



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE  
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

FOR US POSTAL SERVICE DELIVERY:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500, MSC 6910  
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-6910  
Home Page: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>

FOR EXPRESS MAIL:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500  
Bethesda, Maryland 20817  
Telephone: (301) 496-7163  
Facsimile: (301) 402-7065

September 3, 2019

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
#A4107-01 (OLAW Case 1U)

Dr. Daniel T. Jaffe  
Vice President for Research  
University of Texas at Austin  
P.O. Box 7996  
Austin, TX 78713

Dear Dr. Jaffe,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your August 29, 2019 letter reporting a serious deviation from the provisions of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* at the University of Texas at Austin, following up on an initial report on August 15, 2019. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that four adult singing mice and several pups died due to lack of food. This was due to an error on behalf of the husbandry staff. The mice were supported by NSF grants #1827790 and 1457350.

The corrective actions consisted of counseling the animal caretaker responsible, implementing a policy to have animal care management staff increase oversight of the area, assigning an experienced caretaker who was trained on the standard operating procedures to take care of this colony, using larger food bowls for these mice, and ensuring that husbandry staff has ample time to provide care for the animals.

Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that measures have been implemented to prevent recurrence of this problem. OLAW concurs with the actions taken by the institution to comply with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.  
Deputy Director  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare

cc: IACUC Chair  
Flo Thiels, NSF Program Manager  
Robert Gibbens, D.V.M., USDA-APHIS-AC

A4107-1u



OFFICE OF RESEARCH SUPPORT  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

P.O. Box 7426 • Mail Code A3200 • Austin, Texas 78713-7426 • (512) 471-8871 • FAX (512) 471-8873  
[www.utexas.edu/research/rscl](http://www.utexas.edu/research/rscl)

August 29, 2019

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.  
Director, Division of Compliance Oversight  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health  
RKL 1, Suite 360, MSC 7982  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7982

Subject: Report of an Adverse Event with PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use  
of Laboratory Animals

Dear Dr. Wolff:

The University of Texas at Austin (UT), Animal Welfare Assurance #A4107-01, submits this report in compliance with section IV.F.3 of the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and with the published guidance document NOT-OD-05-034 "Guidance on Prompt Reporting to OLAW under the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals." This letter is to report an adverse event where conditions jeopardized the health or well-being of animals. The initial report of an adverse event was made August 15, 2019.

On August 1, 2019, an investigator at UT Austin reported mortality of four adult singing mice and evidence of pre-weaning pup losses. The husbandry care of these animals is the responsibility of University animal care staff. This mortality event was due to a husbandry error. The evidence provided by the investigator indicates that a lack of food contributed to the mortalities.

The UT Austin Office of Research Support and Compliance staff have confirmed with animal care management that the following procedures were successfully implemented to prevent reoccurrence:

1. A policy was implemented to state that animal care management personnel would be involved in increased oversight of the area. Members of animal care management are currently performing animal checks on a daily basis.
2. Staff were re-assigned and an experienced alternate caretaker has assumed responsibilities for this area. This caretaker was fully trained on the appropriate SOPs and additional supervision from animal care management is being performed to ensure proper performance.
3. The use of larger food bowls has become the standard for singing mice.

Axel Wolff, Director, Division of Compliance Oversight  
August 29, 2019  
Re: PHS Assurance Number A4107-01  
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4. Responsibilities and tasks given to husbandry staff assigned to the singing mice were re-assessed to assure that staff have adequate time to provide appropriate care and observations.

The project involved in this report is funded by NSF award numbers 1827790 and 1457350, entitled "*EDGE: Tools for studying gene function in voles*" and "*Inventing monogamy: innovation and adaptation in the epigenome*". The grant officer has been copied on this notification.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Daniel T. Jaffe  
Vice President for Research  
University of Texas at Austin

DTJ:aem

cc: Kathryn Bayne, Global Director, AAALAC  
S. John Mihic, Chair, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee  
(b) (6)  
Edda (Flo) Thiels, Program Manager, NSF

**Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]**

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**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 29, 2019 1:29 PM  
**To:** IACUC  
**Cc:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Subject:** RE: Adverse event report NSF awards 1827790 and 1457350

Thank you for this report, (b) (6) We will send a response soon.  
Axel Wolff

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**From:** IACUC <IACUC@austin.utexas.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 29, 2019 1:23 PM  
**To:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>  
**Cc:** Jaffe, Dan <dtj@austin.utexas.edu>; Mihic, S J <mihic@austin.utexas.edu>; (b) (6)  
(b) (6) ethiels@nsf.gov; IACUC  
<IACUC@austin.utexas.edu>  
**Subject:** Adverse event report NSF awards 1827790 and 1457350

Dear Dr. Wolff,

On behalf of Dr. Daniel Jaffe, Vice President for Research at the University of Texas at Austin, please find the attached final report involving an adverse event with NSF grant awards 1827790 and 1457350. Please feel free to contact me with any further questions. Thank you.

(b) (6)

**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Friday, August 16, 2019 6:11 AM  
**To:** IACUC  
**Cc:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Subject:** RE: Initial report of an adverse event

Thank you for this preliminary report, (b) (6). We will open a new case file and look forward to receiving the final report from the IO after the IACUC has completed its investigation.

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.  
Deputy Director, OLAW

**From:** IACUC <IACUC@austin.utexas.edu>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 15, 2019 2:53 PM  
**To:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>  
**Cc:** Jaffe, Dan <dtj@austin.utexas.edu>; (b) (6) Mihic, S J  
<mihic@austin.utexas.edu>; (b) (6)  
**Subject:** Initial report of an adverse event

Director, Division of Compliance Oversight  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health  
Rockledge 1, Suite 360, MSC 7982  
6705 Rockledge Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7982

Dear Dr. Wolff,

On behalf of Dr. Daniel Jaffe, Vice President for Research at the University of Texas at Austin, please accept this initial report of an adverse event for NSF award numbers 1827790 and 1457350, under Assurance number A4107-01.

On 08/01/2019, an investigator at the University of Texas at Austin reported mortality of four adult singing mice and evidence of pre-weaning pup losses. The husbandry care of these animals is the responsibility of University animal care staff. This mortality event was due to a husbandry error. The evidence provided by the investigator indicates that a lack of food contributed to the mortalities.

The animal care director or designee will follow-up with the staff member responsible for husbandry in this area. In addition, the following steps were immediately implemented to prevent reoccurrence:

1. A policy was implemented to state that animal care management personnel would be involved in additional oversight of the area.
2. Staff will be re-assigned so that an experienced alternate caretaker will assume responsibilities for this area. This caretaker will be fully trained on the appropriate SOPs and will be supervised to ensure proper performance.
3. The use of larger food bowls will become the standard for singing mice.
4. Responsibilities and tasks given to husbandry staff assigned to the singing mice will be re-assessed to assure that staff have adequate time to provide appropriate care and observations.

As per NOT-OD-05-034, conditions that jeopardize the health or well-being of animals is reportable.

The IACUC will continue to review the matter. After finishing the review, a final report of its conclusions and actions will be submitted to the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,

(b) (6)