



Animal-Free
Science
Advocacy

ANIMALFREESCIENCEADVOCACY.ORG.AU

Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade
Animal Welfare Branch
GPO Box 3000, Darwin NT 0801

31 July 2024

Dear Animal Welfare Branch

Re: Northern Territory Animal Protection Act Legislative Review 2024

I am writing this submission on behalf of Animal-Free Science Advocacy (AFSA), a national not-for-profit organisation that advocates to replace animals in research and teaching. As such, the suggestions proposed are related to the use of animals in science. The amendments I wish to suggest do not fit neatly as responses to the questions posed on the discussion paper, many of which have broader applicability than animals in science, and instead are summarised below.

1. Transparency in animal use reporting

After 72 (4) The registered person must give the annual report to the CEO within the later of:

- (a) 5 months after the end of the calendar year; or
- (b) any longer period allowed by the CEO.

Add:

- (5) *De-identified prescribed information provided by license holders must be published for public access within 18 months of the end of the reporting calendar year*

2. Mandate consideration and update of non-animal methods where applicable

Insert new proposed section under Project oversight and code requirements (Division 4) or alternatively 70Offence to contravene codes

Use for scientific purpose must prioritise replacement

- (1) *A person must not use an animal for a scientific purpose, or allow an animal to be used for a scientific purpose, unless –*

- (a) *Methods that replace or partially replace the use of animals have been investigated, considered and, where applicable, implemented; and*

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(b) *Opportunities to replace the use of animals are kept under review during the lifetime of the scientific purpose.*

(2) *A person must not use an animal for a scientific purpose, or allow an animal to be used for a scientific purpose, if a validated method that replaces or partially replaces the use of animals for that scientific purpose is available.*

For the purposes of this section, replacement methods that must be considered include the use of epidemiological data, physical and chemical analysis, computer, mathematical and inanimate synthetic models, simulations, in vitro systems, non-sentient organisms, cadavers, clinical cases and any other non-animal method validated for use in Australia.

For consistency with the Act, failure to comply should also carry a maximum penalty of 300 penalty units or 1 year's imprisonment (to be amended if penalties are amended as a result of the Review).

3. Encourage the development of non-animal technologies

Insert a new provision to the effect of 'the CEO must make and implement an alternatives non-animal development program'.

4. Add additional requirements for lethal dose testing

Insert proposed section:

1A (a) *'Any permit application relevant to lethality testing is only approved if agreed by both an ethics committee and the Minister' and*

(b) 'Any application to renew a permit relevant to lethality testing is only approved if agreed by both an ethics committee and the Minister' and


(c) 'A decision to grant approval from the Minister must be provided in writing'.

5. Prohibit the use of nose-only smoke inhalation smoke research and the forced swim test, in line with NHMRC funding guidance and recent amendments to NSW Animal Research Act.

Add: Under Division 4 (59) the additional requirement:

Application for project approval: Any animal ethics committee project using the forced swim test or forced smoke inhalation must not be granted'.

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I am happy to provide further justification or background briefings as to the recommended amendments above should this be of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

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