



# Canadian Council on Animal Care Conseil canadien de protection des animaux

## CCAC YEAR-END PERFORMANCE REPORT 2008–2009

In compliance with the planning and reporting framework required by the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), the *CCAC Year-End Performance Report 2008-2009* provides Council members with a public report on CCAC activities.

### A. INTRODUCTION

#### 1. CCAC 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

Over 100 volunteers, including Council members and participants in the CCAC Forum 2008, gathered in Ottawa on October 2, 2008 to celebrate the CCAC's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. An afternoon seminar, entitled *From Vision to Implementation of Good Animal Practice in Science*, began with strong words of support for the CCAC's mandate and achievements from the President of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, Dr. Susanne Fortier, and the Vice-President, Research of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Dr. Pierre Chartrand.

The recipient of the 2006 Harry C. Rowsell Award for Outstanding Service to the CCAC, Dr. Ernest Olfert, opened the series of invited presentations with a retrospective of the CCAC's founding principles and founders, with a special tribute to the legacy of Dr. Harry C. Rowsell, founding executive director of the CCAC. The achievements of the Assessment, Guidelines and Education, Training & Communications programs were presented by Dr. Luc Chouinard, Mr. Henrik Kreiberg, and Dr. Marilyn Keaney, respectively. The second half of the afternoon comprised presentations from the two recipients of the 2008 Harry C. Rowsell Award for Outstanding Service to the CCAC, Drs. Edwin Kroeger and Peter Flanagan, who gave presentations on *Keeping Lines of Communication Open* and *The Way Forward*, respectively. A formal award ceremony where the outstanding service awards were presented to Drs. Flanagan and Kroeger closed the afternoon. An evening gala dinner followed, during which Dr. Andrew Fletch, former CCAC Chair, shared some of his special memories with participants. A summary of key statements made by presenters at the seminar will be published in the next edition of the CCAC newsletter, *RESOURCE*.

#### 2. CCAC Forum 2008 – Building on Strength

The *CCAC Forum 2008 – Building on Strength* was held in Ottawa on October 3, 2008. CCAC Council members and more than 30 constituents, selected for their sustained participation in the CCAC system over the years, were invited to participate in a facilitated one day forum. The Forum examined key questions related to issues identified in letters forwarded by 13 academic institutions to the federal granting Agencies in early 2008 as part of the CCAC grant submission 2008-2011, as well as responses from 184 individuals to the *CCAC Strategic Planning Questionnaire* circulated by the CCAC in May 2008 (with the assistance of the granting Agencies).

The Forum, as well as the Questionnaire and the open letters to the granting Agencies, are a valuable contribution towards ensuring the relevance of the CCAC 2009-2014 strategic plan and building a future that resonates with stakeholders across the country. A report containing the highlights and key events of the CCAC Forum 2008 was published in early December 2008.

## **B. RESULTS BY BUSINESS LINE**

### **1. Planning and Priorities**

#### **1.1 CCAC Five-Year Plan 2009-2014**

In early December 2008, the CCAC Secretariat developed a first draft of the *CCAC Five-Year Plan 2009-2014* based on the *CCAC Five-Year Plan 2004-2009*, the CCAC's December 14, 2007 Grant Submission to NSERC-CIHR and the accompanying March 31, 2008 report of the Evaluation Committee, and the *Report of the CCAC Forum 2008 – Building on Strength*. This first draft was further refined through exchanges with the CCAC standing committees and a revised draft was submitted on December 19, 2008 to the CCAC Board of Directors for comments. A third draft was subsequently submitted for consideration by the standing committees and Council at their February 28 and March 1, 2009 meetings.

#### **1.2. Review of the Structure and Size of Council**

The Canadian Federation of Biological Societies (CFBS) became a limited-term member of the CCAC on April 1, 2008. As per the advanced notice given to CCAC Council on October 5, 2008 and article 10 [Withdrawal from Membership] of the CCAC By-Laws, a formal letter was received early December 2008 confirming that the CFBS will come to closure effective December 31, 2008 and will not be able to provide consistent representation on the CCAC Council from that date on.

#### **1.3 Universality, Harmonization and Recognition of CCAC Standards**

##### **At the National Level**

Following an October 4, 2008 meeting between representatives of Science-Based Departments and Agencies (SBDAs) convened by the CCAC Chair, Mr. Stephen Bjarnason, draft-11 of the *CCAC Memorandum of Understanding Between the Canadian Council on Animal Care and Federal Science-Based Departments and Agencies* was developed and circulated to SBDAs' representatives on October 24, 2008.

##### **At the International Level**

The CCAC Executive Director represented the CCAC at the fourth meeting of the International Council for Laboratory Animal Science (ICLAS) Working Party for Harmonization of Guidelines held in Indianapolis, Indiana on November 8-9, 2008. This meeting was convened by the President of ICLAS and CCAC Assessment Director, Dr. Gilles Demers to (i) revise the work done by the ICLAS ad hoc committee on genetically-engineered animals chaired by Dr. Gilly Griffin, CCAC Guidelines and Three Rs Programs Director, and (ii) initiate the revision of the 1985 Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences (CIOMS) *International Guiding Principles for Biomedical Research Involving Animals*.

The Executive Director represented the CCAC at the November 11, 2008 meeting of the ICLAS International Consortium held in Indianapolis, Indiana in conjunction with the meeting of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science (AALAS).

### **2. Assessment**

#### **2.1 Personnel for the Assessment Program**

Ms. Pascale Belleau, Scientific Writer, transferred from the Assessment Sector in October 2008 to become the CCAC's Education, Training and Communications (ETC) Coordinator. Ms. Anne

Thibaudeau, who earned her M.Sc. in biology from the Université du Québec à Montréal in 2004, was hired to replace Ms. Belleau in October 2008.

Dr. Denis Rainville was hired in December 2008 as the fourth CCAC assessment director to assist the other members of the sector with the very large volume of work resulting from the Assessment Program's rapid growth. Dr. Rainville obtained his DMV from the Faculté de médecine vétérinaire de l'Université de Montréal in 1982. He worked in a private practice until 2005, focusing mostly on farm animals, and later worked in the private sector for a contract research organization until joining the CCAC. The third scientific writer position remains vacant.

The members of the Assessment Sector continue to work very hard to provide all assessment services in a timely manner. Although they have been generally successful in doing so, a few delays in providing services have occurred over the past six months. Every effort will be made to minimize these delays, and the addition of Dr. Rainville to the sector should provide invaluable help in achieving this goal.

## **2.2 Assessment Visits**

Of the 37 assessment visits conducted between October 6, 2008 and February 27, 2009, there were 26 regular, 2 interim, 2 special, and 7 orientation visits. Four academic institutions and two private institutions joined the CCAC Program during the current fiscal year, and ten academic and three private institutions plan to join the CCAC Program by April 1, 2009.

## **2.3 Assessment and Implementation Reports**

Following assessment visits, detailed reports are prepared jointly by the CCAC assessment directors, scientific writers, assessment panel members and the Assessment Committee (AC). Assessment reports generally include recommendations to help institutions improve their animal care and use program and meet CCAC guidelines and policies. At the time of the production of this report (for the 36 visits conducted between September 13, 2008 and January 30, 2009), the average length of time to produce an assessment report, from the day of the visit to the day the report is sent to the institution, was 8.8 weeks (n=20, range from 1 to 11 weeks). These reports covered three interim, two orientation, one special, and fourteen regular visits. Both of the reports that exceeded the 10-week objective for assessment report production times set by the AC were produced in 11 weeks.

Institutions respond to recommendations through implementation reports submitted to the CCAC, with a different due date for each type of recommendation (Major, Serious and Regular). Delays in the processing of implementation reports occur when the Assessment Sector must request additional information from institutions that have submitted incomplete reports, or because assessment directors lack sufficient time to review the reports.

Between September 1, 2008 and January 31, 2009, a total of 21 CCAC Certificates of GAP – Good Animal Practice<sup>®</sup> were issued. Eight institutions were assigned a status of Compliance and thirteen were assigned Conditional Compliance. One institution's Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice<sup>®</sup> was renewed following an interim visit. The average length of time to process the implementation reports was 8.9 weeks (range from 0 to 19 weeks). Eight implementation reports were processed within the 8-week target and thirteen reports were processed between 9 and 19 weeks.

## **2.4 Additional Assessment Sector Activities**

### **Policy for Senior Administrators**

The new *CCAC policy statement for: senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs* was published online and distributed to institutions in October 2008. This new policy is divided into sections describing the various components of a complete animal care and use program, and it

provides guidance and references to relevant existing guidelines and policies for each component. The CCAC is introducing the new policy for senior administrators for implementation by institutions over the next year (October 2008 to October 2009). Existing policies and guidelines will be applied during this period, and participants in the CCAC Program will be assessed based on the few new requirements in the policy for senior administrators beginning in October 2009.

### **Revised Program Review Form**

The English and French versions of the revised *CCAC Animal Care and Use Program Review Form* (PRF) have been finalized, posted on the website and made available to participating institutions. Their use in assessment visits began in the fall of 2008.

### **CCAC Survey of Animal Use**

The 2007 animal use data was validated and analyzed during the fall of 2008, and the 2007 survey of animal use was posted on the CCAC website on December 23, 2008. A memo reminding institutions to send their 2008 animal use data by March 31, 2009 was sent in January 2009.

### **Upcoming review of CCAC Policies Related to the Assessment Program**

Eight CCAC assessment-related policies, which are becoming outdated, are slated for revision. Revision of four policies was initiated in 2008: the *CCAC policy statement on: confidentiality of assessment information* (1999), the *CCAC policy statement on: definitions of recommendations made in CCAC reports* (1996), the *CCAC policy statement on: compliance and non-compliance* (2000), and the *CCAC policy statement on: Canadian Institutes of Health Research and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Policy on Non-compliance* (2000). The latter two policies are being combined into the new draft *CCAC policy statement on: the certification of animal care and use programs*, with the assistance of the Tri Council. The AC is working with the Executive Director and the Board of Directors to complete this work and will bring the revised policies to Council for comments and approval.

The AC is also working with the Executive Director and Board of Directors to complete a general plan, rationale and timelines for assessment policy revision. The four remaining assessment-related policies are: the *CCAC policy statement on: the importance of the independent peer review of the scientific merit of animal-based research projects* (2000), the *CCAC policy statement on: assessment panels* (1999), the *CCAC policy statement on: the assessment program of the CCAC* (2000), and the *CCAC policy statement on: animal-based projects involving two or more institutions* (2003).

### **Review and Revision of SOPs**

The standard operating procedure (SOP) on *Conflicts of interest in the assessment process for Assessment Committee members* was approved by the Assessment Committee in October 2008. Existing Assessment Sector SOPs are reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis. SOPs on office-related procedures, assessment visit preparation and assessment visits are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect procedures that now involve SharePoint and/or the content management system databases.

### **Assessment Database**

A work plan has been completed for the assessment database. This database, which will be used to keep track of all assessment-related information for each participant in the program, is being developed and should increase the effectiveness of the Assessment Program.

### **3. Guidelines**

#### **3.1 Personnel for the Guidelines Program**

Ms. Wendy Clarence was hired as a research assistant for the Guidelines Program in November 2008. She has already provided substantial assistance in locating and organizing reference material, which has benefited the development of guidelines and implementation tools.

#### **3.2 Guidelines Development**

##### ***CCAC guidelines on: the care and use of farm animals in research, teaching and testing***

The final draft of the farm animal guidelines has been undergoing approval for publication, final editing and translation, and is expected to be published by March 2009.

##### ***CCAC adopted guidelines on euthanasia***

The Subcommittee on Euthanasia has restructured the document and is working to resolve the few remaining issues from the widespread review, in preparation for a final review in March 2009.

##### ***CCAC guidelines on: the care and maintenance of marine mammals***

The Marine Mammal Subcommittee has been working to resolve outstanding issues in this draft guidelines document, with the aim of producing a final draft for publication in 2009.

##### ***CCAC guidelines on: genetically-engineered animals***

The Biotechnology Subcommittee has been reviewing the feedback from the widespread review held during fall 2008, with the view of preparing a revised draft of the guidelines to circulate for review.

##### ***CCAC adoption of Australian care and maintenance guidelines***

Information found in international guidance documents on the care and maintenance of rats has been compiled by the Sector as part of an international harmonization exercise (noted in Section 3.2 International harmonization). This information will also be used by the subcommittee working on the development of a CCAC adoption document for the Australian *Guidelines for the Housing of Rats in Scientific Institutions*.

#### **3.3 Additional Guidelines Program Activities**

##### **Guidelines Implementation**

The *Species-specific recommendations on marine mammals* were circulated to a group of experts for review in December 2008. Comments from this review will be used to revise the recommendations for publication on the CCAC website.

##### **International Harmonization**

The Guidelines and Three Rs Programs Director gave a presentation comparing international guidelines on euthanasia at the Institute for Laboratory Animal Research Symposium, *Animal Research in a Global Environment: Meeting the Challenges*, held in Washington, DC, on September 23-26, 2008. On November 8, 2008 she chaired a meeting of the International Harmonization Working Group to consider harmonization of guidelines for genetically-engineered animals.

These two international meetings, held within a relatively short time period, were attended by members of the International Focus Group working on guidelines for the care and maintenance of laboratory animals. Members of the Focus Group used this opportunity to discuss the preparation of documents comparing guidelines of different jurisdictions, beginning with guidelines on the care and maintenance of rats.

### **Interdisciplinary Collaborations**

The Guidelines and Three Rs Programs Director was invited to give presentations at the Sanofi Pasteur Education Day, October 20, 2008 and at the Canadian Physiology Society meeting, February 4-7, 2009 (see details under the Three Rs Program).

### **3.4 Fellowship in Animal Policy Development**

The CCAC is advertising for a research fellow to develop background papers and tools to support the development and implementation of the *guidelines on: genetically engineered animals* (in prep.).

## **4. Three Rs**

### **4.1 Personnel for the Three Rs Program**

The Three Rs Program was created in early 2008. Re-organization within the Secretariat resulted in a combined Guidelines and Three Rs Sector and Dr. Gilly Griffin's promotion to the new role of Guidelines and Three Rs Programs Director. Work of the Three Rs Program is carried out by staff in the Guidelines and Three Rs Sector. The new role of Three Rs coordinator (part-time) is being filled by Ms. Nicole Fenwick on an independent contractor basis. In October 2008, Ms. Mara Long became the new CCAC fellow in animal policy development for the Three Rs Program.

### **4.2 Development of the Theoretical Basis of the Three Rs Program**

An invited paper titled *The welfare of animals used in science: how the "Three Rs" ethic guides improvements* was prepared and submitted to the Canadian Veterinary Journal in January 2009.

### **4.3 Prioritization of Three Rs Program Projects**

A draft prioritization framework was prepared to assist Three Rs Committee members in their development of a formal procedure for determining project priorities. Discussions with the Assessment Sector have been initiated to gain access to a database of recommendations made in assessment reports in order to provide objective information concerning challenges faced by institutions.

### **4.4 Promotion of the Three Rs**

#### **CCAC Three Rs microsite**

The first phase of the Three Rs microsite was launched in March 2008 and included the sections Three Rs Alternatives, Special Topics and Additional Resources. Prior to publication, this section of the microsite was reviewed by over 30 reviewers. Publication of the microsite was communicated to the scientific community through an announcement at the CCAC 2008 March Council meeting, personal emails to all individuals involved in the review process, a CCAC capsule announcement to animal care committee coordinators, and announcements at scientific meetings attended by CCAC staff. An additional announcement was prepared for the NSERC newsletter, *CONTACT*, and is expected to be published in early 2009.

The Guidelines and Three Rs Programs Director gave an invited presentation on the Three Rs microsite at the Canadian Physiology Society meeting held February 4-7, 2009 in Mont Sainte Anne, Québec.

Additional sections of the microsite, the Three Rs Search Guide and the Table of Alternatives Methods: Regulatory and Validation Status, were developed in 2008 and are expected to be published in early 2009.

### **CCAC as Canada's Three Rs Centre**

The CCAC continued representing Canada on the international project team for Altweb<sup>1</sup>, a comprehensive web-based resource for the Three Rs. The Guidelines and Three Rs Programs Director attended the project team meeting held in Reston, Virginia, on November 12, 2008.

The Guidelines and Three Rs Programs Director gave an invited presentation on the CCAC and the implementation of the Three Rs in Regulatory Testing at the Sanofi Pasteur Education Day held October 20, 2009 in Toronto.

The CCAC was also invited to host the 8<sup>th</sup> World Congress on Alternatives & Animal Use in the Life Sciences (WC8) in Montréal in 2011, in recognition of the important contributions made by the CCAC and Canadian investigators and veterinarians in the area of the Refinement alternatives.

## **4.5 Supporting the Implementation of the Three Rs**

### **Implementation of the Three Rs in Research**

Development of the online Three Rs Search Guide, which included peer review by 12 reviewers, substantial revisions to address reviewer comments and web formatting, occurred in 2008.

### **Promoting Research in Support of the Three Rs**

A discussion was held with representatives from the granting Agencies to explore the possibility of “top up” funding for investigators that have already been awarded a grant to carry out additional studies, mainly in the area of refinement alternatives (e.g., improved endpoints, use of analgesics and development of in vitro approaches to monoclonal antibody production).

### **Implementation of the Three Rs in Teaching/Training**

The CCAC Three Rs microsite provides a section on teaching and the Three Rs, and offers resources which can be used to find suitable replacement alternatives. A literature review to support the preparation of a discussion paper on evaluation of the pedagogical merit of non-animal and animal teaching and training methods was initiated. This discussion will be used to engage a working group that will evaluate how to establish the pedagogical merit of a teaching/training method.

### **Implementation of the Three Rs in Testing**

The second fellow in animal policy development carried out a case study to determine the opportunities and challenges in the implementation of the Three Rs in shellfish toxin testing. A paper, *Adopting alternatives for the regulatory monitoring of shellfish for paralytic shellfish poisoning in Canada: interface between federal regulators, science and ethics*, has been submitted for publication in *Regulatory Toxicology and Pharmacology*. The work of the CCAC's third fellow in animal policy development will also relate to implementation of the Three Rs in a particular area of regulatory testing.

In addition, the Table of Alternatives Methods: Regulatory and Validation Status continued to be developed and is expected to be published on the Three Rs Microsite in early 2009.

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1 <http://altweb.jhsph.edu/>

## **5. Education, Training and Communications**

### **Personnel Changes**

Upon the departure of Ms. Claude Charbonneau, Director of Communications, Ms. Pascale Belleau, formerly a scientific writer of the Assessment Sector, joined the ETC Sector on October 4, 2008 as the Education, Training and Communications Coordinator.

### **5.1 Training and Education**

#### **Workshops**

In collaboration with the other CCAC Sectors, and with governmental departments and agencies, the ETC Sector is coordinating the 2009 CCAC National Workshop, to take place in Ottawa on May 7-8, 2009. This two-day event will include plenary sessions and breakout group discussions on a variety of topics related to issues or challenges faced by institutional animal care committees. Many experts and long-time volunteers in the CCAC Program have already agreed to give presentations or act as facilitators in breakout group sessions.

In collaboration with the Canadian Association for Laboratory Animal Science (CALAS), the CCAC will again offer the advanced orientation workshop, ACC-201; a scientific session on “Back to Basics: Housing and Husbandry of Common Laboratory Species” and a booth to provide information about the CCAC at the next CALAS Symposium, which will take place in Montréal on April 4-7, 2009.

#### **National Institutional Animal User Training (NIAUT) Program**

The ETC Committee determined that a training module on cattle (beef and dairy) would be developed. Experts in that field were contacted in February 2009 to identify potential writers for the module.

The ETC Committee is currently refining a prioritization matrix to facilitate decision-making regarding the development of new modules, the review of existing training modules, and the preparation of related questions and answers. The prioritization of modules will be aligned with the following criteria: relevance, usefulness, complexity, cost, and the work of the Guidelines Program. Coordinating the development of training materials with publication of new guidelines documents, when possible and appropriate, would provide additional support for CCAC participants.

The current HTML format of the training modules does not allow flexibility for use as didactic material for teachers. Therefore, the ETC Committee is currently looking into the possibility of changing the format of training modules (e.g., to PowerPoint) in order to increase their user-friendliness.

#### **Long-distance Education Tools**

Through the May 2008 *CCAC Strategic Planning Questionnaire* and the CCAC Forum 2008, CCAC constituents identified the need to develop IT approaches for long-distance education and dissemination of information, including the use of webinars and other e-learning opportunities. The ETC coordinator, along with the CCAC directors and the ETC Committee, is evaluating the available long-distance education and communication tools to make recommendations on the purchase of the most appropriate tools.



## 5.2 Communications

### Information Capsules and Articles

The following e-mail information capsules were sent to constituents:

- October 15, 2008 – *CCAC policy statement for: senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs*;
- October 16, 2008 – CCAC Three Rs Microsite;
- October 29, 2008 – Widespread review of the *CCAC guidelines on: genetically-engineered animals*;
- November 14, 2008 – CCAC Fellowship in Animal Policy Development;
- November 20, 2008 – Financial Monitoring of Animal-based Research Projects;
- December 3, 2008 – *Report on the CCAC Forum 2008*;
- December 11, 2008 – CCAC National Workshop 2009 – Preliminary program and registration form;
- December 23, 2008 – Important News From the CCAC Secretariat; and
- January 19, 2009 – Submission of Animal Use Data for 2008.

### Contributions to Publications about CCAC

A short article on the new Three Rs Microsite, written by Dr. Griffin, Guidelines and Three Rs Programs Director, was submitted to NSERC on January 8, 2009 to be published in the February 2009 edition of *CONTACT*, an electronic newsletter sent to Canadian researchers. The article was submitted in French and English to reach the largest audience possible.

The ETC Coordinator participated in the unveiling of the CCAC Certificate of GAP – Good Animal Practice<sup>®</sup> received by the National Research Council – Industrial Research Assistance Program on December 16, 2008. An article about the event was published in the ZONE section of the IRAP intranet on January 15, 2009. This article, as well as a picture taken during the unveiling, will also be published in the next edition of *RESOURCE*.

### Publication Procedure

As highlighted by participants in the CCAC Forum 2008, communication with constituents needs to be strengthened to ensure effective delivery of education and training information. To address this, a new publication procedure has been established, which includes the publication of official CCAC documents, such as guidelines, policies, training modules and *RESOURCE* at fixed dates.

A new section will be created on the CCAC website where new publications will be posted, along with an announcement of the next publication date. This will enable constituents to know when they should consult the website to be informed of new publications.

### Website

The number of website visits (approximately 1000 visits/day) and the diverse countries of origin of the visitors reveal the importance of the CCAC as a trusted resource, and of its website as its window to the world. Furthermore, the launch in October 2008 of the Three Rs Microsite is expected to increase the use of the CCAC website.

Like most other organizations, the CCAC uses its website as a key communications tool. Therefore, its content, efficiency, user-friendliness and design must be reviewed regularly. For that reason, a review of the website was undertaken by the Secretariat, the Board of Directors and the ETC Committee in December 2008 to identify its strengths and weaknesses as part of the redesigning process. Based on this feedback, redesigning of the website will be initiated by the ETC Coordinator and web designer in the winter of 2009.

## **6. Finance**

At their October 4, 2008 meeting, the Finance Committee (FC) reviewed some of the comments made by the Evaluation Committee of the granting Agencies, and noted that the budget submitted by CCAC outlined only those expenses for the academic sector.

At this meeting, the FC deliberated the merging of the committee with the Planning and Priorities Committee. It was agreed that the merger would increase efficiency, since both groups would be aware of the issues being faced and the financial implications. The merger would also assist in dispersing Council members more evenly amongst all the committees, since a sixth standing committee was formed in April 2008. The proposed new standing rules were also reviewed and approved by the FC. It was proposed to the Board of Directors to accept the merging of the two committees, to be known as the Planning and Finance Committee. Council members will be asked to vote on the merger at the next meeting on March 1, 2009.

As a regular business item, the FC reviewed the first quarterly report, the business line expenses from April 1, 2008 to August 2008 and the directors' activities and related costs at the October 4, 2008 meeting. The FC will be meeting in February 2009 to review and approve the 2009-2010 budget.

Respectfully submitted by:

Stephen Bjarnason  
Chair of Council, CCAC  
March 1, 2009