



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 12, 2019

Re: Animal Welfare Assurance
A3347-01 [OLAW Case 2X]

Dr. Emmanuel Giannelis,
Vice Provost for Life Sciences
Cornell University
(b) (4) Day Hall
Ithaca, NY 14850

Dear Dr. Giannelis,

The Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) acknowledges receipt of your September 10, 2019 letter reporting a serious deviation from the provisions of the *Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals* at Cornell University. According to the information provided OLAW understands that five zebra finches died/were euthanized following a drop in temperature in the animal room due to a failure of the heating, ventilation, air conditioning system (HVAC). The alarm did not sound because the temperature parameters had been set too widely apart. The birds had just been received at the institution so shipping stress could have contributed to the animals' deaths following exposure to the cold temperature.

The immediate action taken upon discovery consisted of placing space heaters into the room and providing veterinary care to the surviving birds which all recovered. The corrective actions consisted of repairing the HVAC system, adjusting the alarm settings, and checking the alarm settings in all animal rooms on campus.

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,

(b) (6)

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

cc: IACUC Contact



**Cornell University
Office of
Research Integrity and Assurance**

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September 10, 2019

Axel Wolff, MS, DVM, DACLAM
Deputy Director, Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health
6700B Rockledge Drive, Suite 2500, MSC 6910
Bethesda, MD 20892

Animal Welfare Assurance Number: D16-00225 (A3347-01) Cornell University – Ithaca
PHS Grant or Contract Number: 5R01NS094667-04

Dear Dr. Wolff:

As Institutional Official for Cornell University's animal care and use program, I am reporting an adverse event that occurred under our General Assurance. On the night of 8/2/2019, the HVAC system in an animal quarantine room failed, causing temperatures within the room to drop as low as 60°F overnight and resulting in the death or euthanasia of five zebra finches. The incident was reported to the IACUC at the August 15, 2019 meeting.

Explanation of the situation:

Fifty zebra finches arrived from the vendor and were placed in the quarantine room on 8/1/2019. The next night, the HVAC system in that room failed, causing temperatures within the room to drop as low as 60°F overnight. Normally the alarm system would have flagged this drop in temperature, and the facility staff would have been notified immediately, but the alarm limits were set too wide (roughly 40-85°F range). As a result, the low room temperature was not detected until the next morning when husbandry staff arrived to care for the birds, and found one bird dead and several more ill with ruffled coats and decreased activity levels. A total of 4 affected birds died and one additional bird was euthanized. The euthanized bird and three of the deceased birds were submitted for histopathology. Although there were no clear causative agents for the birds' decline in health, the histologic findings in affected birds suggest chronic negative energy balance or dehydration, and the pathologists do mention that the shipping stress may have been a contributing factor. The lower room temperatures may have exacerbated stress in birds already stressed from transit. All remaining birds recovered fully and environmental parameters have remained stable within the room.

Action taken by the institution:

Space heaters were immediately placed in the room to bring the temperature back up to 71°F. Veterinarians from the Cornell Center for Animal Resources and Education (CARE) were also consulted and provided clinical care. The CARE staff provided suet (food) supplementation to the sick birds, and additional water basins from which to drink (in case birds were dehydrated due to lack of familiarity with sipper drinking systems). All affected birds were monitored closely by CARE staff.

Facilities management fixed the HVAC system and alarm settings on Monday 8/5/2019, and the space heaters were then removed. CARE Animal Facilities management staff have also commenced a campus-wide assessment of the alarm parameters for animal housing rooms, to ensure that a similar event does not occur elsewhere on campus.

If you have any questions concerning this adverse event, please call (b) (6)

Sincerely,
(b) (6)

Emmanuel Giannelis
Vice Provost for Research

cc:

(b) (6)

AAALAC International

Morse, Brent (NIH/OD) [E]

From: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2019 12:16 PM
To: (b) (6) OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD)
Cc: Office of the Vice Provost for Research; (b) (6)
Subject: RE: Cornell University Report Regarding Facility Issue Affecting Finches

Thank you for providing this final report (b) (6). We will send an official response soon.

Best regards, Brent Morse

Brent C. Morse, DVM, DACLAM
Director
Division of Compliance Oversight
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare
National Institutes of Health

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From: (b) (6)
Sent: Wednesday, September 11, 2019 9:29 AM
To: OLAW Division of Compliance Oversight (NIH/OD) <olawdco@od.nih.gov>
Cc: Office of the Vice Provost for Research <vp_research@cornell.edu>; (b) (6)
(b) (6) AAALAC International <accredit@AAALAC.org>
Subject: Cornell University Report Regarding Facility Issue Affecting Finches

Dear Dr. Wolff,

Please see the attached final report from Cornell University's Vice Provost for Research, Dr. Emmanuel Giannelis, describing a facility issue that affected finches and which occurred under our General Assurance. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

(b) (6)

(b) (6)



CornellResearch