Preparation Summary for AAALAC Accreditation – Aquatic Animals

Three years ago, through a coordinated effort from all levels of the University, the campus received accreditation from the AAALAC. This was an important milestone for the campus and great accomplishment for all animal researchers. In a few short months, we will undergo our next continuing review, which promises to be at least as thorough as our initial review. Our initial success was due in large part to the overwhelming efforts of PIs and research staff in individual labs who brought their facilities into strict compliance with federal and campus guidelines. We will need a similar response if we are to be successful this time and we are counting on your support. Most of the requirements were implemented previously and are being followed. We have prepared this summary as a guide to helping units prepare for our AAALAC review and to correct any deficiencies. We are also providing a copy of the semi-annual inspection checklist, which you have all seen previously, as a reference.

If you have any questions, or need assistance with any of the issues presented here or elsewhere, please contact Doug Powell at dpowell@umd.edu or 5-4920 or the IACUC office at graebel@umd.edu or 5-5037.

References on Animal Care:

Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals, 8th edition. See Chapter 3, Aquatic Animals, pp.77 – 88.* Please note: “must” means mandatory, imperative, while a “should” also means “must” but the IACUC may approve an alternative strategy.

*If using societal or industry guidelines, send the name of the guidelines to CARF@umd.edu or Doug Powell.

Please note the new policies recently accepted by the IACUC based on the new requirements of the updated Guide:

Temperature of refrigerators and freezers are documented weekly when used to store products for animal care such as food or medications.

Bins that are used to store animal feed either have a plastic liner or are sanitized every 3 months. When plastic liners are used, they must be changed every 3 months and the bin sanitized every 6 months or more often if needed.

Unopened bags of feed and bedding are stored on racks, pallets, carts or shelves. If pallets are used, they must be at least 4 inches from the wall to allow cleaning. Opened bags of feed are stored in a sealed container.

Live rodent traps are checked at least daily to prevent potential animal distress. Trapped animals must be euthanized humanely. Documentation of observing traps can be part of the daily animal health checks.
Consistency with Protocol

Please ensure that the operations of your facility are in compliance with your IACUC protocol. Items to pay particular attention to include:

- All animal procurement including animal transfers between protocols are sent to CARF@umd.edu
- Ensure that, unless exempted by the protocol or other written policy, all animals receive species-appropriate enrichment.
- Non-pharmaceutical grade drug use approved by IACUC
- SOPs for husbandry, veterinary care and biosecurity are on file with IACUC.

Personnel Documentation

Please ensure that your training and documentation is up to date, and that personnel are compliant with proper lab safety, procedures, and reporting methods. Items to pay particular attention to include:

- PI/Animal User training. (Must be renewed every 3 years.)
- Lab-specific training.
- Facility-specific training provided by the facility manager for outside individuals entering the facilities, such as FM.
- Enrollment in Occupational Health. (Must be renewed every 3 years.)
- Ensure that personnel are conversant in SOPs and protocols and that the training was documented.
- Ensure that personnel are aware of procedures to report animal welfare issues.
- Ensure that personnel are familiar with the Emergency Response Plan (http://www.umresearch.umd.edu/IACUC/campus_policies.html), the facility-specific response plan and the provisions for euthanasia in the plan.

Other Documentation

- Ensure that any out of date pharmaceuticals are disposed of properly – in particular, please examine dates on any refrigerated items
- Pest management notebook is available
- Sanitation log for all surfaces. See the attachment - AAALAC Site Visit Packet appendix entitled “Cleaning and Disinfection of the Micro and Macro Environment”. The sanitizing method and frequency of surface areas must me documented.

Signage

Please ensure that signage is clear, and in proper use. Items to pay particular attention to include:

- Injury reporting procedure
- Safety with animals
- Abuse & Neglect Letter
- Emergency contact information
- Refrigerator signage (e.g., Food/No Food)
Physical Environment

Please be sure that the facilities and equipment are regularly cleaned and functioning properly (or clearly labeled if not functioning). Items to pay particular attention to include:

- Walls, floors, ventilation grills, filters, and floor grills
- Refrigerators and freezers (defrosted)

Please also note:
- Ensure that proper PPE is available and used
- Minimize overall clutter
- Avoid tape build up (labels, etc.,) on racks other vivarium surfaces
- Label all broken equipment
- Ensure that dedicated equipment/supplies are present in rooms
- Any peeling paint is identified; uncaulked wall or ceiling penetrations are repaired and/or work orders submitted
- Chemicals/cleaners, etc. are labeled with product and expiration date when placed in end-use containers. Label with “date opened” identified if no expiration date.
- Ensure that nets are cleaned, disinfected and managed to avoid contamination of systems
- Check sharps containers for overfill
- Ensure that:
  - eye wash station is flushed weekly and documented
  - electrical outlets in potential wet areas are covered and/or are ground fault
  - burned out light bulbs, cracked or missing light covers are replaced
  - gas cylinders are secured.
- Ensure that personnel are familiar with environmental controls and who is responsible for them
- Ensure that employee lunches are not stored in biological refrigerators
- Check and document proper light timer function every 6 months
- Ensure that Aquatic Systems Summary Parts I and II have been completed. See Attached. AAALAC Site Visit Packet appendes entitled “Aquatic Systems summary Part I and Part II”.

Husbandry

Please be sure that proper husbandry documentation procedures are being followed. Items to pay particular attention to include:

- Ensure that animals are observed daily
- Ensure that logs or records are complete, including:
  - room logs
  - animal health records
- Ensure proper tank use, including:
  - tanks are not overcrowded
  - tank walls are not so opaque to prevent adequate observation and/or sanitation
- Ensure that primary enclosures must allow normal physiological and behavioral needs
- Test and document water quality and ensure that standards are acceptable
• Determine frequency of tank/cage changing by water quality

Other husbandry considerations:
• Remove outdated feed
• Ensure that there is a means of determining age (milling date) or type of feed in feed barrels/receptacles
• Ensure that filters (ventilated racks, room air, water lines etc.) are periodically changed and change documented.