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Pain & Distress Report is available online at www.hsus.org/pain_distress_report.



Policies & Perspectives

ICCVAM CALLS FOR COMMENTS ON BOTULINUM POTENCY TESTING

In response to a proposal from The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the U.S. Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods (ICCVAM) announced plans to host an expert workshop on alternatives to the LD₅₀ test for assessing the potency of botulinum-toxin-based products such as Botox® Cosmetic, the popular antiwrinkle treatment. For the workshop, ICCVAM is soliciting submissions of data from the in vivo mouse LD₅₀ test, as well as from ex vivo and in vitro methods, for assessing botulinum toxin potency testing. ICCVAM is also soliciting comments on the status of efforts to develop alternatives to the mouse LD₅₀ assay for botulinum toxin potency testing and the appropriateness of holding a workshop on this topic, as well as nominations to an expert panel. For more information, go to <http://liccvam.niehs.nih.gov/?CFID=32232&CFTOKEN=42104911>.

HOW TO BALANCE SCIENTIFIC AIMS AND ANIMAL WELFARE

Medina (2004, *Contemporary Topics*, 43(5): 56-62) offers pointers for strengthening institutional programs to ensure animal welfare, including establishing clear guidelines, fostering a team approach, implementing training and retraining, increasing communication

and veterinary oversight/intervention, and ensuring administrative support. Since animal welfare problems in an animal care and use program can usually be traced back to a deficiency in one of these areas, reinforcing them will go a long way toward addressing animal welfare concerns.

THREE RS DECLARATION

At the Europe Goes Alternative conference held in November 2005 in Brussels, Belgium, the European Commission and several industrial trade associations issued a "Three Rs Declaration," which establishes a voluntary European partnership aimed at refining, reducing, or replacing animal use in research. A task force will be formed in the first quarter of 2006 to determine a program and appropriate activities based on existing barriers and potential solutions. For more information, go to <http://ecvam.jrc.it/index.htm>.

AUSTRIA BANS RESEARCH ON APES

Austria has passed legislation that prohibits the use of nonhuman apes (great apes and gibbons) in research that is not in the interest of the apes themselves. The legislation, effective January 1, 2006, passed the Upper Chamber of the Austrian Parliament by a unanimous vote. The last institution in the country to use apes in research was Baxter Healthcare Corporation, which

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retired the apes in 2002. New Zealand and the Netherlands legislatively prohibit research on great apes; the United Kingdom will not grant licenses for such work; Sweden has produced regulations banning all research on apes; and Japan has taken steps to ban invasive research on great apes. Spain is currently considering a proposal to grant great apes legal protection against “slavery, torture, death and extinction.” The United States is one of the few remaining countries to conduct research on great apes, but legislation passed in 2000 created a national sanctuary system for placement of chimpanzees no longer considered “useful” by the research community. For an in-depth look at the use of chimpanzees in research, visit www.hsus.org/state_of_the_animals.html.

Noteworthy

DIALOGUE FORUM ON THE USE OF ANIMALS IN RESEARCH

The Dialogue Forum on the Use of Animals in Medical Research consists of individuals from diverse backgrounds—including animal protection, veterinary medicine, laboratory animal care, academia, industry, and government—and with diverse viewpoints on the use

of animals in research, testing, and education. The forum aims to develop greater understanding of the issues and differing viewpoints concerning the use of animals in medical research; to bridge the divisiveness of the debate and create constructive relationships and interactions; and to find common ground and take common action that benefits both the welfare of animals used in medical research and society as a whole. The forum is coordinated by the Public Conversations Project (www.publicconversations.org).

ILAR TO ADDRESS ANIMAL PAIN AND DISTRESS

The Institute for Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR) will be updating its 1992 report *Recognition and Alleviation of Pain and Distress in Laboratory Animals*. The supplement will be divided into two reports, each consisting of a review of the current scientific literature. The first report will focus on “scientific understanding of causes and functions of stress and distress; determining when stress becomes distress, and identifying principles for recognition and alleviation of distress.” The second report will address pain. The reports will provide practical information for Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) members, principal investigators, and animal care staff. Gaps in the scientific literature will also be identified.

HBO AIRS DOCUMENTARY OF A CLASS B DOG AND CAT DEALER

In February, the HBO® cable network aired *Dealing Dogs*, a documentary exposing the horrific treatment of dogs at Martin Creek Kennels in Little Rock, Arkansas. The film footage—taken by an undercover investigator for Last Chance for Animals over six months—prompted the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to take action. A settlement was reached between the USDA and the kennels’ owners: Chester C. Baird; his wife, Patsy; and their daughters, Jeanette and Patricia Baird.

Chester and Patsy Baird’s Animal Welfare Act (AWA) licenses were permanently revoked, and they agreed to pay fines totaling \$262,700—the largest civil penalty ever assessed and paid under an AWA case. The Bairds also relinquished their remaining dogs and cats to the USDA. The USDA alleged that the Bairds violated the AWA on numerous occasions “by acquiring dogs from random-source dealers and by failing to provide basic veterinary care to hundreds of dogs and cats; failing to maintain accurate records; and failing to meet minimum standards for housekeeping, husbandry, feeding and shelter.” Patsy Baird pled guilty to misprision of the felony of mail fraud. Chester Baird pled guilty to felony criminal charges of conspiracy to launder money involving the sale of dogs and cats to research laboratories.

This is only one of a number of historic cases of unacceptable treatment of animals by Class B dealers. A Life magazine exposé of a Class B dealer in 1966 provided the impetus for passage of the AWA during that same year. The research community should denounce inhumane treatment of animals, such as that seen in the Baird case. Research institutions should also dissociate themselves from the use of random-source animals because of a number of serious concerns raised with the trafficking of thousands of these animals each year to supply research institutions.

EUROPEAN NATIONAL CONSENSUS PLATFORMS ON ALTERNATIVES

Rogiers (2005, *Toxicol. Appl. Pharmacol.*, 207(2 suppl.): 408–413) describes the European Consensus-Platform for Alternatives (ECOPA) as a well-structured organization that aims to stimulate development and increase public, scientific, and regulatory awareness of the Three Rs and to implement national legislation on alternatives to animal use in research. ECOPA conducts workshops and meetings, drafts scientific-political

Recent Publications

Anderson, D. E., & Muir, W. W. (2005). Pain management in ruminants. *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Food Animal Practice*, 21: 19–31.

Murrell, J. C., & Hellebrekers, L. J. (2005). Medetomidine and dexmedetomidine: a review of cardiovascular effects and antinociceptive properties in the dog. *Veterinary Anaesthesia and Analgesia*, 32: 117–127.

Pombo, M., et al. (2004). Validation of an anti-PA-ELISA for the potency testing of anthrax vaccine in mice. *Biologicals*, 32: 157–163.

statements, and brings together national consensus platforms on Three R alternatives. Fourteen member state platforms currently exist, and three are being developed. For more information, go to <http://ecopa.vub.ac.be>.

Statistics on Animal Use Pain & Distress

SWISS ANIMAL USE STATISTICS FOR 2004

The Swiss government has released its 2004 report on the use of animals in research and testing (*Tierversuche in der Schweiz, Experiences Sur Animaux en Suisse, Statistik 2004*). The total number of animals (including birds, mice, rats, amphibians, reptiles, fish, and invertebrates) used in research and testing in 2004 was 492,456—a 3% increase since 2003. Similar to previous years, the most commonly used species were rats and mice (approximately 86% of all species used). Medical research and development and quality control involved the largest number of animals, followed by biological and medical studies of a fundamental nature, toxicity studies, and disease diagnostics. Seventy percent of the animals experienced minimal to no pain, 25% experienced moderate pain, and 5% experienced severe pain.

NEW ZEALAND ANIMAL USE STATISTICS FOR 2004

New Zealand's National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee recently reported the country's 2004 animal use in research, testing, and teaching statistics. The total number of animals used was 246,122—a 23.3% decrease from 2003. Similar to prior years, mice, sheep, cattle, and rats were among the most commonly used species. The numbers of fish, cattle,

and possums decreased since 2003. New Zealand grades manipulations from “no suffering” to “very severe suffering”; 18.3% of the research animals experienced moderate (13.2%) to very severe (4.2%) suffering. The number of animals in the moderate and very severe categories increased in comparison to 2003. As in previous years, mice made up the vast majority of animals in the very severe suffering category.

From the Technical Literature

PROVIDING SHELTER DOES NOT COMPLICATE HANDLING OF MICE

Moons et al. (2004, *Contemporary Topics*, 43(4): 18–21) studied whether providing shelter to laboratory mice complicates human handling. Twenty inbred and 20 outbred male mice were housed in standard cages, and 20 inbred and 20 outbred male mice were housed in cages enriched with two PVC conduits. Food and water consumption, weight, latency of catching, and behavior score in response to handling during a sham subcutaneous injection were measured weekly for four consecutive weeks. Strain affected food and water consumption and weight more than environmental enrichment, as outbred mice consumed more food and water and weighed more than the inbred mice, but did not significantly gain weight during the four weeks. The PVC conduits decreased the time needed to catch outbred animals and did not increase the time needed to catch the inbred strain. No differences in behavior scores during the injection were detected between animals from the enriched versus the standard cages. These results indicate that providing access to sheltering objects does not complicate

handling of laboratory mice. Enrichment decreased intraspecific aggression, demonstrated by the absence of bite lesions. Given these findings and the beneficial effects of enrichment on animal welfare, the authors recommend stimuli in the home cage.

ALTERNATIVES IN BASIC RESEARCH

Grüber and Hartung (2004, *ALTEX*, suppl. 1: 3–31) discuss the issue of alternatives in basic research (research that has no immediate application to medicine) and related problems, such as underreporting of failed research, lack of flow of information on alternatives, use of too few animals to achieve significant results, lack of attention to species differences, and lack of appropriate validation of animal use. Examples of alternatives in some areas of basic research are provided, including in vitro production of monoclonal antibodies, use of incubated chicken eggs for various purposes, and cell culture models for cancer research. The advantages and disadvantages of in vivo and in vitro methods are discussed. The authors include a list of currently available alternatives databases, but emphasize the need for database improvements, such as including information on feasibility and relevance of each alternative, standard operating protocols for each method to ease use, guidance on how to search databases, and information on each method's shortcomings. Some final recommendations include increased public funding of alternatives (including to improve the quality of in vitro methods), harmonization of methods between countries, formal education on advantages of in vitro techniques, and improved tracking of statistics on pain and distress and other welfare issues.

Resources & Services

ILAR REPORT ON LABORATORY ANIMAL TRANSPORT

The Institute for Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR) has published new *Guidelines for the Humane Transportation of Research Animals*, based on recommendations by a committee formed by the National Research Council on behalf of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Center for Infectious Diseases. The report discusses good practices and outcome measures—such as animal well-being or safety—to address thermal environment; space, food, and water requirements; social interaction and group transportation; handling; monitoring; emergency procedures; and personnel training. To read the report in its entirety, go to www.nap.edu/books/0309101107/html/1.html.

NEW PUBLICATION ON RODENTS AND RABBITS IN LABORATORIES

A new report entitled *Variables, Refinement and Environmental Enrichment for Rodents and Rabbits Kept in Research Institutions—Making Life Easier for Animals in Laboratories*

is available online at www.awionline.org/pubs/rabrodent/rodrab.html. The publication addresses refinements, housing, cage cleaning, restraint, noise, and transfer of animals to an unfamiliar location for rodents and rabbits in laboratories. A number of valuable references are also provided.

Attitudes & Public Opinion

POLL EXAMINES ATTITUDES TOWARD CHARITIES THAT FUND ANIMAL RESEARCH

The results of a recent poll conducted by Opinion Research Corporation and commissioned by the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine suggest that Americans favor health charities that do not fund animal research, a stance that has increased since 1996. Of the 1,000 people surveyed, 71% of respondents felt it was important that their health charity donations be used for “innovative non-animal research rather than animal experiments,” and 67% were more likely to donate to a health charity that has a policy of never funding animal research. To view the poll report and discussion, go to www.pcrm.org/resch/charities/charity_report05/charityreport_details.html.

Helpful Websites

Current and past issues of the *Pain & Distress Report* are available online at www.hsus.org/animals_in_research/pain_distress. Please spread the word to your colleagues, including IACUC members, institutional veterinarians, principal investigators, research technicians, and animal care staff. To receive the electronic version of the newsletter via e-mail as soon as it becomes available, write to ari@hsus.org.

The report *Alternative (Non-Animal) Methods for Cosmetics Testing: Current Status and Future Prospects, A Report Prepared in the Context of the 7th Amendment to the Cosmetics Directive for Establishing the Timetable for Phasing Out Animal Testing* (C. Eskes & V. Zuang, eds., 2005, *Alternatives to Laboratory Animals*, 33, suppl. 1), can be downloaded at the European Centre for the Validation of Alternative Methods (ECVAM) website at <http://ecvam.jrc.it/index.htm>.

Pain & Distress Report

The *Pain & Distress Report* provides laboratory animal veterinarians, technicians, oversight committees, and others with up-to-date information on issues regarding pain and distress in laboratory animals.

E-mail ari@hsus.org for a free subscription to the electronic version of the newsletter; copies are also available online at www.hsus.org/pain_distress_report. Please share this report with your colleagues and IACUC members.

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