



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

FOR US POSTAL SERVICE DELIVERY:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
Rockledge One, Suite 360
6705 Rockledge Drive – MSC 7982
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-7982
Home Page: <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/olaw.htm>

FOR EXPRESS MAIL:

Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
Rockledge One, Suite 360
6705 Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20817
Telephone: (301) 496-7163
Facsimile: (301) 402-7065

April 11, 2017

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance
#A3281-01 [OLAW Case 1Y]

Francis L. Macrina, PhD
Vice President for Research
Virginia Commonwealth University
Biotech One, Room #
PO Box 980568
Richmond, VA 23298-0568

Dear Dr. Macrina,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your April 9, 2017 letter reporting a serious deviation from the provisions of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* at Virginia Commonwealth University, following up on an initial telephone report on March 29, 2017. According to the information provided, OLAW understands that four mice died and four were lethargic due to lack of food. The research staff had weaned the mice and failed to provide food and the animal care staff failed to notice the problem.

The corrective actions consisted of euthanizing the surviving mice, counseling and retraining the animal caretaker responsible on the conduct of daily health checks, and counseling all animal caretakers. The investigator and staff were counseled on ensuring that animals have food and water and to double check all cages before leaving the animal room.

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 institution to comply with the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Sincerely,

Axel Wolff, M.S., D.V.M.
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight

cc: IACUC Chair

Secondary Individual Assoc. Dir. for Animal Research



VCU

Office of Research and Innovation

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Francis L. Macrina, PhD
Edward Myers Professor of Dentistry and
Vice President for Research and Innovation

April 9, 2017

Axel V. Wolff, M.S., D.V.M., Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health
RKL1, Suite 360, MSC 7982
6705 Rockledge Drive
Bethesda, MD 20892-7982
(301) 594-2061

VCU Animal Welfare Assurance number A3281-01

Dear Dr. Wolff:

Virginia Commonwealth University, in accordance with Assurance A3281-01 and PHS Policy IV.F.3., provides this report of noncompliance regarding lack of food resulting in the death of four mice. This incident was reported to you on March 29, 2017 via a telephone call by **Secondary Individual** Associate Director for Animal Research, Office of Research Subjects Protection (ORSP).

Description of Incident:

On March 13th, Division of Animal Resources (DAR) animal care staff reported two cages containing four mice found dead and four lethargic mice due to lack of food during morning health observations. These two cages had adequate water but there was no food. The veterinarian evaluated four lethargic mice with the lab personnel and instructed that the remaining mice be euthanized for health reasons. The investigator was contacted. Our investigation revealed that research personnel weaned these animals and did not add food to the cages. The DAR weekend caretaker assigned to this area conducted daily observations and failed to identify the lack of food.

Corrective action plan:

- (1) The DAR animal caretaker involved in this incident received individual counseling and retraining on conducting animal health observations, which emphasized the importance of verifying appropriate food and water levels and overall animal health every day. Documentation of this counseling and retraining, conducted on March 23rd, was provided to ORSP and also recorded in DAR's training file.
- (2) In order to minimize the possibility of a similar incident occurring in the future, at the March 2017 DAR staff meeting all DAR staff with animal husbandry responsibilities were apprised of this incident in order to increase awareness regarding verification of food and water in each cage. Documentation and description of this meeting received during the staff meeting was recorded and maintained in DAR's training folder.

- (3) The investigator and lab personnel were informed to ensure animals must not be left without food and water. It was suggested that they develop a habit of visually checking all cages they have handled before leaving the animal room.

We regret that this incident occurred. Following our detailed investigation, we have deployed specific corrective actions to enhance our program and to minimize future occurrences. The IACUC will be advised of the above corrective actions at the next full committee meeting on April 12th.

We appreciate your consideration of VCU's efforts to minimize future occurrences. VCU remains committed to animal welfare and recognizes its ethical responsibilities in ensuring the welfare of research animals and complying with the *PHS Policy* on the Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Sincerely,



Francis L. Macrina, Ph.D.
Institutional Official
Edward Myers Professor of Dentistry and
Vice President for Research and Innovation

Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Monday, April 10, 2017 7:45 AM
To: Secondary Individual
Subject: RE: Follow-up letters -VCU Assurance# A3281-01 (D16-00180, effective 1/9/2017))

Thank you for this report. I will respond soon.
 Axel Wolff

From: Secondary Individual <mailto:Secondary Individual@vcu.edu>
Sent: Sunday, April 09, 2017 11:13 PM
To: Wolff, Axel (NIH/OD) [E] <WolffA@OD.NIH.GOV>; OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>
Cc: Francis L Macrina <macrina@vcu.edu>; Secondary Individual <Secondary Individual@vcuhealth.org>
Subject: Follow-up letters -VCU Assurance# A3281-01 (D16-00180, effective 1/9/2017))

Dear Dr. Wolff,

Attached please find the follow-up reporting letter signed by Dr. Macrina, VCU Institutional Official. The incident was reported to you by phone on March 29. The written report includes a detailed explanation of the incident and actions taken by VCU.

We have reviewed this incident thoroughly and deployed specific corrective actions designed to enhance our animal program and to prevent future occurrences. We appreciate your consideration and VCU recognizes its responsibilities to comply with the Public Health Service Policy on the Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals and the Guide, and also remains committed to animal welfare.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me at Phone Number or email to: Secondary Individual@vcu.edu.

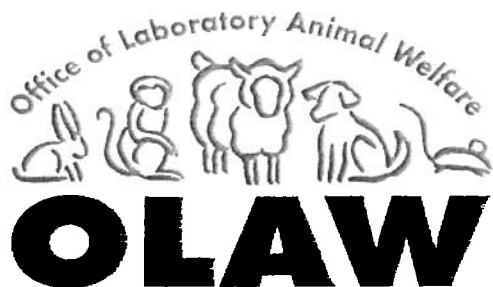
Best Regards,

Secondary Individual

Associate Director for Animal Research
 Office of Research Subjects Protections
 Virginia Commonwealth University
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 800 E. Leigh St., Suite 3000
 Richmond, VA 23298

Phone Number
ndary Indi@vcu.edu

Animal Research website: <https://www.vcu.edu/research/acup/index.htm>
Animal Care and Use Program Blog: <http://wp.vcu.edu/acup/>



Initial Report of Noncompliance

By: *aw*

Date: *3/29/17*

Time: *8:45*

Name of Person reporting: Secondary Individual

Telephone #:

Phone Number

Fax #:

Email:

Name of Institution: *Virginia Commonwealth U*

Assurance number: *A3281*

Did incident involve PHS funded activity?

Funding component:

Was funding component contacted (if necessary):

What happened?

2 cages without food - 4 died. Starved + not fed. Problem not noted by caretakers

Species involved: *Mice*

Personnel involved:

Dates and times:

Animal deaths:

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

Euthanize other mice. Counsel staff, retrain.

Projected submission to OLAW of final report from Institutional Official:

OFFICE USE ONLY

Case #