1. Background

Research animals may need to be transported to, from or between facilities on ANU or The Canberra Hospital (TCH) campuses. This has the potential to raise a number of issues relating to animal welfare and biocontainment.

2. Considerations

**General Considerations**

- **Welfare**: Exposure, stress, maintenance of species specific provisions
- **Activism**: Targeting by animal activists who do not agree with the use of animals for scientific purposes
- **Biological Safety**: Containment of animals that are infected with biological agents
- **Biosecurity**: Compliance with conditions for the transport of animals to or from Approved Arrangements. Transport of animals from an Approved Arrangement is not permitted unless a specific procedure has been approved by the Department of Agriculture relating to the relevant approved arrangement.
- **OGTR**: Transport of genetically modified animals to, from or between Physical Containment (PC) facilities is restricted to facilities of the same status.

**Prior to Transport**

Before transporting animals to or from facilities on campus at ANU or TCH it is expected that the following steps are taken.

1. Contact local area animal services manager to determine the pre transport steps required regarding:
   - a. Transport within facility areas
   - b. Transport between facilities and or laboratories on ANU or TCH campuses
   - c. Domestic or international imports or export (arrangement of appropriate couriers)
2. Completion of prerequisites required for the handling and use of the animals to be transported. This includes the completion of ANML03 Animal Ethics Seminar, animal handling training and facility inductions
   - a. Where genetically modified animals are to be transported the Gene Technology Practices course and Biological Safety course must be completed
b. Where animals infected with biological agents are to be transported the Biological Safety
course must be completed
3. Ensure the health, temperament, age, sex, number of animals, social relationships, previous
experiences and special provisions required for the transport of sick, pregnant or juvenile animals
are considered
4. Animals must be assessed for health and identity immediately prior to transport
5. Animals to be transported must only be requested in association with an approved AEEC protocol
and ANU Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC) NLRD, DNIR licence issued by OGTR or exempt
dealing approval where applicable

3. Monitoring, Intervention and Reporting

During Transport
Animals must be transported in accordance with the section 3.2.5 of The Code of Practice for the Care
and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes.

In a manner appropriate for the species, transport of animals must:

1. Ensure that a source of hydration and food is provided (where appropriate)
   a. Juvenile/pre weaning animals are not to be held without a nursing mother for periods longer
      than 30 minutes
   b. Pregnant animals may require special provisions
2. Provide a physical and social environment appropriate for the species
   a. If secondary containment of animals is required for transport, the container should be sturdy
      and opaque with a properly fitted lid
   b. Animals requiring secondary containment must only remain in the container for the period of
time required to transport them. The period of time and type of containment will be specific
to the species.
   c. All species are to be transported in accordance with relevant Biosecurity or OGTR
      requirements
3. Minimise harm, pain and distress arising from factors such as containment, movement, noise,
disruption of social groups and changes to environment or personnel
4. Involve appropriate transport arrangements particularly in extremes of weather
   a. On the Acton campus and at TCH animals may be transported by foot or vehicle. In extreme
      weather conditions a vehicle must be used
   b. Use of a bicycle, motorcycle, moped or similar is not permitted
5. Ensure that animals are supervised and identifiable at all times
   a. Information relating to the name and contact details of the person responsible for the animals,
      AEEC protocol number, date, number of animals, sex, GMO status (including dealing number
      where applicable) and number of transport containers (where applicable) must be visible
6. Where additional conditions relating to physical containment of GM animals or biosecurity
   requirements apply these must also be adhered to:
   a. Meet ANU Biological Safety requirements
   b. Meet ANU and OGTR Guidelines for the Transport, Storage and Disposal of GMOs

After Transport
Animals must be checked for health as soon as possible after arrival at the receiving location. Animals
must also be crossed checked against those detailed on cage cards/order forms and ensure that all
animals are adequately accounted for.

When moving animals from one facility to another animals should be provided with sufficient time to
acclimatise to their new environment prior to starting any experimental work. Acclimatisation periods will
vary between species and should be based on considerations such as the distance travelled,
immunosuppression or pregnancy. Provision of appropriate periods of acclimatisation also ensures that
that negative impacts on research are minimised.
Animals that are humanely killed for experimental use immediately after transport do not require acclimatisation periods. It is a requirement that you consider any impact stress and related physiological changes as a result of transport may have on your experimental results to ensure usable data is attained.

Where food and/or a source of hydration has been withheld during transport this must be provided immediately upon arrival at the receiving facility.

4. Minimum Requirements

Reporting
In the event that animals are found to be unwell or have died during transport, investigators must act in accordance with the Procedure for Managing & Reporting Unexpected Adverse Events.

Breaches of Biosecurity or Unintentional releases of GMOs must be reported in accordance with the relevant legislation and ANU protocols.

5. Appendices

Appendix I – Rodent Transport

Rodent Considerations
The following additional considerations apply for the transport of rodents.

1. Rodents are to be packed into a primary sealed container that has the following requirements;
   a. Must be taped closed to prevent the escape of animals.
   b. Must be labelled with strain, number, sex, individual ID, AEEC number and where applicable OTGR and AQIS categories.
   c. The rodents must then be placed into a secondary container. This container should be an opaque sturdy plastic container or similar with a properly fitted lid.
   d. Except where transport takes place entirely within a building, the outermost container must be labelled to clearly show the name, address and contact details of the person responsible for the dealings, so that the person can be contacted should the package be lost, damaged or misdirected.

2. All genetically modified rodents are required mice to be transported in sealed unbreakable primary and secondary containers.

3. Rodents requiring secondary containment must not be left unattended and may only remain in a sealed container for a maximum of 30 minutes.

4. Rodents being transported between facilities should be done using a method of transport that minimises stress to the animals. As such, transport using trolleys should be avoided to minimise noise and vibration.

5. Transport of pregnant rodents:
   a. <14d pregnancy – mice and rats can be transported. Sufficient nesting, bedding and food must be provided for the journey.
   b. >14d pregnancy – try to avoid transportation of mice and rats at late stage of pregnancy due to the increased risk of complications. If this is necessary transport should only be between close facilities (i.e. on campus) or requires specific ethics approval.

6. References and Resources

The Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes 8th edition, 2013
Procedure for Managing & Reporting Unexpected Adverse Events
OGTR Guidelines for the Transport, Storage and Disposal of GMOs