

Since the previous Codes were published in 2009 there have been some advances in our understanding of animal behaviour, socialisation, and training, and the amended Codes have been updated accordingly. The Codes also take into account changes in legislation, such as the requirement for all dogs to be microchipped (Microchipping of Dogs [England] Regulations 2015).

The updated Codes are generally user-friendly with a clear layout, more pictures and simple charts. Useful extra information is provided in the Annexes of each Code, which direct the reader to other, more comprehensive, guidance and advice.

Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cats (2017). A4, 12 pages. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Canine and Feline Sector Group. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-cats>.

Code of Practice for the Welfare of Dogs (2017). A4, 12 pages. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Canine and Feline Sector Group. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-dogs>.

Code of Practice for the Welfare of Horses, Ponies, Donkeys and their Hybrids (2017). A4, 37 pages. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Equine Sector Council for Health and Welfare and the British Horse Industry Confederation. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-horses-ponies-donkeys-and-their-hybrids>.

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Updated zoo standards for care of elephants in England

In 2008, a Report found that there were a number of welfare concerns for zoo-housed elephants in the United Kingdom (UK) (Harris *et al* 2008). Many elephants had foot or joint problems (over half the national herd was either mildly or severely lame), 75% of the herd was classed as ‘overweight’ or ‘very overweight’, and many elephants exhibited abnormal behaviour (stereotypies). Subsequent to this Report, the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA) formed the Elephant Welfare Group and were tasked by the UK Government with improving the welfare of captive elephants over the next ten years.

To ensure that the welfare of elephants could be monitored in an objective way, a further project was supported by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and undertaken by the University of Nottingham (Defra 2015). The main objective of the project was to create a reliable and evidence-based behavioural welfare assessment tool for elephants. Researchers also reviewed current elephant provisions in the Secretary of State’s Standards of Modern Zoo Practice.

Under UK law, zoos (defined as an establishment which houses wild animals and allows the public access to view the animals seven or more days in a twelve-month period [not including pet shops or circuses]) must be managed in accordance with the Secretary of State’s Standards of Modern Zoo Practice, which are issued under Section 9 of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981. Zoo Inspectors are also expected to refer to the standards when carrying out zoo inspections.

The Standards encompass 12 areas of care and management, including: provision of a suitable environment for animals (based on the Five Freedoms); transportation and movement of live animals; conservation and education measures; public safety in the zoo; stock records; staff and training; public facilities; and display of zoo licence. There are also 12 Appendices that give greater detail on areas, such as veterinary facilities (Appendix 5), training of animals (Appendix 7), and specialist exhibits (Appendix 8).

Appendix 8.8 of the standards covers elephants and, taking into account recommendations from the recent report by the University of Nottingham (Defra 2015), Defra has recently updated the Standards to include much greater detail on elephant care. The new sections within Appendix 8.8 emphasise the complex needs of elephants and introduce a requirement for zoos housing them to develop both a Long Term Management Plan (LTMP) for their elephant collection as a whole (spanning at least 30 years), and an Individual Welfare Plan (IWP) for each elephant. These plans must include certain features, such as: herd compatibility, long-term enclosure development planning, elephant training and an exit strategy should the collection choose to no longer hold elephants.

The importance of social grouping is given greater weight in the updated standards and section 8.8.8 on social grouping states that: “Appropriate social grouping is key to successful elephant management and must be pre-eminent in all aspects of care”.

Other changes to Appendix 8.8 include an increase in the recommended indoor enclosure size (from 200 m² to at least 300 m² for indoor cow/herd facilities for four [or fewer] animals); an increase in outdoor enclosure size (from 2,000 m² to at least 3,000 m²) and a recommendation that at least one metre of sand is provided in indoor areas to help prevent foot and joint problems, as well as allowing other natural behaviours, such as digging).

There is also greater detail given within sections on: behavioural management; healthcare; and elephant training. For example, it is stipulated that “Each institution must have an elephant training programme (documented in the LMP) and individual tailored goals for each animal (documented in the IWP).” Particular emphasis is placed on appropriate use of the ankus (a tool with a hook on the end that is used to cue elephants when training) and all staff using an ankus are required to undergo continued professional development.

Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice: Appendix 8 – Specialist Exhibits, Elephants (2017). A4, 11 pages. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Available online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/secretary-of-state-s-standards-of-modern-zoo-practice>.

References

Defra 2015 *Developing behavioural indicators, as part of a wider set of indicators, to assess the welfare of elephants in UK zoos*. Defra Project WC1081, Final report prepared for the Zoos policy team, Defra. Prepared by University of Nottingham. http://science-search.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=12816_Elephant_welfarereportWC1081.pdf

Harris M, Sherwin CM and Harris S 2008 *The welfare, housing and husbandry of elephants in UK zoos*. Report to Defra. http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=WC05007_7719_FRP.pdf

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European Commission reports on implementation of EU Directive 2010/63/EU on the use of animals in research

The European Directive 2010/63/EU adopted in 2010 updated and replaced the previous legislation that had been in place since 1986. This Report, and accompanying staff working document, meet the requirement of Article 58 of the 2010 Directive for a review of the Directive by 10th November 2017.

The aim of the review was to assess how well the Directive's objectives had been achieved, whether it is fit for purpose or whether it needs updating given the latest scientific and ethical developments. However, whilst the Directive came into effect on 1 January 2013, it took until 2015 before the last national standards were developed. Moreover, the husbandry standards only came into force in January 2017. This Report can, therefore, be seen as only a very preliminary assessment. The review was largely carried out through a consultation with stakeholders, and via a public consultation, although several reports and opinions were also taken into account.

The Report indicates that much of the implementation seems to have gone well and that the Directive is making progress in achieving its aims of advancing the 3Rs in member states by creating a level playing field; and improving transparency to the public. Animal welfare bodies were also felt to be a useful contribution to improving animal care and husbandry. However, in some areas, the Commission felt it was too soon to evaluate the Directive. For example, national committees, a requirement of the legislation, are still feeling their way in many countries. Inspection data will also not be available from Member States before late 2018 and it is not yet clear to what extent publication of non-technical project summaries and revised annual statistical data will contribute towards improved transparency. It is also considered too soon to assess the impact of the Directive on the promotion and uptake of non-animal alternatives in research.

The Report concludes that the current deadline of November 22 after which only non-human primates that are the offspring

of animals which have been bred in captivity (F2/F2+), or that are sourced from self-sustaining colonies will be allowed to be used in research is still appropriate (this refers mainly to the cynomolgus or long-tailed macaque: marmosets have been required to be F2/F2+ since January 2013).

Issues where further work is needed, include harmonisation of guidance on project applications and measures to streamline assessment and authorisation. Information is also needed on housing and care of cephalopods and methods for their euthanasia. With respect to the Directive's scope, there were no major issues, but it was felt that, for better harmonisation, guidance is needed on minimum threshold of severity which triggers the Act for a procedure.

Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions in Accordance with Article 58 of Directive 2010/63/EU on the Protection of Animals used for Scientific Purposes (SWD[2017] 353 final) (November 2017). A4, 10 pages. Available from <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2017/EN/COM-2017-631-FI-EN-MAIN-PART-1.PDF>.

Commission Staff Working Document Accompanying the Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (SWD[2017] 353) 10.11.2017 Final (November 2017). Available from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1510252227435&uri=SWD:2017:353:FIN>.

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First EU reference centre for animal welfare

Wageningen Livestock Research (The Netherlands), the Friedrich Loeffler Institute (Germany) and the Department of Animal Science at Aarhus University (Denmark) have together been selected as the first European Union (EU) Reference Centre for Animal Welfare.

The centre will provide scientific and technical expertise to support the activities of the Commission and EU Member States and pig welfare will be the focus of this first centre.

The centre has been established in accordance with Articles 95 and 96 of the Official Controls Regulation, which also lays out further information on how EU Reference Centres are selected and what their responsibilities and tasks will be. The designation of the first Reference Centre for Animal Welfare will be reviewed in five years time.

EU Reference Centre for Animal Welfare (5 March 2018). European Commission, Brussels, Belgium. Further information available at: https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/welfare/eu-ref-centre_en.

Official Controls Regulation (15 March 2017). Regulation (EU) 2017/625 of the European Parliament and Council of the European Union of 15 March 2017, on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed laws, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products. Further information available online at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/625/oj>.

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