

UK Bioscience Sector Coalition – ASRU meeting

26 July 2018

10:00 – 11:00 pre-meeting

11:00 – 13:00 meeting with ASRU

Pre-meeting summary note

1. Discussion of the agenda for meeting with ASRU

UKBSC members discussed:

- the process of project licence (PPL) application through ASPeL. Members have assessed data samples shared by ASRU looking at the length of time taken to grant licenses. However, questions remain about what characteristics explain why some applications still can take a long time.
- The state of development of the new e-licensing system. UKBSC will discuss with ASRU what elements of the stakeholder input collected during the 2017 PPL workshops will inform the design of the new PPL. The new format and software for PEL will be trialled in two big establishments at the end of August. UKBSC members interacted with the developers and were also involved in face-to-face meetings with senior inspectors to discuss the future format of PPL.
- UKBSC wants to stress the importance of ASRU issuing advice notes with expert advice already in – rather than in draft or early form as happened for the retrospective assessment note. UKBSC had repeatedly offered to contribute.
- The release of an additional set of statistics in accordance to PEL standard condition 8 (and stipulated by article 54 of EU Directive to occur every five years) in November 2018. The statistics will be based on animals bred and not used further in scientific procedure.
- Collated contributions and responses prior to drafting a response to the consultation on the draft Defra policy on banning live animal export.
- The invitation of inspectors to relevant scientific conference organised by learned societies. The Physiological Society reported a successful example of engagement with the inspectorate at a recent conference about alternative animal models in physiological research.

ASRU meeting summary notes

1. Welcome and apologies

2. Developments of the **future e-licensing system**

The Head of ASRU gave an account of the changes that ASRU underwent in the past years, such as a governance review and a business reform programme, which led to the development of a new e-licensing system. This new e-licensing system will conform to Government digital requirements, it will be developed by Marvell consulting with direct stakeholder involvement through a behaviourally-driven agile design framework. It will be web-based and on the Government web platform. UKBSC and ASRU discussed the tentative time frame for the release of trial versions of the new software. The system will be entirely paid for out of the fees, with a clear line of sight and accountability.

a. Software for PEL

ASRU confirmed that the PEL module of the new e-licencing system will be trialled at the end of August.

b. Development of software for PPL/PIL

The PPL module of the new e-licencing system is under development. It will be a piece-by-piece development with direct stakeholder involvement from the end of September. Development will be informed by stakeholder input received during the 2017 PPL workshops, carried out across the country. UKBSC and ASRU discussed key aspects/goals of the new PPL format. The annotated application form will be used in the design of the new application process/PPL format, which will consist of shorter sections that will be easier to fill in. Making the application process more efficient is a key driver for design because currently the number of iterations impacts on the overall time taken for granting. The new format should make the process of inspection more transparent and consistent and allow the public to access good quality non-technical summaries of the licences. The new format will help streamlining the process of amendments. UKBSC and ASRU discussed potential cases that need to be considered in designing the new format for the PPL. Current PPL holders can sign-up to take part in the agile development from September onwards.

c. Extension of ASPeL

Extension of ASPeL has been agreed for another year. The first assessment of the new system under development was positive and the future e-licensing system is on track.

d. Review of current PPL granting times (based on sample dataset from ASPeL)

ASRU will endeavour to have greater availability of operational statistics to the stakeholder community through newsletters moving forward. UKBSC and ASRU discussed what kind of information can be extracted from ASPeL (e.g. complexity of the application, amendments etc.). The expectation is that with the new application system the process will be faster, more streamlined and more transparent too. A lot of the issues with ASPeL are due to a legacy of a paper application form simply transferred onto an electronic format. UKBSC noted how the annotated version has helped some applicants to speed up the process, but not everyone. UKBSC also asked for the annotated guidance of the current version of the PPL application form to be circulated again in a newsletter.

3. **Advice & guidance notes**

a. Published:

i. Retrospective assessment

UKBSC members detected some problems with the draft guidance on retrospective assessment (RA), which were communicated to ASRU. ASRU advised that RA is a new process for them but they will consider UKBSC input and provide reworked examples. UKBSC and ASRU discussed the format of the RA, publication of lay version of it and how AWERB should give input on the document.

b. Pending publication or in revision:

i. Education and training advice note

UKBSC asked whether they can see the draft note and input any comments to it, if relevant. ASRU agreed to provide a copy in due course.

ii. Re-homing advice note

A review is not currently planned.

iii. Severity assessment of aged animals

LASA and IAT have provided input on the development of this advice note. LASA has also led a workshop and will support the delivery of the new note.

4. **Annual statistics & ASRU annual report ASRU publications**

a. ASRU annual stats (19 July)

UKBSC chair gave an overview of the briefing for journalists organised by the Science Media Centre with contribution from other members of UKBSC, UAR and other scientists. UKBSC discussed the media coverage of the statistics and agreed that the infographics that accompanied the official report were useful.

b. Annual report

To be released later in the year.

c. Additional statistics (PEL standard condition 8)

Additional returns were collected in accordance to PEL standard condition 8, earlier in 2018. A planned release of the statistics for this dataset is expected later in 2018. The [PEL newsletter in August](#) provided information about the release of the additional statistics.

5. Updates from **NCP meeting** in Brussel & **exit from the EU**

In relation to the UK exit from the EU, ASRU advised that parts of the directive (e.g. annexes describing classes of severity, housing and care as they are currently worded) will be transposed into the UK rulebook through the use of Statutory Instruments, which will be laid before Parliament in late 2018.

6. **AOB**

Prospective and retrospective severity of experiment with NHP was discussed.

Finally, UKBSC raised the need for ASRU to publish an update about the roles of the ELH and AWERB in ensuring the submission of a high quality first draft of PPL application to ASRU. This was taken on board and published in the [August 2018 PEL newsletter](#).