

# Guidelines for Crisis Management

*Responsible Use of Animals and  
Humans in Research*



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### Introduction

Research in neuroscience contributes importantly to society by increasing our understanding of the brain, its organization, and its function. Knowledge generated by neuroscience research has led to important advances in the understanding of diseases and disorders that affect the nervous system and in the development of better treatments that reduce suffering. Continued progress in many areas of neuroscience research requires the use of living animals to investigate the complex systems and functions of the nervous system, because no adequate alternatives exist. Therefore, the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) has taken the position that the use of living animals in properly designed scientific research is both ethical and appropriate.

This position does not, however, condone all experiments on animals. The neuroscience community shares the concern of society at large that the use of animals in research should conform to standards that are consonant with those applied to other uses of animals by humans, as currently outlined in federal regulations. Hence, animals can be used only in carefully planned studies, which must have been approved by an independent committee concerned with animal welfare, when suitable alternatives are unavailable, and only when appropriate precautions have been taken to minimize distress. A fundamental principle of ethical animal research is that experimental animals must not be subjected to avoidable distress or discomfort. This principle must be observed when designing any experiments that use living animals. It is also important that the smallest number of experimental animals be used to produce significant results.

Neuroscientists conduct their research in a pluralistic society, and this research is often funded by public agencies. However, it must be understood that for religious reasons, ethical principles, or personal beliefs, many people object to the killing of animals for the purpose of food, clothing, or research. The sensitivities of these individuals must be appreciated, and their beliefs cannot be dismissed as based simply on ignorance or faulty logic. In this regard, the animal welfare groups have a long history of acting in a responsible manner to prevent unnecessary suffering on the part of animals and have played an important role in advocating issues that many SfN members support, such as protecting the environment.

Unfortunately, over the last decade, some individuals who espouse animal rights have taken increasingly radical approaches to impose their beliefs on the research community. Their stance is that all research involving animals must be abolished. Radical adherents to this point of view have been involved in the destruction of laboratories, stealing of experi-

### Introduction (cont.)

mental animals and threats of violence to ethical researchers. These acts are clearly illegal and cannot be condoned. They pose a clear threat to the future of research and to the potential health benefits resulting from research. Related groups have exploited materials obtained from such raids to mount campaigns involving lies, distortions, and fabrications to vilify targeted researchers.

Neuroscientists have attracted a disproportionate amount of attention from animal rights radicals, and it seems probable that attacks on research performed by the members of SfN will continue to take place in the foreseeable future. Accordingly, SfN has prepared these guidelines for its members to provide background information and to offer appropriate proactive and reactive responses for SfN members whose research is attacked. This guide contains the following information:

- SfN *Guidelines on the Use of Animals in Neuroscience Research*;
- SfN *Guidelines on the Use of Humans in Neuroscience Research*;
- What you should do to prepare now, before an attack;
- What you should do if the ethics of your animal research is questioned;
- How SfN can assist you;
- Other groups to contact for information and assistance.

The ability of neuroscientists to continue their vitally important work depends critically upon their attention to the principles of responsible and ethical treatment of animals. Members are urged to read this guide. If your research is attacked, please contact the Society's Central Office immediately for assistance.

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### Preparation

If your research requires the use of animals, particularly the use of primates or other “sensitive species,” there are several steps you should follow, regardless of whether or not you think your work may be questioned. These proactive measures will give you initial security and save you stress if you are attacked. This section presents an overview of what you need to do to protect yourself.

### Complying with Regulations

Every SfN researcher using animals should automatically comply with the appropriate following policies, regulations, and/or governing organizations. They are cited for the purpose of review.

- *SfN Guidelines on the Use of Animals in Neuroscience Research*;
- *SfN Guidelines on the Use of Humans in Neuroscience Research*;
- NIH Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (required if research is conducted with PHS funds);
- US Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (amended 8/31/85) and its implementing regulations from the USDA (if conducting research in the U.S);
- PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (revised 2002);
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) within your institution;
- Guidelines of the Canadian Council of Animal Care;
- Other local or state regulations that may be in effect where your research is conducted.

### Preparation (cont.)

#### Animal Use Project File

In addition to the files normally maintained for various aspects of your research project, you should start and regularly update a file that contains background material that would be useful in case there was an inquiry into the use and care of animals used for your research. Keep in mind the following situations:

- Administration of drugs by any route, other than those originally approved, requires an addendum to protocol;
- Administration of one novel compound in place of another requires an addendum in protocol;
- Four-day versus 24-hour survival requires an addendum to protocol.

Specifically, your Animal Use File should contain the following:

- Approved research grant documentation;
- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)-approved protocol and any other related documents;
- List of all research grants, fellowships, honors, and awards received by researchers working on the project;
- List of clinicians who would be willing to speak out on the need for your type of research;
- Brief description (1-2 pages), in non-technical terms (lay English), of each of your research projects that includes its goals and accomplishments. Prepare this statement so that it could be given to the press or used in discussions with local groups. It should describe the nature of your research, why it is being conducted, why the use of animals is necessary, how the research will benefit humans and animals (either directly or in the long run), and what official approval agencies have approved your research. After you have drafted this statement, ask the media/public relations office in your institution (see next section: “[Coordinating with Institutions](#)”) to edit it. An example of such a project description can be found in the [Appendix](#) of this guide;

### Preparation (cont.)

- Prepare a list of the range of publications in which citations of your research publications have appeared, as well as an estimate of the number of citations. It is not necessary to compile a complete list of citations of your research publications. This information can be obtained in the Citation Index. Your list could be crucial in combating typical claims by animal activists that the research is trivial, has no impact on other scientists, or is of no use to humans;
- Your institution's plan for responding to animal activist allegations, including names and phone numbers of whom to contact within your institution in case of an attack or threat of an attack. Post the list of contacts in places readily available to laboratory personnel;
- *SfN Guidelines for Crisis Management.*

Every project that uses animals should have a separate file that includes the above information and documents. If you do not have such a file, develop one today. Make compiling this file a priority! If you are the target of an attack by animal activists, you will be relieved to have all these documents up-to-date and organized to assist you in developing a timely and appropriate response. Furthermore, remember to review and update the file periodically.

### Coordinating with Institutions

Your institution is responsible for defending itself and you against allegations of animal abuse made by animal activists. Your institution should have an administrative plan of action for responding to such an incident. Meet with the person responsible for activating the plan and review the procedures. At a minimum, the plan should contain the following information.

- Names and responsibilities of key people within the institution who should be contacted immediately if an incident occurs, e.g., security, administrative representative, veterinarian, animal care and use staff;
- Name of the official spokesperson;

### Preparation (cont.)

- Lines of communication;
- Security procedures;
- Public relations procedures;
- Support groups within the community to contact;
- Other organizations to contact nationwide.

You should not attempt to defend your own research. Anything that you say will be perceived as self-serving. A colleague or official spokesperson for your institution should take this role. Ideally, the person designated to be the official spokesperson should not be a scientist who is working on the project, but rather someone who understands both the institution's animal care and use program and is accustomed to talking to the press and groups of people. Institutions are now beginning to provide training to scientists on how to respond to the press and answer questions in a non-technical, straightforward manner. Encourage your institution to offer you and your colleagues such training. Also, consult the SfN *Guide to Public Advocacy*, this guide's section on "[Using the Media](#)," and the *Translational Neuroscience Accomplishments List*, for useful tips and background information on animal research.

When meeting with institutional representatives, review the contents of the Animal Use File that you are maintaining (see the section "[Animal Use Project File](#)"), and inquire if any other documents and letters would be useful. Have your project description reviewed and edited to make it understandable to the general public. Remember, it is your responsibility to maintain and update your file.

Many institutions do not have a plan for responding to animal activists' allegations or attacks. Take the responsibility to ensure that your institution does have such a plan. If you find that there is no institutional plan or central office to handle an incident, discuss the necessity of preparing a plan with your department head or the person responsible for overseeing research. The Foundation for Biomedical Research can assist you. The absence of an institutional plan cannot be ignored. Your institution should be prepared to provide you with organized and effective support if your research is questioned.

### Preparation (continued)

In addition, you should take the following steps:

- Place on file with your institutional IACUC a standing request that you be notified immediately when an Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA) request is placed for documents relating to your research;
- Make it very clear to technicians and students that you are committed to animal welfare and you are open to discussing any concerns they may have regarding the animals;
- Make sure the veterinarian who heads the animal care facility is completely informed about the project;
- Know whom you are hiring/mentoring;
- Be certain that all technicians and students understand proper experimental procedures and can describe the research in appropriate terms outside the laboratory (also that no deviation from protocol is allowed unless approved by IACUC);
- Be certain that all technicians and students are fully trained by appropriate individuals and such training is documented;
- Caution all technicians and students against morgue humor or insensitive comments that could be misunderstood;
- Make a list of important numbers such as for media relations, security, local police, physical plant, etc. and post in an area accessible to staff, but not readily available to activists if they should enter the lab;
- Contact your institutional security organization and invite those in charge to visit your lab and your animal care facilities so they will be familiar, not only with the layout of the facility, but also with the type of research that you are doing. Conduct a walk-through every year;
- Set up a schedule for monitoring animals (especially post-surgery). Make it clear this responsibility is not to be taken lightly and thorough records must be kept;
- Secure sensitive documents and other media items (i.e., video tapes) so that they are protected from theft during a break-in;

### Preparation (cont.)

- If your institution has been targeted in the past, find out what procedures were used to respond to the attack and how effective they were.

### Wording Research Documents

Remember that non-scientists may be reading your manuscripts and grant documents. When preparing your grant applications, IACUC forms, and other related documents, always consider the possibility that they might be read and reprinted out of context by animal activists, who may try to gather such information via FOIA. This warning applies especially to those sections of grant applications and manuscripts describing experimental procedures involving animals. These sections are often used by animal activist groups to “damn you with your own words.”

You are especially susceptible to being targeted by animal rights activists if you:

- Conduct research on dogs, cats, or non-human primates;
- Conduct research on animals from shelters or pounds;
- Conduct research funded by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke or the National Eye Institute;
- Conduct research that has been accessed through FOIA.

Remember to coordinate with your institution so that you are notified when a FOIA request is put in for documents pertaining to your research.

Because animal activist groups usually quote passages out of context and overlook vital information, e.g., that general anesthesia is used, it is unlikely that you can completely immunize yourself from misrepresentation. However, if you thoroughly explain all of the surgical and experimental procedures involving animals, emphasizing what procedures are used to insure that the animals suffer minimal discomfort, a reasonable person, supplied with your full text, should discount the activists’ claims as extreme. Therefore, it is recommended that you go beyond the minimal statement required when drafting your manuscripts, applications, or animal care and use forms. In addition, it is becoming more and more critical to stress and justify the importance and impact of your work.

### Preparation (cont.)

#### Becoming an Advocate

Becoming an advocate can encompass many activities, including writing to your local or national legislators, participating in a forum with local health associations, and speaking at a local school. Each of these activities promotes public awareness and creates an environment in which radical actions of animal rights groups will be unwelcome. Another aspect of being an effective advocate is being informed. Stay abreast of current legislative issues, local animal rights groups and their tactics, and other institutions and organizations within your area with which you can engage in advocacy projects and coordinate an appropriate response in the event of a crisis.

Contact your local [SfN Chapter](#) for more information on how to become involved.

#### For Other Useful Information on Public Advocacy

- [SfN \*Guide to Public Advocacy\*](#):
- [Joint Steering Committee for Public Policy \(SfN Coalition\)](#)

### Preparation (cont.)

#### Using the Media

Before contacting the media, identify key points to convey both about your specific research and animal research as a whole. Consult the SfN [\*Guide to Public Advocacy\*](#) for more information on how to prepare for contact with the media. Animal rights activists will often try to elicit damaging comments from you about animal research by giving you faulty information and asking you to reply. Remember to only respond to questions to which you know the answer, and only comment on research familiar to you!

#### General Information about Animal Research

- [Common Questions on Animal Models of Disease from the AALAS](#)
- [Questions People Ask about Animals in Research from the American Physiological Assn.](#)
- [USDA Animal Welfare Act Fact Sheet](#)
- [USDA Annual Animal Care Report for 2001](#) (consult Appendix for animal research data)

### Guidelines for Use of Animals

The Society for Neuroscience, as a professional society for basic and clinical researchers in neuroscience, endorses and supports the appropriate and responsible use of animals as experimental subjects. Knowledge generated by neuroscience research on animals has led to important advances in the understanding of diseases and disorders that affect the nervous system and in the development of better treatments that reduce suffering in humans and animals. This knowledge also makes a critical contribution to our understanding of ourselves, the complexities of our brains, and what makes us human. Continued progress in understanding how the brain works and further advances in treating and curing disorders of the nervous system require investigation of complex functions at all levels in the living nervous system. Because no adequate alternatives exist, much of this research must be done on animal subjects. The Society takes the position that neuroscientists have an obligation to contribute to this progress through responsible and humane research on animals.

Several functions of the Society are related to the use of animals in research. A number of these involve decisions about research conducted by members of the Society, including the scheduling of scientific presentations at the annual meetings, the review and publication of original research papers in *The Journal of Neuroscience* and the defense of members whose ethical use of animals in research is questioned by animal rights activists. The Society's support for the research of individual members defines a relationship between the Society and its members. The purpose of this document is to outline the policy that guides that relationship. Compliance with the following policy will be an important factor in determining the suitability of research for presentation at the annual meetings or for publication in *The Journal of Neuroscience* and in situations where the Society is asked to provide public and active support for a member whose use of animals in research has been questioned.

The responsibility for implementing the policy in each of these areas rests with the relevant administrative body (Program Committee, Publications Committee, Editorial Board, and Committee on Animals in Research, respectively) in consultation with Council.

### Guidelines for Use of Animals (cont.)

#### General Principles

The following principles, based largely on the [PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals](#), are a useful guide to designing and implementing experimental procedures involving laboratory animals.

- Animals selected for a procedure should be of an appropriate species and quality and the minimum number required to obtain valid results.
- Proper use of animals, including the avoidance or minimization of discomfort, distress and pain, is imperative.
- Procedures with animals that may cause more than momentary or slight pain or distress should be performed with appropriate sedation, analgesia or anesthesia. Surgical or other painful procedures should not be performed on unanesthetized animals paralyzed by chemical agents.
- Postoperative care of animals should minimize discomfort and pain and, in any case, should be equivalent to accepted practices in schools of veterinary medicine.
- Animals that would otherwise suffer severe or chronic pain or distress that cannot be relieved should be painlessly killed at the end of the procedure or, if appropriate, during the procedure. If the study requires the death of the animal, the animal must be killed in a humane manner that complies with the [Report of the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia](#).
- Living conditions should be appropriate for the species and contribute to the animals' well being. Normally, the housing, feeding and care of all animals used for biomedical purposes must be directed by a veterinarian or other scientist trained and experienced in the proper care, handling and use of the species being maintained or studied. In any case, appropriate veterinary care should be provided.
- Exceptions to these principles require careful consideration and should only be made by an appropriate review group such as an Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC).

### **Guidelines for Use of Animals (cont.)**

#### **SfN Policy on the Use of Animals**

Neuroscience research uses complicated, often invasive methods, each of which is associated with different problems, risks and specific technical considerations. An experimental method that would be deemed inappropriate for one kind of research may be the method of choice for another kind of research. It is, therefore, impossible for the Society to define specific policies and procedures for the care and use of all research animals and for the design and conduct of every neuroscience experiment.

The US Public Health Service's Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS policy) and the Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (the *Guide*) describe general policies and procedures designed to ensure the humane and appropriate use of live vertebrate animals in all forms of biomedical research. The Society finds the policies and procedures set forth in the PHS policy and the *Guide* to be both necessary and sufficient to ensure a high standard of animal care and use and adopts them as its official Policy on the Use of Animals in Neuroscience Research (Society policy). All Society members are expected to conduct their animal research in compliance with this policy. Members are required to verify that they have done so when submitting abstracts for presentation at the annual meetings or manuscripts for publication in *The Journal of Neuroscience*. Adherence to the Society policy is also an important step toward receiving help from the Society in responding to questions about a member's use of animals in research. A complete description on what to do if your research is questioned is included in this handbook. Also, a complete description of SfN's policy and procedures for defending members whose research comes under attack can be obtained by contacting the Society's Central Office.

#### **Review by Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC)**

An important element of the Society's policy is the establishment of a local committee that is charged with reviewing and approving all proposed animal care and use procedures, such as the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) at your research facility. In addition to scientists experienced in research involving animals and a veterinarian, the membership of this local committee should include a person who is not affiliated with the member's institution in any other way. In reviewing a proposed use of animals, the committee should evaluate the adequacy of institutional policies, animal husbandry, veterinary care, and the physical plant. The committee should pay specific attention to proposed pro-

### **Guidelines for Use of Animals (cont.)**

cedures for animal procurement, quarantine and stabilization, separation by species, disease diagnosis and treatment, anesthesia and analgesia, surgery and post-surgical care, and euthanasia. The review committee also should ensure that procedures involving live vertebrate animals are designed and performed with due consideration of their relevance to human or animal health, the advancement of knowledge or the good of society. This review and approval of a member's use of live vertebrate animals in research by a local committee is an essential component of the Society policy. For assistance in developing appropriate animal care and use procedures and establishing a local review committee, call the Society and consult the documents recommended at the end of this section. SfN also encourages its members to serve on their local IACUC.

#### **Other Laws**

In addition to complying with the policy described above, Society members who reside in North America must also adhere to all relevant national, state, or local laws and/or regulations that govern the use of animals in neuroscience research. Thus, US members must observe the US Animal Welfare Act (as amended) and its resulting regulations from the US Department of Agriculture. Canadian members must abide by the January 1993 Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals. Members in Mexico must comply with the "Seventh Title of the Regulations of the General Law of Health Regarding Health Research." In addition to complying with the laws and regulations of their home countries, foreign members of the Society should adhere to the official Society policy outlined here.

# Guidelines for Use of Animals (cont.)

## Other Regulatory Documents

### Canada

Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals. Canadian Council on Animal Care, 315-350 Albert Street, Ottawa ON Canada K1R 1B1. (Updated in 1993)

### European Union

Council Directive 86/609/EEC on the approximation of laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the Member States regarding the protection of animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes. (1986)

European Convention for the protection of vertebrate animals used for experimental and other scientific purposes. (1999)

### Germany

The German Animal Protection Act. Tierschutzgesetz (TSchG). [in German]  
(Updated in 1998)

### Mexico

Laws and Codes of Mexico. "Seventh Title of the Regulations of the General Law of Health Regarding Health Research." 12th updated ed. Porrúa Collection, 430-31. Mexico: Porrúa Publishers. (1995)

### United Kingdom

Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, UK. (1986).

Guidance on the Operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986.

### **Guidelines for Use of Animals (cont.)**

#### United States

Alternative to Animal Use in Research, Testing, and Education. US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC. US Congress Office of Technology Assessment publication no. OTA-BA-273. (1986)

Animal Care Policy Manual. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). (Updated in 2002)

Animal Welfare Act. Animal Welfare Information Center, US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Beltsville, MD. (Public Law 89-544 as amended)

Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Institute of Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR), Commission on Life Sciences, National Research Council. National Academy Press, Washington, DC. (Updated in 1996)

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Guidebook. Applied Research Ethics National Association, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW). (Updated in 2002).

Occupational Health and Safety in the Care and Use of Non-human Primates. Institute of Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR). National Academy Press, Washington, DC. (2003)

Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), NIH. 6705 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892-7982. (Updated in 2002)

Report of the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia. American Veterinary Medicine Association. JAVMA 218 (5): 669-696. (Updated in 2000)

Use of Laboratory Animals in Biomedical and Behavioral Research. Institute of Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR). National Academy Press, Washington, DC. (1988)

### **Guidelines for Use of Animals (cont.)**

#### United States

Alternative to Animal Use in Research, Testing, and Education. US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC. US Congress Office of Technology Assessment publication no. OTA-BA-273. (1986)

Animal Care Policy Manual. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). (Updated in 2002)

Animal Welfare Act. Animal Welfare Information Center, US Department of Agriculture (USDA). Beltsville, MD. (Public Law 89-544 as amended)

Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Institute of Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR), Commission on Life Sciences, National Research Council. National Academy Press, Washington, DC. (Updated in 1996)

Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) Guidebook. Applied Research Ethics National Association, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW). (Updated in 2002).

Occupational Health and Safety in the Care and Use of Non-human Primates. Institute of Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR). National Academy Press, Washington, DC. (2003)

Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals. Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), NIH. 6705 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892-7982. (Updated in 2002)

Report of the AVMA Panel on Euthanasia. American Veterinary Medicine Association. JAVMA 218 (5): 669-696. (Updated in 2000)

Use of Laboratory Animals in Biomedical and Behavioral Research. Institute of Laboratory Animal Research (ILAR). National Academy Press, Washington, DC. (1988)

### **Guidelines for Use of Humans**

#### **SfN Policy on the Use of Humans**

Experimental procedures involving human subjects must have been conducted in conformance with the policies and principles contained in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects (US Office for Human Research Protections) and in the Declaration of Helsinki. When publishing a paper in *The Journal of Neuroscience* or submitting an abstract for presentation at the annual meetings, authors must sign a statement of compliance with this policy.

#### **Other Regulatory Documents**

Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects. Declaration of Helsinki, World Medical Association (WMA).

Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects. Department of Health and Human Services, NIH, Office for the Protection from Research Risks (OPRR). (Updated in 2001).

# What To Do If Your Research Is Questioned

## Taking Action

You cannot always anticipate when an animal activist group will question or attack your research. The method(s) used to stop or impede your research could range from inflammatory letters in local newspapers to destructive laboratory break-ins. Many SfN members have been attacked through an unannounced distribution of printed material to their host institutions, to representatives of the federal, state and local governments, and to the neighborhood in which they reside. These leaflets usually contain glossy brochures in which inaccurate descriptions of research are disparaged by so-called “experts.” Whatever the form of attack, you will be in a good position to handle the controversy if you have followed the recommendations in the previous section of this guide.

One definite clue that your research is being considered for an attack is notification that your grant application, if federally funded, and your reports have been requested under FOIA. Under the current guidelines, virtually the entire grant application file must be released to the requester. The funding agency will inform you that your grant materials have been petitioned. You should treat this situation as an alarm and prepare yourself and your institution for an attack.

If you believe, for any reason, that your research is being reviewed by an animal activist group, you should take the following steps:

- Review your Animal Use File and make sure that all the necessary information on the project is documented and updated;
- Inform your institution’s Animal Care and Use representative of your concerns and discuss which precautions described in the institutional plan should be activated;
- Inform the funding agency’s project officer of your concerns;
- Inform SfN and other professional societies involved in this issue;
- Contact the [National Association for Biomedical Research](#) (NABR);
- Contact your media/public relations office at your institution.

If your research comes under any attack from an animal activist group, with or without prior warning, even if it does not appear to be threatening at first, follow the guidelines presented below. You are not alone if you are attacked by an animal activist group. Your institution, funding sources, colleagues, and professional societies can all offer support.

### Questioned Research (cont.)

#### Contacting Your Institution

Assuming that your Animal Use File is in place and up-to-date, meet immediately with the person your institution has designated to handle the incident. The people to contact should be listed in the institution's plan. Remember to contact your institution's Animal Care and Use chairperson, who will also contact the veterinarian in charge of the facility. With this group, discuss the following points:

- Review the original institutional plan that outlines the procedures to follow;
- Identify the type of crisis, location (if appropriate), names, and number of people involved;
- Determine what information still needs to be collected and reviewed;
- Specify what responses will be given to specific allegations, confirm who the designated spokesperson is, and determine the type and timing of press releases.

#### Contacting Your Funding Source

It is important that you contact the project officer from your funding source as soon as possible after any type of activity from an animal activist group. Your grant proposal has been approved and, therefore, so has your plan for the care and use of laboratory animals needed for your research. Therefore, your funding source would want to be informed of any problem. Officials within your funding source can provide you with support, such as letters highlighting the importance of your research, and documentation of your compliance with federal legislation on the care and use of animals. Federal granting agencies place a high priority on this issue and have worked closely with grantees who have been unjustly accused by animal activist groups. If your grant is through the National Institutes of Health, you should also contact [Dr. Margaret Snyder](#) at their Office of Scientific Affairs.

### Questioned Research (cont.)

#### Contacting Security

As mentioned in the section “Be Proactive: What You Should Prepare Now,” contact your local security organization before there is a problem. If the organization is familiar with your work, there will be less of a chance that your research will be disrupted. After your research is questioned, contact your security organization. You may also want to inform your local police. If federal grant dollars are involved, the Federal Bureau of Investigation should be notified as well.

#### Contacting Professional Societies

As discussed in the “Preparation” section of this guide, the Society for Neuroscience may provide various forms of support from writing letters to offering suggestions. This is one of your membership benefits and you should take advantage of it by contacting the SfN Central Office. Other associations also have policies and procedures in place to assist researchers who are unjustly attacked by animal activist groups.

It is important to remember that an attack from an animal activist organization will not be short-lived. For the most part, these organizations are extremely well-organized and have the resources to plan and implement a noteworthy campaign against your research. Their actions will affect your research and also your life. One scientist, who has been targeted for over a number of years, said, “The amount of time we spend defending ourselves and dealing with added layers of paperwork has dramatically increased. We all do less science than before.”

### Support from SfN

The Committee on Animals in Research drafted SfN's Policy on the Use of Animals in Neuroscience Research, the foundation for the Society's involvement on the issue. SfN's basic premise is that both basic and clinical research in many areas of biomedical research cannot continue without the use of living animals, and that such use is both ethical and appropriate. The policy is presented in this guide.

If a SfN member comes under attack by animal rights activists, please contact Executive Director Marty Saggese at the SfN central office. The Society can make recommendations. Any specific action taken by SfN on behalf of your research will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

### Educational Materials

SfN has developed materials that members can use to assist them in educating their patients, students, colleagues, and other people in their community, on the importance of using animals in brain research. SfN can obtain the following materials, upon request.

#### Books and Brochures

- *Brain Briefings* – a series of two-page newsletters explaining how basic neuroscience discoveries lead to clinical applications. These newsletters are intended for a lay audience and cover topics as varied as cell suicide, stem cell transplants, and gender and the brain.
- *Brain Facts* – a 52-page illustrated booklet on the brain and nervous system. Designed for lay audiences, these publications describe the contributions of research on animals to the understanding of the nervous system and to the development of treatments for neurological and psychiatric disorders.
- *Guide to Public Advocacy* – a 30-page booklet providing tools, information and tips on how to be a public advocate. The *Guide* is designed for anyone interested in communicating the importance of biomedical and neuroscience research to elected officials, the press, and the general public.
- *Translational Neuroscience Accomplishments* – a list of the top accomplishments in the field of neuroscience that would not have been possible without the use of animal research.

### **Support from SfN (cont.)**

#### **Slides**

The Society has a set of slides available, which illustrate human diseases of the nervous system that have become better understood through research on animals. Each slide focuses on a single disorder and is accompanied by a description of how animal research has led to advances. Topics include polio, Alzheimer's disease, strabismus, Down syndrome, and depression. The sets are designed to be used by scientists during talks to students.

#### **Annual Meeting Presentations**

Every year SfN schedules a program at its annual meeting that focuses on the animals in research issue. The program generally consists of a panel of speakers to address animals in research issues, and there is time for the audience to ask questions of the panelists.

#### **Networking**

SfN's membership includes over 33,000 neuroscience researchers from all over the world. Unfortunately, as the animal issue becomes more prominent and disrupts more research, more SfN members are likely to be affected both directly and indirectly. SfN may be able to provide official support, as well as the names of other Society members who are similarly affected, thereby facilitating much needed personal support. Members are urged to call the Central Office if they have questions or would like to locate a member who has experience with animal activist groups.

### Support from Other Groups

#### State Organizations

[States United for Biomedical Research](#) – links to organizations by state

#### Government Agencies

[Animal Welfare Information Center](#)

US Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Research Service  
[National Agricultural Library](#)  
10301 Baltimore Avenue, 4th Floor  
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351  
(301) 504-6212 Fax (301) 504-7125

[Institute for Laboratory Animal Research](#)

National Academy of Sciences  
2101 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20418

[Office for Human Research Protections](#)

US Department of Health and Human Services  
The Tower Building  
1101 Wootton Parkway, Suite 200  
Rockville, MD 20852  
(301) 496-7005 Fax (301) 402-0527

[Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare](#)

National Institutes of Health  
Office of Extramural Research  
RKL1, Suite 360, MSC 7982  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7982  
(301) 496-7163

## Support from Other Groups (cont.)

### National/International Organizations

Americans for Medical Progress

908 King Street, Suite 301  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
(703) 836-9595 Fax (703) 836-9594

Canadians for Health Research

PO Box 126  
Westmount, Quebec  
Canada  
H3Z 2T1  
(514) 398-7478 Fax (514)-398-8361

European Biomedical Research Association (EBRA)

58 Great Marlborough Street  
London W1F 7JY  
United Kingdom

Foundation for Biomedical Research (FBR)

818 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 457-0654 Fax: (202) 457-0659

incurably ill for Animal Research (iiFAR)

PO Box 27454  
Lansing, MI 48909  
(517) 887-1141 Fax: (517) 887-1550

National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR)

818 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 857-0540 Fax: (202)-659-1902

## **Support from Other Groups (cont.)**

### Partners in Research

PO Box 192, Station B  
London, ON  
Canada  
N6E 4V8  
(519) 433-7866 Fax: (519) 645-8899

### Research Defence Society (RDS)

58 Great Marlborough Street  
London W1F 7JY  
England  
020 7287 2818 Fax: 020 7287 2627

### Scientists Center for Animal Welfare (SCAW)

7833 Walker Drive, Suite 410  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770  
(301)-345-3500 Fax: (301)-345-3503

# Appendix

## Sample Research Project Description

### Research Goals

We want to understand the development of the human visual system. This knowledge will help in the prevention and treatment of certain vision problems in children. Further, the rules that guide development in the visual system can be applied to other systems within the brain. Our work, therefore, has wide application to other developmental disorders affecting the nervous system.

We do not rely solely on animal experiments. We can obtain answers to some of the questions we pose from computer models designed to simulate various aspects of visual development. In addition, information about some of the mechanisms and molecules that might be operating in development comes from experiments on brain cells cultured in a dish. We utilize this knowledge in planning our experiments to yield the greatest amount of new information. However, our most important goal is to discover new information about the anatomy and physiology of visual pathways in the developing brain. The careful use of living animals in experiments is the only means by which we can obtain this particular information.

A major focus of our work is the pathway that leads from the two eyes to the visual centers of the brain, including the cerebral cortex. Another area of study is the pathway that links visual areas located in the two sides of the brain. In each case, our initial work is performed using normal adult animals, usually rats. Data we obtain from these adult animals are then compared with data from young, developing animals or from older animals that had abnormal visual experience early in life.

Our goal is first to understand the normal arrangement of neural connections and then to assess how genetic and environmental factors guide the formation of these connections during development. The more we learn about development of the visual system, the more we realize the importance of events that occur at the very earliest stages in the formation of the central nervous system. For this reason, much of our work involves studies of animals at, or even before, the time of birth.

### **Appendix**

## **Sample Research Project Description (cont.)**

### **The Value of Our Research**

Our experiments result in a better understanding of the biological rules that govern basic aspects of brain development in all mammals, including humans. One of our most important discoveries is that a brief critical period exists shortly after birth when visual experience permanently modifies the properties of the visual system. We could not have predicted this finding from computer models or from experiments on nerve cells cultured in a dish. This discovery helps us to understand some disorders of the human visual system such as amblyopia, also called lazy eye, a currently untreatable severe loss of vision in one eye. Amblyopia occurs when humans are exposed to abnormal visual experience early in life, during the critical period, because of disruption of any one of the delicate systems that control the focus or the movement of our eyes. Conditions that commonly produce these disruptions include an uncorrected refractive error, as in myopia or nearsightedness; a cloudy lens or cataract that is not removed; a misalignment of the eyes, such as a squint or cross-eye, that is not corrected; and irregular eye movements or nystagmus. These clinical disorders are found in over 10 percent of all children. A clearer understanding of normal brain development is a necessary step toward preventing problems like amblyopia and toward rehabilitating children who are already afflicted.

### **Animals Used in Experiments**

Prior to the use of any animal, all of our proposed procedures are reviewed by a committee of scientists, veterinarians, animal care technicians, and members of the local community to ensure that they conform to all institutional, local, state, and federal animal welfare laws, regulations and policies. This committee has the power to ask us to modify our procedures or to halt our work if there are unresolved problems. After our use of animals has been approved, our proposed experiments are reviewed for scientific merit by a national committee of experts in this field, in competition with proposals from other investigators. For the past 15 years, our experiments have been judged to be excellent and have received funding from various agencies, including the National Institutes of Health.

Our experiments are performed on fully anesthetized animals so that the experiments do not cause pain or distress. Veterinary staff members examine our animals daily to monitor their health and welfare. Staff members have the authority to remove from experimental use

### Appendix

## Sample Research Project Description

any unhealthy animal. The animal care facility in which our animals are housed is fully accredited and subject to inspection by the accrediting agency. All our technical staff and research trainees have received formal instruction in our approved techniques.

In some of our experiments we use rats that we either breed ourselves or obtain from licensed commercial suppliers. We use rats because of their short gestation period, the relatively immature state of their brain at birth and the rapid rate at which they mature after birth. They are ideal studies of mammalian brain development.

In addition, we use various mutant strains of rodents, such as those naturally born without eyes or with abnormal brain pathways, to study the effects of prenatal problems in one part of the visual pathway on the development of visual connections elsewhere. None of these mutants shows any signs of pain or distress as a result of their developmental abnormalities.

We conduct some of our experiments using mixed-breed domestic cats purchased from licensed commercial suppliers. We use cats because, like humans, they have forward-facing eyes and keen visual acuity. Indeed, there are no significant differences between the visual pathways of cats and humans. Thus, our findings on the mechanisms of brain development in cats will also apply to humans.

### Scientists Who Can Offer Assessments of Our Research

For assessments of our research, please contact the following:

Dr. Jane Doe, Department of Ophthalmology, University of Metropolis, CT 06360; phone: (203) 123-4567; fax: (203) 123-6389; and e-mail: jane.doe@umetropolis.edu.

Dr. Jack Sprat, Vision Research Center, Erewhon, NM 21227; phone: (505) 987-6543; fax: (505) 987-9951; and e-mail: jsprat@vrc.edu.

Dr. U.T. Cobley, St. Elsewhere's Hospital, Clarksville, CA 92033; phone: (619) 542-1111; fax: (619) 542-9127; and e-mail: utc@stelsewhere.hospital.com.