

Report to President of CSZ of the highlights of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) meeting, Ottawa, September 29–October 1, 2011

Items are in order of discussion at the meeting. I am a member of the Three Rs committee (Replacement, Reduction, Refinement), which met with the Guidelines Committee on September 30. I cannot comment on discussion that occurred at the Assessment-Planning-Finance or Education-Training-Communications committee, although I do comment on reports from those committees to the meeting of Council held on October 1. Items considered of major importance are in **bold**.¹

1. Guidelines continue to evolve and new guidelines prepared, especially to address emerging issues, transgenic organisms being one of the latest.
2. International harmonization of guidelines is ongoing.
3. CCAC played a major role in the Eighth World Congress on Alternatives and Animal Use in the Life Sciences (21–25 August, 2011 in Montreal), at which the **Montréal Declaration on the Synthesis of Evidence to Advance the 3Rs Principles in Science was adopted**. (http://www.ccac.ca/en_)
4. The current Executive Director of CCAC, Dr. Clément Gauthier, will retire on March 31, 2012. An executive search firm has been hired to spearhead the search for a new Executive Director.
5. The nature and aim of the tri-annual site visits of CCAC to institutions was discussed extensively, including ways of involving grant holders in such visits (it was **suggested that these visits could be renamed ‘site’ rather than ‘assessment-visits’**) and having CCAC emphasize its essential role in (i) **ensuring the ethical use of animals to foster world class research,**² and (ii) **that CCAC’s primary goal is to enable research not to regulate.**
6. The composition of Council was modified to better reflect the constituencies served by CCAC. **AUCC relinquished one of its four seats, which was assigned as their fourth seat to the Canadian federation of Humans Societies.**

¹ These items should be communicated to CSZ members via the website or next newsletter.

² “Setting and maintaining standards for the ethical use and care of animals in science in Canada.” CCAC home page (http://www.ccac.ca/en_/about)

7. CCAC receives its operating funding from NSERC and CHIR after submission of an application for funding. Until this year, NSERC/CIHR have **always provided three-year grants. This year, a one-year grant was awarded** to cover 1 October 2011 to 20 September 2012, reflecting “**budgetary constraints and the recommendation that CCAC activities remain focused on its core services**”. Specifically (A), in a letter from NSERC/CIHR dated September 14, CCAC was asked:

“to develop a new business plan, taking into consideration alternate models of service delivery, areas where efficiencies can be realized, and other possible sources of funding... [including] a comprehensive business case that addresses, among other issues, how CCAC intend to improve the efficiency of cooperation with universities.”

CCAC was provided with (B) **a report** evaluating their activities over the last funding period and the request for a further three years funding. The report contains 14 specific recommendations. CCAC was also provided with (C) **eight letters of evaluation** (variously dated between October 2010 and March 2011) by senior administrators at the eight institutions, each responding to an e-mail request of 25 October 2010 from NSERC/CIHR for input on the extent to which CCAC fulfils its mandate. Whether NSERC/CHIR received other responses is unknown but it is presumed by CCAC that other institutions received the October 25 e-mail. It is unclear to your representative how this e-mail request relates to the grant proposal submitted to NSERC/CIHR by CCAC or whether the responses formed part of the evaluation by NSERC/CHIR of that proposal. **Items A–C were made available to CCAC Council, which agreed that they should be distributed.**³

Needless to say, CCAC will be preoccupied over the next six to eight months (my estimate) divining the motivation behind NSERC/CHIR awarding of a one-year grant, developing a new business plan, and reevaluating its interactions with universities. **This may be a pivotal year in the history of CCAC and in its interactions with institutions with animal care committees.**

Respectfully submitted, October 3, 2012 by Brian K. Hall, CSZ representation to CCAC

Cc Dr. Clément Gauthier, Executive director, CCAC (cgauthier@ccac.ca)

³ I have a hard copy but will determine whether an electronic copy can be made available by CCAC.