspection database to replace paper-based templates. This system is tablet-compatible, embeds relevant guidelines such as those issued by ARRPs and NC3Rs, provides contextual help for inspectors, and allows real-time assignment and tracking of action items. The tool also enables the recording of photographic evidence and comparison of facility performance over time.

Georgia also spoke about virtual tours as an emerging best practice, particularly in support of the Openness Agreement. These can increase transparency, accommodate remote AEC members, and foster public understanding of research animal care. She cited examples from The University of Sydney's poultry facility and the University of Manchester's publicly available virtual tour, which includes staff interviews and demonstrations of equipment and procedures.

The discussion reinforced the importance of data integrity, including monitoring records and cage cards, recognising thermal comfort and environmental needs by species, and fostering a culture where researchers understand and embrace welfare expectations. Georgia concluded by framing inspections as a tool not only for oversight but for supporting research excellence, building trust, and improving animal welfare outcomes.

Housing systems should support all basic behavioural and physiological needs of the animals, including eating, drinking, playing, resting, grooming, foraging, exploring, gnawing, hiding, reproduction, engaging in a range of social activities, urination and defaecation.

Recommendations:

- Cage should be made from colourless transparent, tinted material with solid flooring - no mesh or grids.
- Made of durable, impervious material and in good condition.
- Minimum of 2cm depth of bedding for mice, should be able to dig and burrow.

Light intensity, vibrations and noise levels appropriate

Findings/Observations:

Satisfactory Unsatisfactory N/A

Attachments / Notes (0) Action (0)

Confirm monitoring of light intensity, vibration and noise levels with facility management. Consider light intensity variation across a cage rack. Check equipment in room for fans or motors which may be emitting high frequency sounds. Note if building works are occurring. Extra consideration should be taken for rooms with breeding protocols as this may cause cannibalism of litters and rejection of pups.

Action

Action Tasks

Description	Assigned to	Due Date	Status	Progress	Action
Animal research authority expired and monitoring frequency not recorded as specified in approved application (monitoring should be at least twice per week, but only 1 monitoring occasion during Feb 2025)	Georgia Teasdale-Twyford	10 Apr 2025	To Do	0%	...

Task Details

Task Description: Ara out of date

Task Completed: 3 Feb 2025

Task Due: 4 Feb 2025

Assigned On: 3 Feb 2025 11:08 am

Assigned By: Georgia Teasdale-Twyford

Estimate how complete this task currently is

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

Figure 6. Converting the template for recording inspection data to a database allowed easier input and greater interrogation of the data



Figure 7. The varied animal research projects taking place at The University of Sydney, which all need approval and inspections

Discussion 5

The Role of the Animal Research Review Panel (ARRP)

Professor Jacqueline Phillips outlined the structure, responsibilities, and evolving role of the Animal Research Review Panel (ARRP), the statutory body established under the NSW Animal Research Act 1985 to oversee compliance, promote ethical research, and safeguard animal welfare in scientific and educational settings. Her presentation clarified the relationship between the ARRP, the NSW Government, and institutional Animal Ethics Committees (AECs), as well as the distinct legislative environment in New South Wales.

The ARRP supports the licensing and inspection of establishments conducting animal research or supplying animals for research, reviewing accreditation applications, annual reports, and complaints. In 2023–24, it reviewed over 100 accreditation-related submissions and oversaw 17 site inspections. While inspections are carried out by DPI compliance officers, ARRP authorises and evaluates them, with ARRP members often also present at inspections to observe and contribute. The panel also reviews AEC annual reports and monitors committee composition to ensure appropriate expertise and engagement across all categories.

Professor Phillips emphasised the complementary but distinct responsibilities of ARRP and AECs. AECs operate at the institutional level, authorised to approve and monitor research, while ARRP provides high-level oversight, policy development, and advice to the Minister. She stressed that while ARRP cannot provide definitive rulings on project-specific ethical questions, it supports consistency through policies, guidelines, inspections, and training resources.

Recent initiatives include revised guidelines on guinea pig and rabbit care, smoke inhalation procedures, and forced swim tests. ARRP also publishes detailed animal-use statistics and leads the assessment of applications for LD50 testing and, under new legislation, right-to-release exemptions for long-term use of dogs and cats. The panel's transparency work includes public access to data, policy documents, and a growing series of well-attended webinars.

During discussion, Professor Phillips acknowledged concerns about inconsistency between institutions and affirmed ARRP's focus on outcomes over rigid uniformity. She noted the need for updated guidelines reflecting current legislation and best practice, and confirmed that ARRP undertakes consultation where appropriate. Questions also addressed the limits of ARRP's advisory role, its independence from NHMRC code revision processes, and the role of AECs in applying but not necessarily following guidelines, provided clear justification is documented.

Professor Phillips closed by affirming that ARRP's role is to support, and not supercede decisions made by AECs. Both share a commitment to ethical, justified, and humane animal use, and collaboration between the two is essential to ensuring confidence in research oversight and public trust.

Definition: Statutory body under the *Animal Research Act 1985*.

Mission: Protect animal welfare in research and promote ethical understanding.

Composition: 12 members representing industry, government, and animal welfare groups.

Figure 8. The role of ARRPP

AECs established by institutions to oversee ethical use of animals in research.

Governed by the *Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* (2013).

Responsibilities:

Review and approve research projects.

Monitor animal care and welfare during research.

Provide advice on compliance with legislation.

- ARRPP provides oversight at a state level; AECs operate at an institutional level.
- ARRPP ensures that AECs comply with legislative requirements through:
 - Assessing AEC annual reports (58 reviewed in 2023)¹.
 - Evaluating changes to AEC membership (62 assessed in 2023)¹.
 - Inspecting AEC operations during site visits.

Figure 9. Relationship between ARRPP and AECs

ARRPP	AEC
Oversees compliance with legislation	Reviews ethical aspects of projects
Conducts inspections	Monitors welfare during research
Evaluates Code efficacy	Ensures adherence to Code principles
Reports to NSW Minister	Reports to institutional leadership

Figure 10. ARRPP and AEC governance framework comparison

Annex I

Agenda

9:30 - 10:00	Arrival and refreshments
10:00 - 10:30	Welcome and introductions
10:30 - 11:30	Discussion 1: Competency
11:30 - 11:40	Comfort break
11:40 - 12:40	Discussion 2: Inclusivity
12:40 - 12:45	Morning wrap-up
12:45 - 13:45	Lunch
13:45 - 14:15	Discussion 3: The 3Rs
14:15 - 14:45	Discussion 4: Inspections
14:45 - 15:15	Break
15:15 - 16:15	Discussion 5: Regulation
16:20 - 16:30	Closing comments

Annex II

Speakers

Dr Susan Maastricht

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Susan is a post-graduate qualified veterinarian who has worked in the vocational education, animal shelter, university and research sectors as a senior executive, manager and leader, with responsibility for the operation and management of complex scientific, educational and welfare facilities. She has extensive experience in human and animal ethics and welfare and has served on multiple advisory, ethics and management committees and boards. She is past president of several industry associations. Holding qualifications in business and teaching, Susan has held executive or senior management positions responsible for educational, research and welfare outcomes for the past 10 years. Her work focuses on integrity, and empowering individuals and teams to be accountable in their own domain.

Bella Lear

Chief Executive, Understanding Animal Research Oceania
ajlear@uaroceania.org



Bella is a science communicator, and social researcher who supports positive social change around scientific issues. As Head of Engagement at Understanding Animal Research, Bella created stakeholder and public engagement initiatives to change thinking about animals used in research. She was an instigator of the Concordat on Openness on Animal Research in the UK, which she led for many years, as a way to drive open and constructive communication between the research community, policy makers and the public. Now leading Understanding Animal Research Oceania, Bella provides communications support to build better understanding and representation of animal-based research in Australia, New Zealand and the Oceania region.

Professor Michael D'Occhio

Honorary Professor, School of Life and Environmental Sciences, Faculty of Science, The University of Sydney

michael.docchio@sydney.edu.au



Michael D'Occhio is a reproductive biologist with a particular interest in early embryonic development and non-surgical fertility control. He was associated with the first immunocontraceptive vaccine for livestock, Vaxstrate, and continues to collaborate on the application of gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) vaccines and GnRH agonists for fertility control in livestock and invasive pest species.

Dr Georgia Teasdale-Twyford

Animal Welfare Veterinarian, The University of Sydney

georgia.teasdale-twyford@sydney.edu.au



Georgia graduated from the Royal Veterinary College, London, in 2018, and spent her first three years as a veterinarian working on the Central Coast looking after dogs, cats, rabbits and guinea pigs and wildlife. She is now the animal welfare veterinarian at The University of Sydney, and enjoys working with researchers to refine their projects so that animal welfare is prioritised, leading to excellent research outcomes.

Karen Brennan

Director of Animal Services, University of New South Wales

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Karen has 29 years of experience managing research animal facilities and transgenic services in Australia and Germany, focusing primarily on the creation and analysis of genetically modified mouse models of human disease. She is passionate about providing ethical animal resources and services to the scientific community and promoting responsible use of animal models through effective production strategies, the application of ethical principles (3Rs) and awareness of reproducibility issues in animal experimentation.

Professor Jacqueline Phillips

Professor of Neurophysiology, Macquarie University; ARRP Chair

jacqueline.phillips@mq.edu.au



Professor Phillips was appointed to the Animal Research Review Panel in 2010. Professor Phillips is Professor of Neurophysiology in the Faculty of Medicine, Health and Human Sciences, Macquarie University and is currently Chair of Macquarie University's Academic Senate. She is a registered veterinarian who has worked in small animal veterinary practice and has extensive experience with laboratory animals. She has served on Animal Ethics Committees as a Category A member at the Australian National University (ACT) and Murdoch University (WA). She has been the Panel Chair since November 2019.



Image: Understanding Animal Research

Annex III

Participating organisations

The University of Sydney	Understanding Animal Research Oceania
Animal Medicines Australia	Taronga Zoo
Centenary Institute	University of New South Wales
Invetus	ANSTO
University of Western Sydney	NSW Secretary's AEC
University of Wollongong	Sydney Local Heath District AEC
Macquarie University	Charles Sturt University
TAFE New South Wales	ANZLAA
Dept. Climate Change, Energy, the Enviornment & Water	

Annex IV

Participant feedback

Overall experience



Overall comments

Thanks for organising	Thank you to everyone for organising and to the presenters!
It was v interesting.thank you	Thanks for organising
Thanks for a good session	Location is good - train connection is v convenient
Great way to meet other AEC members and executive members. Hearing about initiatives being implemented at different institutions	Thank you for facilitating today and for an informative workshop
Thank you to Bella and all the supporters for organising this.	Let's share the experience with other AEC members to encourage better participation next year.
Very grateful for all of our speakers and those who attended	Good central venue
Warm up bus lines good starter	Good starting and finishing times!
Really informative day, thanks to all the speakers	Nothing further to add.

Participants enjoyed

Food	The bus sessions
Meeting other AEC members	Meeting some other attendees
Discussion	Networking
Develop online inspection report	Networking
The engagement of everyone	Networking
Discussions were easy- engagement was great	Speaking to other attendees
Networking	Hearing about different approaches and strategies from different AECs
Meeting new people	Excellent catering and networking
Bus session	Open Discussion and networking
Networking with all the lovely members in the industry with similar values and interests	Meeting other AEC members
Meeting people, networking	All presentations were enjoyable.
Open discussions	Networking with other AEC memberd
Regulation by Jackie Phillips	Time out to think more about our roles in animal ethics
Hearing different approaches	Sharing successes and challenges
Nice food	Social interactions
The sushi was delicious!	ARRP présentation

Participants learned

Background to ARRP	The controversy surrounding the definition of sentience
I didn't know about the role of arrp	Relation of ARRP TO AEC's
We are for the most part on the same page and experience similar scenarios	Competency - broader than skills
Broadening definition of competence and relating it to sentience	Clarified AARP's role and capacity.
ARRP role	The difference between ARRP and AEC governance structures
I have a clearer understanding of the interrelationship between AEC and ARRP	Responsibility of ARRP and recommendations they provide
Role of ARRP	Being more inclusive
Inclusivity on ethical review is critical to best practice governance of research	How much codes are evolving regarding sentience
Multiple functions of inspections	NSW NAT-Net
Discussion around "sentient" definition	Use of invertebrate models.
3R related grants	Chair should be independent and avoid politics
A good reminder about sentience being at the core of competency	Online inspection report system
Strategies to keep different category members engaged in the discussions	Rethinking competency with the frame of sentience
Links between 3Rs, competency and sentience	

Even better if...

More interactions with other members	Case studies
More focus on teaching as well as research.	More people on my committee attended
Case studies	There was more detail on the nitty gritty of conducting inspections...
some practical examples	Cake
Greater attendance from more institutions	Case study on Review of applications
Talks about technologies in research	Discussion includes case studies
Fruit	More practical ways to implement these ideas
Case study	More people here
We had more people attending! These forums are fantastic and we need more support from institutions and leadership to advocate for training	Real coffee
More advertising of session	Be Great to see more people from my committee here
A bit more on the practical side...maybe some case studies?	DPI representatives to attend in addition to ARRP
Perhaps make it more attractive to get more aec members involved? Like zoom, cheaper, not sure	Notes to take home
Case studies anonymised of tricky situations/discussions AECs have had and how they resolved them	Another vote for interesting case studies
Agree with inclusion of case studies	Note books
Shorter afternoon presentations as I am struggling to concentrate	No complaints

Annex V

Selected references & resources

Competency

Silverman, J (2018) Technical competency when using animals in research, FASEB Journal
<https://doi.org/10.1096/fj.201801514R>

Webber, S. et. al. (2022) Welfare Through Competence: A Framework for Animal-Centric Technology Design, Front. Vet. Sci. (9)
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fvets.2022.885973>

Costa, A et. el. (2021) The assessment of researchers' competence in experimental procedures with laboratory animals: A three-step methodology to develop a global rating scale, Laboratory Animals 55 (5).
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00236772211017767>

ComPass: ANZCCART Competency Passport
<https://anzccart.adelaide.edu.au/compass>

NHMRC (2013, updated 2021), Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition
[NHMRC.gov.au/australian-code](https://nhmrc.gov.au/australian-code)

LASA (2016) Guiding principles for supervision and assessment of competence as required under EU and UK legislation, 2nd Ed.
https://www.lasa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/LASA_supervision_and_competence_2016.pdf

3Rs

Russell, W.M.S. and Burch, R.L. (1959) The principles of humane experimental technique, London: Methuen & Co. Limited.

National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, 8th edition. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council.

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 2017 (Updated July 2018), Best practice methodology in the use of animals for scientific purposes.

UNSW 3Rs Grant Scheme <https://research.unsw.edu.au/unsw-3rs-grant-scheme>

Norcopa website with details of 3Rs centres and events worldwide <https://norecopa.no/>

NC3Rs is the UK 3Rs centre. Their website contains many valuable resources for driving the 3Rs
www.nc3rs.org.uk

NA3RsC is the North American 3Rs Collaborative, with a wide range of free resources.

Inspections

Environmental enrichment for fish
<https://norecopa.no/species/fish/environmental-enrichment/>

The ARRIVE publication guidelines
<https://arriveguidelines.org/arrive-guidelines>

FELASA guide on On the accommodation and care of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes
https://felasa.eu/Portals/0/Library/Euroguide_official_publication.pdf?ver=TCFCx_cY62CK37719yKPWg%3D%3D

ARRP

NSW Animal Ethics Infolink - public resources on animal ethics
<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/dpi/animals/animal-ethics-infolink>



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