



Department of Primary Industries

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To whom it may concern,

IMPORTANT CHANGES EFFECTIVE 1 JULY 2004 - ESTABLISHMENT LICENCES

Background:

In Victoria, 'scientific procedures' as defined and regulated by Part 3 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986, essentially include the use of animals in research, testing or teaching and can only be conducted under a current Scientific Establishment Licence. To obtain this licence involves application to the Bureau of Animal Welfare by the 'person in charge' of the premises designated for scientific procedures, stating the applicant details, specific premises and nominating an Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) that is constituted in accordance with the Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes. The nominated AEC must approve all projects involving scientific procedures prior to commencement and monitor ongoing projects and animal house facilities.

Similarly, any premises where only the breeding of 'specified animals' for sale or delivery to a scientific establishment is conducted must have a current Breeding Establishment licence obtained from the Bureau of Animal Welfare.

All scientific procedures and breeding of 'specified animals'¹ must be carried out in accordance with the Act, the Regulations and the above-mentioned mandatory Code of Practice.

Changes:

You are required to apply or re-apply for a new Licence(s) to conduct scientific procedures or breeding of 'specified animals' by 30 June 2004. This is a result of changes to the licensing system through amendments to the *Victorian Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* that were made in December 2003 and that will come into effect on 1 July 2004.

The revised licensing system is very similar to the existing system, but provides legal clarification of the applicant as the legal occupier (owner or tenant) of a premises (where applicable) and formal nomination of the current 'person in charge'. Applications for the 'new' licences will be required to include nomination of the 'person in charge' by the administrative head of the institution (ie Vice Chancellor of a University or Chief Executive Officer of a company / institute), and a declaration by the nominee that they consent to the role and the stated responsibilities.

1. 'specified animals' are defined in the recent Act amendments as '(a) guinea pig; and (b) rat, mouse or rabbit. Other than a rat, mouse or rabbit bred in its native habitat; and (c) non-human primate.'

Revised and new licence types will be introduced.

- All establishments that breed 'specified animals' for use by another licensed institution will be required to have a Specified Animals Breeding Licence (SABL). This licence introduces the nomination of an Animal Ethics Committee to approve practices and procedures necessary for the breeding, care or delivery of 'specified animals'. This may be the only licence that some institutions/companies require if only breeding of these species is carried out.
- A new licence will be introduced for those institutions that only conduct scientific procedures beyond any specific premises ie. fieldwork or collaborative work (the Scientific Procedures Fieldwork Licence or SPFL).
- Finally, the Scientific Establishment Licence will remain largely unchanged and will be renamed the Scientific Procedures Premises Licence (SPPL). This licence will continue to permit the breeding of 'specified animals' for use by that institution, scientific procedures to be carried out at the licensed premises, and scientific procedures to be carried out outside the licensed premises, (ie. fieldwork and collaborative work) as per the existing system.

The above changes mean that current Scientific Establishments that conduct scientific procedures *and* breed 'specified animals' distinctly intended for sale or delivery to *another* establishment or for *export* beyond Victoria will need to hold a SPPL *and* a SABL. Those Establishments that are intending to only breed 'specified animals' will need only a SABL.

A Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) is currently being undertaken to develop regulations to complement the amendments to the Act. This includes review of the fee structure payable for a licence. The public consultation period of the RIS is now open, and copies of the RIS and the proposed Regulations may be obtained from the Customer Service Centre by phoning 136 186 (between 8am to 8pm), the Department's Information Centre (Ground Floor, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne between 8.30am and 5.30pm) and the internet at <http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/ris>. This period of public consultation closes at 5 pm Thursday 10 June 2004. Early submission of comments to the RIS would be greatly appreciated.

Current Scientific or Breeding Establishment licence holders will be formally notified and forwarded application forms for the new licences once the Regulations have been made. Please note that licence renewal applications on the existing form will not be accepted.

If you have any queries regarding the type of licence(s) that your establishment will require as of 1 July 2004 or wish to be placed on our electronic mailing list for further updates concerning the legislative changes, please email me on Kate.Blasak@dpi.vic.gov.au .

Yours sincerely,



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