



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) 480-3387

September 30, 2022

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance  
#A3272-01 [OLAW Case 2Q]

Dr. Denis Wirtz  
Vice Provost for Research  
Johns Hopkins University  
(b) (4) Garland Hall  
3400 N. Charles St.  
Baltimore, MD 21218

Dear Dr. Wirtz,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your September 16, 2022 letter reporting an instance of noncompliance with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals at Johns Hopkins University, following up on an initial telephone report on June 12, 2022. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that peri-operative analgesia had not been provided to mice on a memory study. Inadequate training of laboratory staff was contributory to the matter.

The corrective actions consisted of the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) directing the Principal Investigator to stop additional animal activities during investigation of the matter. The laboratory staff was retrained on protocol procedures and on adherence to the protocol, animal activities were allowed to resume, and observation by the IACUC determined that procedures were now being performed appropriately. The NIH grant was not charged for any unauthorized animal activities.

Based on its assessment of this explanation, OLAW understands that measures have been implemented to correct and prevent recurrence of this problem. OLAW concurs with the actions taken by the IACUC to comply with the PHS Policy.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

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

cc: IACUC Chair

A3272-2Q



September 16, 2022

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.

Deputy Director

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare National Institutes of Health Bethesda, Maryland 20892-6910

RE: Animal Welfare Assurance #A3272-01, OLAW Case 2Q

Dear Dr. Wolff:

Please accept this letter as a final report of a finding of serious noncompliance with the Public Health Service (PHS) *Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals*. In accordance with federal guidelines, the circumstances in question were described to you in a prompt report from Dr. Brendan Canning, Chair of the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) on June 12, 2022 (OLAW Case #A3272-2Q).

The research associated with this incident involved use of mice in studies of memory and reinforcing behaviors and the functions of cortical neurons in these processes. Purchase and care for the animals was supported internally by JHU funding but the research was also supported by an NIH grant (1RF1AG063783-01A1). During COVID-related restrictions on lab personnel density in JHU labs, members of the research team misunderstood guidance regarding care for animals and had failed to provide analgesics prior to or following some surgical procedures. This deviation from the protocol narrative was revealed during routine ACUC inspections of the laboratory and review of records.

Upon discovering the deviation from the approved protocol, the ACUC immediately requested and the PI agreed to stop all planned experiments until the circumstances could be investigated by the ACUC and corrective actions could be implemented. At no point during the investigation was the protocol formally suspended. The ACUC concluded that the PI had failed to ensure appropriate training of personnel on protocol-required pain control procedures. The PI promptly re-educated all listed personnel on the protocol and reinforced the need for adherence to all procedures set forth in the protocol. The ACUC reviewed the standard operating procedures and surgical records with the laboratory before determining the experiments could resume as described in the approved protocol. ACUC personnel observed several subsequent experiments upon restart and reported to the ACUC Chair that care and use of the animals under this protocol was appropriate.

This matter including the corrective actions taken was reviewed by the ACUC during a meeting held on June 16th, 2022. A quorum of committee members voted unanimously that the circumstances represented serious noncompliance with PHS policy and that the corrective actions were appropriate. While the ACUC found serious noncompliance, because none of the costs of the animal work were charged to the federal grant, no charges were removed from the award cited above. The JHU ACUC considers this matter closed.

Office of the Provost

265 Garland Hall 3400 N. Charles Street Baltimore, MD 21218 410-516-8070 <http://web.jhu.edu/administration/provost>



Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

Denis Wirtz, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Research

cc: AAALAC International  
Brendan J. Canning, Ph.D., Chair, Johns Hopkins University Animal Care and Use  
Committee  
Eric Hutchinson, D.V.M., DACLAM, Attending Veterinarian and Assistant Vice Provost  
for Animal Research and Resources, Johns Hopkins University

(b) (6)

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265 Garland Hall 3400 N. Charles Street Baltimore, MD 21218 410-516-8070 <http://web.jhu.edu/administration/provost>

**McCoy, Devora (NIH/OD) [E]**

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**From:** Denis Wirtz <wirtz@jhu.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 16, 2022 2:09 PM  
**To:** Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]  
**Cc:** Brendan Canning; Eric Hutchinson; (b) (6)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Animal Welfare Assurance #A3272-01, OLAW Case 2Q, Final Report  
**Attachments:** OLAW Report (Case 2Q) 9.16.2022.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Dr. Wolff,

Please find attached a final report of a finding of serious noncompliance with the Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Best,  
Denis

Denis Wirtz | [wirtz@jhu.edu](mailto:wirtz@jhu.edu)  
Vice Provost for Research  
TH Smoot Professor, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Pathology, Oncology  
Director Johns Hopkins Physical Sciences-Oncology Center (PS-OC)  
Director Johns Hopkins Cellular Cancer Biology Imaging Research Center (CCBIR)  
Johns Hopkins University and Johns Hopkins School of Medicine  
3400 N. Charles St.  
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(b) (6)

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**McCoy, Devora (NIH/OD) [E]**

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**From:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Sent:** Friday, September 16, 2022 3:30 PM  
**To:** Denis Wirtz  
**Cc:** OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)  
**Subject:** RE: Animal Welfare Assurance #A3272-01, OLAW Case 2Q, Final Report

Good afternoon Denis,

Thank you for sending us this final report and we will send an official response soon.

Best,  
Devora

Devora McCoy, BS, MBA  
Program Analyst  
Division of Compliance Oversight  
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare  
National Institutes of Health  
301-435-2390

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**From:** Denis Wirtz <wirtz@jhu.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 16, 2022 2:09 PM  
**To:** Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E] <WolffA@OD.NIH.GOV>  
**Cc:** Brendan Canning <bjc@jhmi.edu>; Eric Hutchinson <ehutchi8@jhmi.edu>; (b) (6)  
(b) (6)  
**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Animal Welfare Assurance #A3272-01, OLAW Case 2Q, Final Report

Dear Dr. Wolff,

Please find attached a final report of a finding of serious noncompliance with the Public Health Service (PHS) Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Best,  
Denis

Denis Wirtz | [wirtz@jhu.edu](mailto:wirtz@jhu.edu)  
Vice Provost for Research  
TH Smoot Professor, Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering, Pathology, Oncology  
Director Johns Hopkins Physical Sciences-Oncology Center (PS-OC)  
Director Johns Hopkins Cellular Cancer Biology Imaging Research Center (CCBIR)  
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3400 N. Charles St.  
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<https://wirtzlab.johnshopkins.edu>

(b) (6)



## Initial Report of Noncompliance

By: (b) (6)

Date: 6/12/22

Time: 4:25

Name of Person reporting: Brendan Conning

Telephone #: (b) (6)

Fax #: (b) (6)

Email: (b) (6)

Name of Institution: Johns Hopkins U

Assurance number: A3272-2Q

Did incident involve PHS funded activity? No

Funding component: \_\_\_\_\_

Was funding component contacted (if necessary): \_\_\_\_\_

What happened?

Mice didn't receive pre-emptive analgesia

Species involved: Mice

Personnel involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates and times: \_\_\_\_\_

Animal deaths: \_\_\_\_\_

Projected plan and schedule for correction/prevention (if known): \_\_\_\_\_

Projected submission to OLAW of final report from Institutional Official: \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICE USE ONLY

Case # \_\_\_\_\_