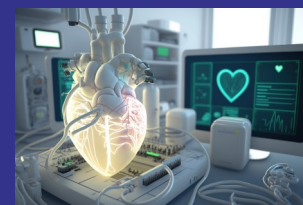


# NAEAC

## The National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee



**The Waran Report**

**April 2024**

### **Kia ora koutou**

Welcome to the first newsletter of 2024. As you will see there has been a lot going on, and we have some good activities planned for this year. The year has started well with the publication of our new 5-year strategy (2024-2028), which will help guide NAEAC's work in providing world class leadership to ensure the ethical use of animals for research, testing and teaching in Aotearoa. The strategy is divided into four quadrants with underpinning actions related to the core objectives of; advancing public confidence in RTT, ensuring decision makers have the evidence needed to inform changes where required, that animal use is always well justified and that our RTT system is robust and world-class. We look forward to working with our AEC colleagues to achieve these objectives.

Last month I was pleased to have a meeting with Minister Hoggard to discuss Part 6 of the Act and the work we do in the RTT space, especially in relation to the recommendations we make to him regarding standard setting and policies of ethical conduct. Although only a short meeting this time, it was good to be able to start the dialogue and let him know about the plans we have for 2024.

NAEAC have decided to try a different format for the AEC committee training event this year. Instead of one 'in-person' gathering, we will run a series of on-line sessions, to which all members will be invited to attend with topics drawn from previous feedback—more on this will be provided once the programme is finalized. We also have our annual 'on-site' AEC and facility visits planned in May for organisations in the Canterbury area, with our focus being the '3Rs', and there is the ANZCCART conference taking place in September, with a number of NAEAC members speaking and attending. We look forward to seeing some of you there .

Ngā mihi,  
Nat

*Professor Nat Waran - NAEAC Chairperson*



## NAEAC's AEC Chairs meeting

NAEAC held its biennial AEC Chairs meeting on 27 October 2023. NAEAC hosts these meetings as part of its commitment to support animal ethics committees and provide an opportunity for chairs to exchange information and discuss issues with NAEAC and other chairs.

This year's half-day Teams meeting featured presentations by NAEAC members Mike King and Nita Harding. Mike shared his thinking on the composition of AECs and how this underpins a well-functioning AEC. Nita's talk focussed on how AECs should be dealing with non-compliances, including possible actions and relevant outcomes.

We were also fortunate to have Gail Anderson from ANZCCART give an introduction to ComPass. This is a free online course for Australian and New Zealand students, researchers, teachers and members of AECs covering legislative requirements and welfare issues relating to animal use in RTT.

The MPI Animal Welfare Science Team gave a preview of the first ever 3 Rs dataset that was collected alongside the 2022 animal use statistics. The presentation highlighted how organisations across New Zealand have implemented the 3 Rs in their RTT work.

This segued into the day's discussion topic, *Animal Ethics Committees and the 3 Rs*, which focused on the following questions:

- Are you actively upskilling your AEC in the 3 Rs? If so, what steps are you taking to achieve this?
- What would you like to see NAEAC achieve in this area?
- How much weighting are you putting on 3 Rs in ethics applications? What are the barriers to weighting it more heavily?

The session stimulated useful discussion regarding what organisations are learning as they approach the implementation of the 3 Rs.



## NAEAC Secretariat Team Spotlight— Dr Sarah Lamar

Sarah joined MPI in 2023 as a Senior Adviser for Animal Welfare Sciences, undertaking several workstreams including matters related to Part 6 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 and Animal Welfare (Records and Statistics) Regulations 1999.



Sarah started out in veterinary nursing, before going on to work in freshwater fisheries, and then obtaining an MSc and PhD in Ecological and Biodiversity sciences. She specialises in amphibian and reptile physiology and has worked extensively across Aotearoa with diverse species on projects involving local government, researchers, universities, and iwi. She continues to lecture a course on tuatara and is involved with urban lizard research and student supervision in the greater Wellington Region as a Visiting Scholar at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington.

### Accredited Reviewers

#### *Reappointment*

Dr David Morgan has been reappointed as accredited reviewer for 3 years as of 24 October 2023.

#### *Resignations*

Mark Vallarta resigned as an accredited reviewer as of 15 February 2024. Mark became an accredited reviewer in 2020.

**For more information regarding accredited reviewers please visit the [MPI website](#) or contact MPI [animal.welfare@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:animal.welfare@mpi.govt.nz).**

### Good Practice Guide

for the use of animals in research,  
testing and teaching

#### Updated Good Practice Guide

An updated NAEAC Good Practice Guide for the Use of Animals in Research, Testing and Teaching was released online in April. This replaces the 2022 version after a thorough review to implement key updates and improve usability by reorganising the content.

We strongly recommend you re-familiarise yourself with the updated content, as this is important for your ongoing work.

You can find and read the updated guide [here](#).

## NAEAC Strategic Plan 2024-2028

NAEAC is a statutory committee established under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 to provide independent advice to the government 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 for the period 2019-2023 was reviewed by a NAEAC subcommittee in 2023. A draft updated strategic plan for the period 2024-2028 was developed and approved by NAEAC at its November general meeting.

The updated NAEAC strategic plan approved 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). The strategic plan creates the framework and direction for NAEAC’s operational work plan, aligned with four core strategic priorities.

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



## Vision

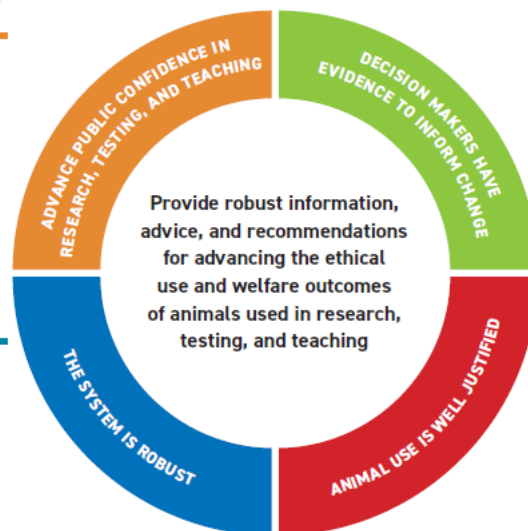
Providing world-class leadership that underpins the ethical use of animals for research, testing and teaching in New Zealand

### 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.

## ANZCCART survey results show New Zealander's care about the use of animals in science but feel ill-informed about regulation.



The Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART NZ) have released results from a recently conducted survey on the attitudes towards and understanding of animal use in researching and teaching in New Zealand.

Some key findings as shared by ANZCCART NZ, include:

**High engagement but an information gap:** 94% of respondents cared to some degree about animal use in research and teaching, with 67% caring moderately or very much, however, only 16% feel well-informed about the regulation and 43% acknowledged a lack of awareness regarding the permitted uses of animals.

**Varied opinions on regulation:** While 48% of respondents believe that the current oversight by Animal Ethics Committees is adequate, 54% state a preference for more public involvement in ethical approval, and 44% more government involvement.

**Mixed perceptions of animal research organisations:** About a quarter of those surveyed are unsure of their stance on organisations involved in animal research but 34% believe these organisations carry out work essential for human health.

**Demand for increased transparency and public engagement:** A notable 76% of respondents express the need for more transparency from research institutions, and 54% of participants voices a desire for greater public involvement in decision-making processes.

**Trusted information sources:** Half of the survey participants place trust in animal welfare organisations for reliable information on the topic, and 42% trusted veterinarians who care for animals used in research, testing and teaching.

Read the full report [here](#).

## Advances in the 3 Rs

### New ANZCCART 3 Rs booklet

ANZCCART has produced a series of booklets on the application of the 3 Rs. The most recent, **Tissue Sharing**, was published in 2023. The booklet is based on Massey University's tissue sharing database.

Check it out on the ANZCCART website:

[ANZCCART Resources | ANZCCART](#)

### NC3Rs 3 Rs Self-Assessment Tool

This 3 Rs self-assessment tool is designed to help research institutions and research groups to identify new 3 Rs opportunities. The tool assesses current activities and provides feedback on how well the 3 Rs are implemented and provides suggestions for improvement.

More information on the tool can be found here:

### [NC3Rs SATs](#)

[NC3Rs webinar: 3Rs self-assessment tools for research groups and institutions \(vimeo.com\)](#)

### NC3Rs recommends integration of 3Rs approaches in WHO guidance

The NC3Rs has recently published a report reviewing animal testing requirements in WHO guidelines.

The report makes several recommendations regarding the integration of the 3 Rs within WHO guidance documents.

An online resource to share the report and a searchable database of all animal tests identified and alternative suggested text provided by the review have also been created.

The report and additional resources can be accessed here:

[Recommendations to integrate 3Rs approaches in WHO guidance for biological products | NC3Rs](#)

## Code of Ethical Conduct Reviews 2023

In 2023, NAEAC reviewed and discussed eight applications for codes of ethical conduct. Seven of these were existing code holders who were submitting a new application to continue their RTT work. One application was for a new code for an organisation that previously did not have one, which carried across from 2022.

Seven codes have been approved by MPI in total - six for existing code holders and one new code. One code was lapsed.

## Updated Code of Ethical Conduct Template and Application Pack

NAEAC and MPI have developed an application pack to assist organisations when applying for a Code of Ethical Conduct (CEC). In 2023, the NAEAC Operation of Part 6 Subcommittee worked closely with the MPI Animal Welfare Science Secretariat to update the CEC template.



The Subcommittee sent out a survey to current code holders for feedback on the existing template. The template was re-drafted based on feedback, areas of duplication were removed, and sections were re-ordered and clarified to provide clearer guidance to end users.

The draft CEC Application Pack was approved by NAEAC at its November 2023 meeting and was published online and shared to stakeholders in early 2024.

Applicants may vary the content of their CEC to suit their organisation, but should retain the order of sections as laid out in the updated template, and must meet the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

You can find the updated CEC Application Pack on the NAEAC website [here](#), and the MPI website [here](#).

## NAEAC Annual Report 2023

The NAEAC Annual Report for the calendar year 1 January to 31 December 2023 has now been published.

The annual report provides a comment from the NAEAC Chairperson, work undertaken by NAEAC in 2023, updates on new work streams and meetings.

You can find and read the 2023 Annual Report [here](#).



### Want to know more?

Check out the NAEAC website to learn more about the work of the committee and how you can get involved. [www.naeac.org.nz](http://www.naeac.org.nz)

NAEAC holds four ordinary meetings each year. Upcoming meetings are:

- 21st May
- 8th August
- 25th November

Want to attend as an observer? For details about meeting attendance contact the NAEAC Secretary at [naeac@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:naeac@mpi.govt.nz)

#### ***Need to get in touch?***

Send us an email:

[naeac@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:naeac@mpi.govt.nz)

**NAEAC**

The National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee