

NAEAC POLICY STATEMENT: USE OF MORE THAN ONE ANIMAL ETHICS COMMITTEE

1 Concurrent use of multiple AECs

NAEAC recognises that under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 organisations do not require approval to use an existing animal ethics committee (AEC). An arrangement can be made with an approved code holder who is required to notify the Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry (MAF) in writing of the arrangement prior to any research, testing or teaching being undertaken.

This latter requirement provides MAF with the opportunity to manage situations which may arise when two or more notifications are made simultaneously to ensure that all parties are aware of the situation and that relevant information is made available to all concerned to clarify what types of protocols will be submitted to each AEC.

NAEAC:

- recognises the legal realities
- notes that MAF will ensure that all parties are aware when one organisation has an arrangement to use more than one AEC
- recommends that such AECs ensure that the circumstances in which the different AECs will be used are understood by all parties and encourages good communication between all parties.

2 Shopping Around

The Animal Welfare Act requires codes of ethical conduct to include, when relevant, the policies and procedures relating to the arrangements for a code holder to supervise another organisation's research, testing and teaching.

The need for parenting code holders to consider the issue of organisations "shopping around" until they find an AEC willing to approve their project (or willing to approve it on such terms as the applicant finds acceptable) could be brought to the notice of organisations when they apply for their renewed code of ethical conduct under the Act.

NAEAC:

- recognises that organisations "shopping around" for an AEC has the potential to lead to AECs making decisions without all the relevant information
- recommends that this issue should be dealt with in new codes of ethical conduct and by organisations including a question on their application form which asks if the same or a similar project has been submitted to any other AEC
- recognises that an organisation may decline to act as a parenting code holder or withdraw from the arrangement.

Date approved: 9 August 2001