

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

Operational Work Plan

2024-2028

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee
C/- Ministry for Primary Industries
P O Box 2526 Wellington 6140 New Zealand

NAEAC
National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

Preamble

The National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) is a statutory committee established under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 to provide independent advice to the Minister responsible for animal welfare on ethical and animal welfare issues relating to the use of animals in research, testing, and teaching (RTT). It also provides information and advice to animal ethics committees and makes recommendations to MPI concerning codes of ethical conduct under which animal research is carried out.

The current NAEAC Strategic Plan (Appendix 1) approved in 2023 for the period 2024-2028 has an overall aim to advance the ethical use and animal welfare outcomes in RTT by providing clear, high-quality, and robust advice and recommendations to the Minister and other high-level authorities as well as to animal ethics committees (AECs). Within the Strategic Plan, NAEAC identified four strategic priorities aligned with this:



The Strategic Plan creates the framework and direction for this Operational Work Plan, utilising the four aforementioned priorities. The Operational Work Plan aims to identify milestones and resource requirements that underpin the operations of the committee and aims to ensure that NAEAC is able to fulfil its functions as outlined in the Animal Welfare Act 1999 effectively and efficiently, while recognising the diverse and changing factors that influence both the committee's operations and its members.

As a Ministerial Advisory Committee, NAEAC is subject to strategic direction from the Minister and Associate Minister for Agriculture. The NAEAC Operational Work Plan is also subject to constraints associated with NAEAC's own capacity and that of the MPI Secretariat.

NAEAC have indicated that for 2024, their workplan activities will be focused on the Three Rs.

Operational Objectives and Activities

Strategic Priority 1. Advance public confidence in research, testing, and teaching.

Objective:

Effectively engage to improve public awareness and understanding.

This will be achieved by:

- (a) Enhancing awareness of NAEAC's role in RTT;
- (b) Removing barriers and improving understanding of the RTT system;
- (c) Promoting and supporting the Openness Agreement; and,
- (d) Promoting a proactive approach to understanding different public views.

Operational activities:

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Status
1. Strengthen relationship with ANZCCART	NAEAC	Ongoing	
2. Continued development of the NAEAC website to ensure it provides clear and accessible information and communications	Website and digital presence subcommittee	Ongoing	

3. Attendance of NAEAC at relevant conferences	NAEAC	Ongoing	
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Strategic Priority 2. Decision makers have evidence to create change.

Objective:

Evidence-based advice provided to the Minister and Director-General of MPI.

This will be achieved by:

- (a) Making recommendations to ensure Part 6 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 is fit for purpose;
- (b) Recommending specific improvements to the RTT system;
- (c) Identifying and reviewing critical and significant issues, proactively and when directed by the Minister; and,
- (d) Remaining informed of emerging national and international developments and issues.

Operational activities:

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Status
1. Publish the NAEAC annual report	NAEAC / Secretariat	By April each year	<i>Completed for 2024.</i>
2. Hold joint meeting with NAWAC	NAEAC and NAWAC Chairs	To be determined	<i>Scheduled for 7 August 2024.</i>
3. Explore a change in definition of 'animal' to include larval stage of zebrafish	NAEAC Chair	Ongoing	

4. Identify and monitor significant new issues to add to the operational plan	NAEAC	Ongoing	
5. Review Part 6 – is it fit for purpose?	Operation of Part 6 Subcommittee	Ongoing	
6. Provide advice to the Minister on any requested matter or on any significant changes that NAEAC think should be brought to the attention of the Minister	NAEAC	Ongoing	
7. Complete timely reviews of draft Codes of Ethical Conduct and recommendations to MPI	NAEAC	Ongoing	<i>Six Codes for review in 2024.</i>

Strategic Priority 3. Animal use is well justified.

Objective:

Animal ethics committees are supported in making robust decisions.

This will be achieved by:

- a) Supporting an efficient code of ethical conduct review process and provide advice to animal ethics committees;
- b) Enhancing relationships with animal ethics committees;
- c) Ensuring NAEAC communications are fit for purpose, responsive, and maintained;
- d) Promoting sharing of best practice between animal ethics committees, including advancing of the 4Rs; and
- e) Improving understanding of the application of Te Ao Māori principles in the RTT space.

Operational activities:

Activity	Responsibility	Timeline	Status
1. Complete regional site visits with AECs and code holders	NAEAC / Secretariat	Annual – May	<i>Completed May 2024</i>
2. Hold joint meeting with ANZCCART	NAEAC Chair	Annual	<i>Scheduled for November 2024</i>
3. Conduct biennial AEC Chairs meetings and AEC workshops	NAEAC / Secretariat	Annual	<i>AEC Webinar Series planned for 2024</i>

4. Create and circulate the NAEAC Newsletter	NAEAC / Secretariat	2 -3 x yearly	<i>April 2024 issue circulated. Next planned for July 2024.</i>
5. NAEAC members to visit AEC meetings	NAEAC	Ongoing	<i>Members allocated to AECs for 2024.</i>
6. Ensure the GPG is updated in a timely manner in line with best practice and scientific knowledge	Publications Subcommittee	Ongoing	<i>New version published in April 2024. Annual review process to begin again in August 2024.</i>
7. Conduct reviews of other NAEAC publications to ensure they are fit for purpose	Publications Subcommittee	Ongoing	<i>Priority publications for 2024 identified.</i>
8. Engage with MPI during their independent collection and reporting on Animal Use Statistics to better inform the committee regarding process.	NAEAC	Annual	
9. Review and identify any changes needed for the CEC Application Pack	Operation of Part 6 Subcommittee	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Updated Application Pack published late 2023.</i>
10. Review and identify any changes needed for the AEC Induction Pack	AEC Workshop & Training Subcommittee / Secretariat	Ongoing	<i>Pack updated early 2024.</i>

Strategic Priority 4. The system is robust.

Objective:

Ensure a responsible research, testing, and teaching system.

This will be achieved by:

- a) Identifying and prioritising system improvements;
- b) Ensuring effective monitoring of codes of ethical conduct and RTT activities;
- c) Supporting transparency initiatives for animal use in RTT; and
- d) Providing best-practice guidance in relation to RTT.

Operational activities:

Activities	Responsibility	Timeline	Status
1. Participate in the CEC review process as required	NAEAC	Annual	<i>Six Codes for review in 2024.</i>
2. Complete review and recommendation of Accredited Reviewers as required	NAEAC	As required	
3. Explore the application of the 4 th R	3Rs Subcommittee	Ongoing	<i>4th R SC consolidated with the 3 Rs SC.</i>

4. Explore Te Ao Māori principles relevant for the RTT space for guidance material	Mātauranga Māori Subcommittee	2024	<i>Ongoing</i>
5. Promote and present the Aotearoa John Schofield 3Rs Award together with ANZCCART	NAEAC / 3Rs Subcommittee	Biennial	<i>Budget confirmed with ANZCCART in March 2024. Award advertised in July 2024.</i>
6. Liaise with various relevant stakeholders	NAEAC / Secretariat	Ongoing	

Appendix 1. NAEAC Strategic Plan 2024-2028

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) Strategy 2024-2028



Vision

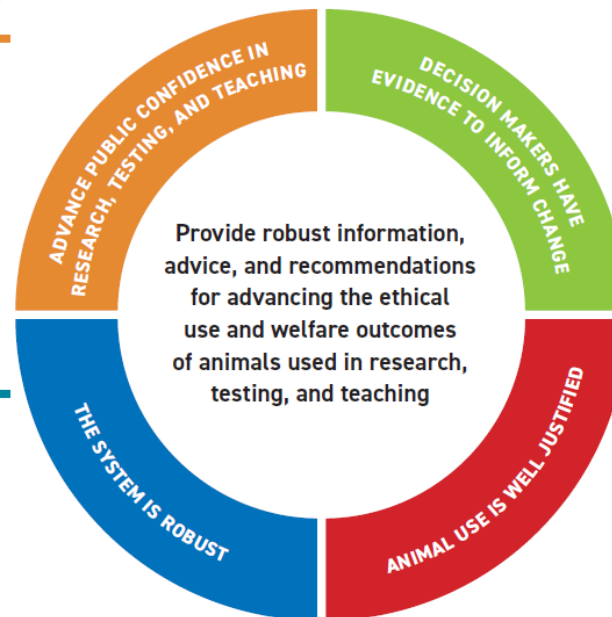
Providing world-class leadership that underpins the ethical use of animals for research, testing and teaching in New Zealand

Effectively engage to improve public awareness and understanding

- Enhance awareness of NAEAC's role in research, testing, and teaching (RTT)
- Remove barriers and improve understanding of the RTT system
- Promote and support transparency initiatives for animal use in RTT
- Ensure NAEAC communications are fit for purpose, responsive, and maintained
- Promote a proactive approach to understanding different public views.

Ensure a responsible research, testing, and teaching system

- Identify and prioritise system improvements within NAEAC's functions
- Ensure effective monitoring of codes of ethical conduct and RTT activities
- Provide best-practice guidance in relation to RTT
- Improved understanding of the application of Te Ao Māori principles in the RTT space.



Evidence-based advice provided to Minister and Director-General of MPI

- Make recommendations to ensure Part 6 of the Animal Welfare Act is fit for purpose
- Recommend specific improvements to the RTT system
- Identify and review critical and significant issues, proactively and when directed by the Minister
- Remain informed of emerging national and international developments and issues.

Animal ethics committees are supported in making robust decisions

- Support efficient code of ethical conduct review process and provide advice to animal ethics committees (AEC)
- Enhance relationships with AECs
- Promote sharing of best practice between AECs including advancing the implementation of the 4Rs.