

## Suggested considerations for establishment working under ASPA during the COVID19 lock-down

| CATEGORY  | CONSIDERATIONS/SUGGESTIONS  |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p><b>PERSONNEL</b></p> <p>Provide 'essential worker' letter to show authorities, include home address.<br/>Consider whether company/photo i.d. would be helpful</p> <p>All personnel must prioritise their health and the health of others by wearing suitable PPE and by observing social distancing as advised by the government</p> <p><b>Support mental health</b><br/>Consider mindfulness apps, Convert empty animal room into a relaxation/yoga room (online yoga classes).</p> | <b>ANIMAL TECHNICIANS</b>   | Run 2 or more teams if possible to lower the risk of transmission( <b>each team is treated as 'household'</b> ) to the wider team. Examples of how onsite teams might be run include alternate days, 2days on 2days off and utilising an early shift / a late shift to reduce contact and total staff in an area at any one time. If people are in isolation or have caring responsibilities they may (if well enough) be able to work offsite as part of a "virtual office" team |
|   |   | Where teams can't be separated use full PPE/ RPE and have staggered entry/break/exit times or other means of avoiding people not in PPE. Physically segregate in unit if possible   |
|   |   | Review teams regularly – this may need to be daily in some situations   |
|   |   | Introduce regular and frequent routines for surface decontamination, paying particular attention to door handle/ door plates, taps and work surfaces. Clean with detergent / 70% isopropyl alcohol or similar   |
|   |   | Limit reliance on public transport methods. Accommodate parking where possible to allow individuals to travel by car  |
|   |   | Consider a designated person working remotely who manages daily issues / is central point of contact  |
|   |   | Consider longer breaks with walks outside the facility (weather permitting) rather than shorter breaks inside the unit  |
|   |   | Minimise contact between technicians and researchers if possible. Consider staggered start / finish times and breaks  |
|   |   | Set up Whats App group – keep in close contact. Consider using this or similar electronic means (e.g. Mattermost) to allocate daily tasks, confirm there are sufficient staff daily, to sign in / out and to confirm task completion to manager   |
|   |   | Have a planned back up if the NACWO is too unwell to perform their duties   |
|   | Assess whether accommodating teams on site would be helpful                           |   |
|   | Maintain a log of when people become infected and calculate safe return to work dates |   |
|   | <b>RESEARCHERS</b>  | Ensure safety is possible for procedures being done (e.g. lone working with gaseous anaesthetics)   |
|   |   | Ensure all supplies are available in advance and check deliveries are being made e.g. Liquid nitrogen/Dry ice and that access is possible to relevant facilities for tissue harvest and storage   |
|   |   | Researchers should have 2 teams that do not come into contact (one to do the work and one as back up) if possible   |
|   |   | Create a list of back up researchers who are prepared to come in and do husbandry tasks & can perform Schedule 1  |
|   |   | Train an extensive number of researchers in daily checks/feed/water/cage change who could then go on backup list  |
|   |   | Clearly communicate possible consequences on research. It may be necessary to terminate experiments early or to prevent access to animal and lab facilities. Research other than essential research (i.e. coronavirus related or long term studies) may need to be stopped entirely   |
|   |   | Review all ongoing work regularly – probably needed at least twice a week whilst the COVID19 situation remains fluid  |
|   | <b>ESTABLISHMENT LICENCE HOLDER</b>   | Keep in close contact, update with any Home Office development. Look to for support   |
| Ensure essential worker letters are promptly provided to all staff required to support the continued functioning of animal facilities, this should include management, animal care staff, NVSs, engineers, stores staff etc. Nominate appropriate person(s) to maintain regular dialogue with HOI, SPOC or other staff of ASRU  |   |   |
| <b>ENGINEERS</b>  | Planned preventative maintenance tasks may need cease unless essential.               |   |
|   | Adopt isolation groups as for animal technicians/ researchers if possible             |   |
|   | Make sure engineers can get access if required in emergency                           |   |

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|                            |   | Ensure all alarm systems are checked regularly and are functional. Monitor, record and act on all alarms  |
|                            |   | Review contingencies for critical system failure (e.g. HVAC) and have an action plan. Make sure all backup systems are fully functional and that sufficient spare parts are available and accessible  |
|                            | <b>DELIVERIES</b>   | Avoid this if possible – If you must wear disposable PPE and wipe surfaces of incoming goods  |
|                            | <b>VETS</b>   | Provide veterinary advice via video or phone unless physical presence (e.g. to perform a procedure) is required   |
|                            |   | Use email/ photos/videos to share clinical signs with NACWO, vets and researchers   |
|                            |   | Have a plan for back up in case vet is too ill to work, and plan access arrangements for substitute vet   |
| <b>ANIMALS</b>             | <b>BREEDING</b>   | Ensure all non-replaceable lines are cryopreserved  |
|                            |   | Consider stopping breeding of lines that are frozen down and have been on “tick over”   |
|                            |   | Breed only for colony management, i.e. minimum number of breeding pairs to maintain the health of the colony  |
|                            |   | Avoid breeding animals with phenotype – maintain animals where homozygotes may be phenotypic as wild type x heterozygote crosses to avoid generation of homozygotes   |
|                            |   | Genotype promptly in order to identify animals required for ongoing breeding and cull animals not required ASAP   |
|                            |   | Consider outsourcing genotyping if internal facilities are closed   |
|                            | <b>REDUCE STOCK</b>   | Do not start new work unless absolutely essential/ internal review has been performed that confirms that the work can be properly serviced  |
|                            |   | Essential research work may continue if staffing levels allow it. A local decision making process which records decision making as to which projects may remain ongoing should be in place. Examples of what may be reasonable are COVID-19 work, aged animal work and work to complete studies |
|                            |   | There may be reasons for prioritising ongoing work with some species (e.g. NHPs)  |
|                            |   | If the facilities allow, consolidate animals to one area, check light cycle, room temps & designation first   |
|                            |   | Spread work evenly / reduce cleaning of cages – but not to extent that welfare could be compromised   |
|                            |   | Re-assess stock levels /staff levels at least once per week   |
|                            |   | Cull animals that are not going to be needed for colony management and cannot otherwise be used   |
|                            |   | Avoid unnecessary movement of animals   |
|                            | Prioritise the movement of animals to other facilities or establishments for contingency of valuable lines. |   |
| <b>ACCESS</b>              |   | Check your facility/ies will be open – Provide a list of names requiring access. Check with security how and when essential staff will access   |
|                            |   | Confirm how essential supplies and waste contractors will service the facility/ies  |
| <b>SUPPLIES</b>            |   | Stock up on diet, bedding, nesting materials, PPE, disinfectants and other essentials, aim for a minimum of 3 months  |
|                            |   | Ensure there will there be Liquid nitrogen / dry ice for cryopreserved stocks   |
|                            |   | Have stocks of CO <sub>2</sub> and sodium pentobarbitone and any other drugs as directed by the NVS   |
| <b>ESTATES / ENGINEERS</b> |   | Check your contractors are working and get emergency contacts. Maintain a list of mobile numbers, available to everyone   |
|                            |   | Consider if essential equipment will require servicing or repair. Ensure that you have a plan to enable this  |
|                            |   | Will waste be being removed from site? – prepare an area for on-site storage if necessary   |
| <b>RECORDS</b>             |   | <b>Record all difficult decisions taken. What/ when /why and any related evidence</b>   |