POSITION STATEMENT ON ANIMAL DEATHS

Section 3.1.25 of the Code states:

*When an animal dies unexpectedly, or is humanely killed due to unforeseen complications, a necropsy should be performed by a competent person.*

Procedures at UQ following any death(s) of an animal(s) within a trial are not currently defined and the decision on whether or not to conduct a necropsy has been left to the discretion of the CI.

The recommendation is to introduce a fair policy which provides clear guidelines to the CI when a necropsy is required and who shall carry out the procedure. The following conditions would apply:

1. **Not requiring post-mortem or notification to an AEC:**
   - Deaths of new-born and on-going deaths in breeding colonies which are within acceptable mortality rates (<30% depending on the breed) does not require reporting
   - Animals which die as a result of expected mortalities on trial does not require reporting
   - Where the cause of death is due to misadventure providing the accident does not result in multiple cage deaths and the problem is rectified.

2. **Requires notification to an AEC but not a post-mortem:**
   - Isolated deaths due to obvious causes such as during anaesthesia *provided the death(s) lie within normal limits (ie < 1%)*

3. **Requires notification to an AEC and a post-mortem:**
   - Every unexpected death must be investigated and the animal presented for necropsy. A PM is only required when a death is unexplained.
   - The CI should notify the AEC of an unexpected death as an Adverse Event as soon as the death is reported and arrange for a post-mortem.
   - A suitably qualified person, **OTHER** than the CI, must conduct the post-mortem. Where possible this should be a licenced diagnostic pathology laboratory however another staff member may be suitable.
   - Where a number of unexpected deaths occur either as a single event or as a series of events, the CI must immediately suspend the trial, investigate the cause(s) and report the Adverse Event to the AEC.