

welfare science around the world. Among the ideas and suggestions discussed by the delegates, three emerged which were widely supported as likely to be very helpful in supporting developments in animal welfare and which might be relatively simple to achieve for a start. These were:

- Provision of support for regional scientific meetings and workshops.
- Provision of funds to support student projects. The latter have been identified as a cost-effective and practical way of helping to support developments in animal welfare science as they: (i) provide good training and experience for students hoping to pursue careers in animal welfare science; (ii) can be helpful to supervisors and their academic groups in contributing to their programmes of research; and (iii) can help address important issues of animal welfare.
- Provision of travel scholarships to enable scientists (including students), especially from countries which have emerging interest in the field, to travel to established centres of expertise in animal welfare science to learn approaches, methods and techniques for addressing the welfare questions and challenges they face in their home countries.

UFAW already does these things to an extent (information about UFAW's activities and awards is presented at its website; www.ufaw.org.uk) but will seek to further expand these particular activities, identified as priorities at the meeting in Barcelona. How this develops will depend on funding.

Helping to Build Capacity in Animal Welfare Science Worldwide (August 2013). UFAW, Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, Wheathampstead, Herts, UK. Available at: <http://www.ufaw.org.uk/documents/Mediareleaseinternationaldevelopment1.pdf>.

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Revised Australian Code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes

The *Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes* (the *Code*) was originally developed in 1969, and by 1996 all Australian universities had agreed to implement it. The *Code* has been adopted by state-based legislation, and is legally binding in all Australian states. The *Code*'s purpose is to promote the ethical, humane and responsible care and use

of animals used for scientific purposes, and implementation of the 3Rs Replacement Reduction and Refinement are implicit throughout.

The latest edition has been restructured to reflect four governing principles which (in brief) emphasise the importance of respect for animals when making decisions and carrying out actions involved in the care and use of animals, the need to properly care for animals, the need for an ethical judgement as to whether the research is justified and the obligation to respect animals used in research throughout the animal's lifetime. The title of the new *Code* has also changed, as *Code of Practice* has been replaced with *Code*, to emphasise that it concentrates on principles rather than practice (performance rather than engineering standards). The result of this shift in emphasis is that specific statements in the 2004 edition, such as the requirement that "Bedding and litter must be provided if appropriate to the species" have been replaced by more general statements of responsibility such as that pens, cages and containers must be "compatible with the behavioural needs of the species". The document aims to clarify the responsibilities of those involved in the care and use of animals for scientific purposes, and makes a clearer distinction between what is obligatory and what is strongly recommended.

The changes have introduced clarity regarding the responsibilities of institutions, individuals and Animal Ethics Committees, and the performance-based expectations provide flexibility so that standards do not become ossified. The use of the term 'current best practice' to allow for advances in knowledge or where firm evidence for such practices is not available also provides flexibility. On the other hand, performance standards are not as informative about the detail of what is expected. Also, guidance on the frequency of independent reviews (these are organised by the institution) to assess the institution's compliance with the *Code* has changed to recommend a minimum frequency of every four years rather than every three years as in the previous edition. It will be interesting to see whether the new *Code* leads to better welfare for animals used in Australian science, and whether institutions and researchers find it easier to use and implement.

Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, 8th Edition (2013). National Health and Medical Research Council, Canberra, Australia. ISBN 1864965975. Available at <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/ea28>.

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