



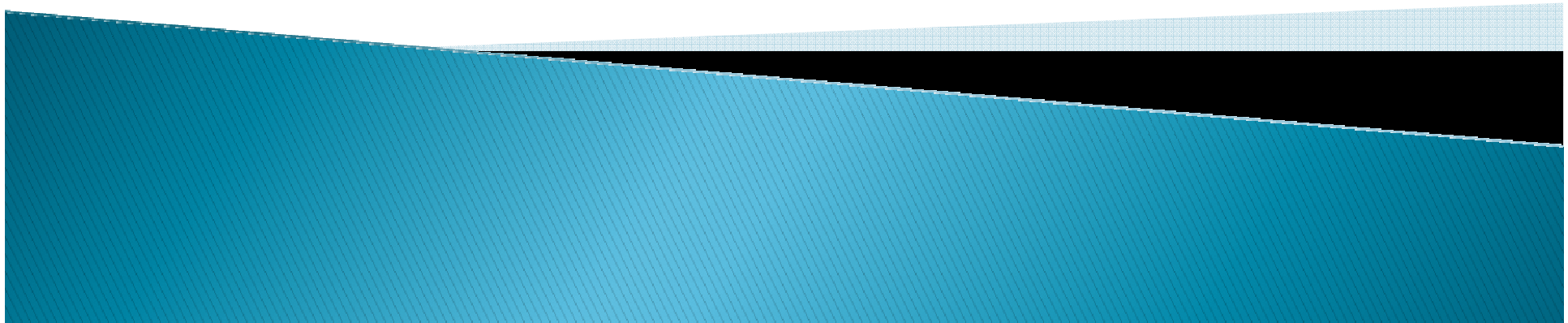
THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

Role of the Animal Welfare Officer

Robyn Gentle

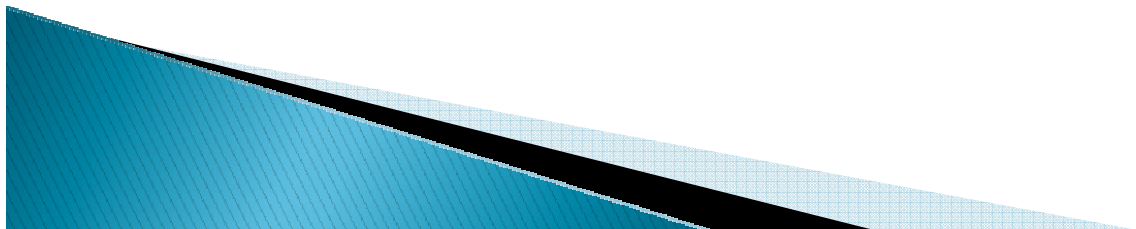
Manager, Animal Welfare and Training

ARRP Seminar– 2 October 2013



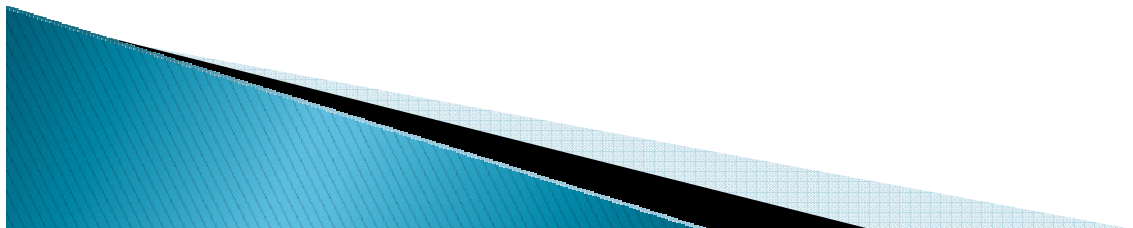
AWTU Manager vs AWO

- ▶ Changes in roles/ structure since 2010.
- ▶ AWO functions performed by veterinarians in the Animal Welfare and Training Unit.
- ▶ ACEC Procedures– definition of AWO:
 - AWO means the person fulfilling the role of Animal Welfare Officer and authorised by the ACEC to ensure that animal research projects are proceeding in compliance with the Legislation and with the decisions of the ACEC. The AWO is a member of the Animal Welfare and Training Unit.



Overview of Role

- ▶ Training and competency assessment.
- ▶ Veterinary clinical care for research animals.
- ▶ Monitoring care and use of research animals.
- ▶ Pre review of Animal Ethics Applications.
- ▶ Development of policy, procedures and guidelines.
- ▶ Assistance with research projects.



Training – Research Animal Training Scheme

- ▶ **Formal training program (RATS)**
 - **Online modules**
 - Legislation, ethics, safety, ACEC, application forms
 - Monitoring, pain management
 - **Seminars and tutorials**
 - Developing and using monitoring checklists
 - Completing and assessing Animal Ethics Applications
 - **Practical workshops**
 - Animal handling and basic research techniques
 - Anaesthesia
 - Aseptic surgical techniques



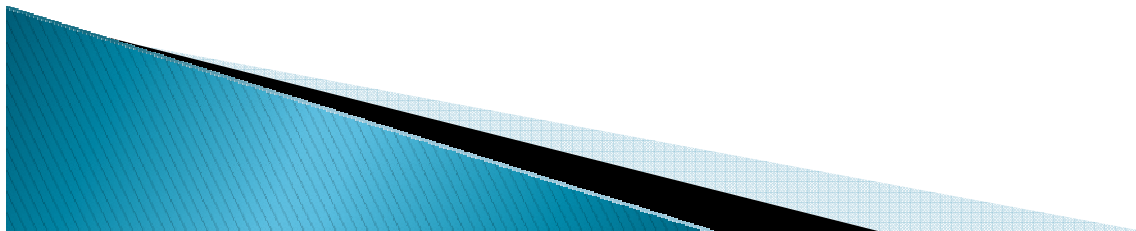
Training– Other

- ▶ Other training
 - Small group and one on one training.
 - Safety inductions e.g. use of anaesthetic machine.
 - Undergraduate lectures– animal research and ethics.
 - AALAS learning library.
- ▶ Training available to:
 - Animal researchers.
 - Animal care staff.
 - ACEC members.



Competency Assessment

- ▶ Quizzes associated with RATS modules.
- ▶ Formal competency assessment against agreed criteria.
- ▶ Informal assessment during ACEC project and facility inspections.
- ▶ Currently ACEC driven.
- ▶ Completions of RATS modules recorded in online ACEC application system: “Certifications”.



▼ Smith, John

Research Personnel

*Name:

Smith, John

CI / Supervisor

*Start Date

03-Jun-2013

End Date

*Role

*Contact phone:

Certifications

Certification	Begin	End
RATS Module 3	16-Mar-2011	
RATS Module 5	05-May-2011	
RATS Module 1	01-Feb-2011	
RATS Module 4	17-Mar-2011	
RATS Module 2	01-Feb-2011	
RATS Module 6	12-May-2011	

*Has this person attended any Research Animal Training Scheme (RATS) modules NOT shown in Certifications above?

Yes No

Relevant Qualifications

Certificate III Animal Technology 2012

*Will this researcher be monitoring the animals?

Yes No

Please outline this researcher's experience in relation to monitoring of animals

6 years experience working with and monitoring mice

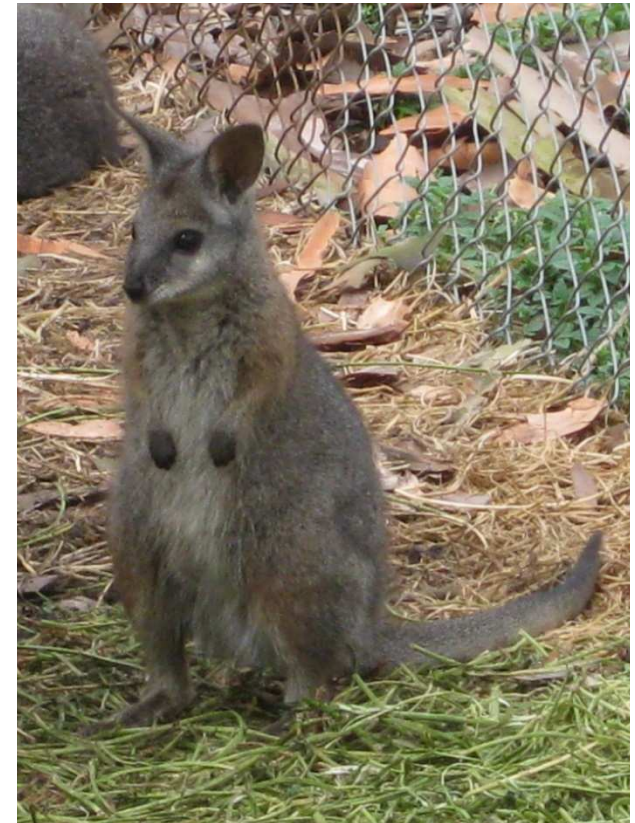
Veterinary Clinical Care

- ▶ Veterinary treatment for sick or injured research animals.
- ▶ Investigation of facility animal health problems.
- ▶ Advice on routine health monitoring.
- ▶ Post mortem- unexpected deaths.



Monitoring Care and Use of Research Animals

- ▶ Accompany ACEC subcommittee inspections of projects and facilities– reports.
- ▶ Carry out ACEC directed inspections.
- ▶ Informal inspections to monitor animal research and animal care standards.
- ▶ Investigate complaints/ concerns about animal health/ welfare and well-being.
- ▶ Investigate adverse events.
- ▶ Attend ACEC meetings to provide advice– not a member.



Pre review of Animal Ethics Applications

- ▶ Administrative review by Animal Ethics Officer
- ▶ Pre review by Animal Welfare and Training Unit.
 - Assist researchers in completion of applications.
 - Provide advice on anaesthesia, analgesia, species and strain selection, sample collection, surgery.
 - Review SOPs submitted with applications.
 - Identify and assist researchers to correct issues that may inhibit ethical review by ACEC.



Policy, Procedures, Guidelines

- ▶ Assist in development of University policy relating to care and use of animals.
- ▶ Assist ACEC to develop guidelines e.g.
 - Transport and acclimatisation.
 - Research Animal Ethics.
 - Implementation of 3Rs.
 - Monitoring animals.
 - Aseptic surgical techniques.
 - Neoplasia
 - Anaesthesia and analgesia
 - Use of GM animals
 - Tissue sharing
- ▶ Write SOPs for basic research procedures.
- ▶ Manage Approved SOPs.
- ▶ Develop monitoring checklist templates.



Assistance with Research Projects

- ▶ Training in humane animal research techniques.
- ▶ Advice on anaesthesia, analgesia, surgical techniques.
- ▶ Managing adverse events:
 - Investigation of cause.
 - Assist in preparation of adverse event reports.
 - Recommend prevention strategies.



Summary

- ▶ Animal Welfare and Training Manager at UoN is:
 - A principle source of professional and technical advice to animal researchers, animal care staff and Animal Care and Ethics Committee on best practice in research animal welfare and well-being.



Challenges

- ▶ Finding a balance:
 - Provision of advice, veterinary clinical role vs 'compliance officer' for ACEC and Institution.
- ▶ Training and competency assessment:
 - Lack of resources.
 - Established researchers.
- ▶ Finding the time to do everything well.....

