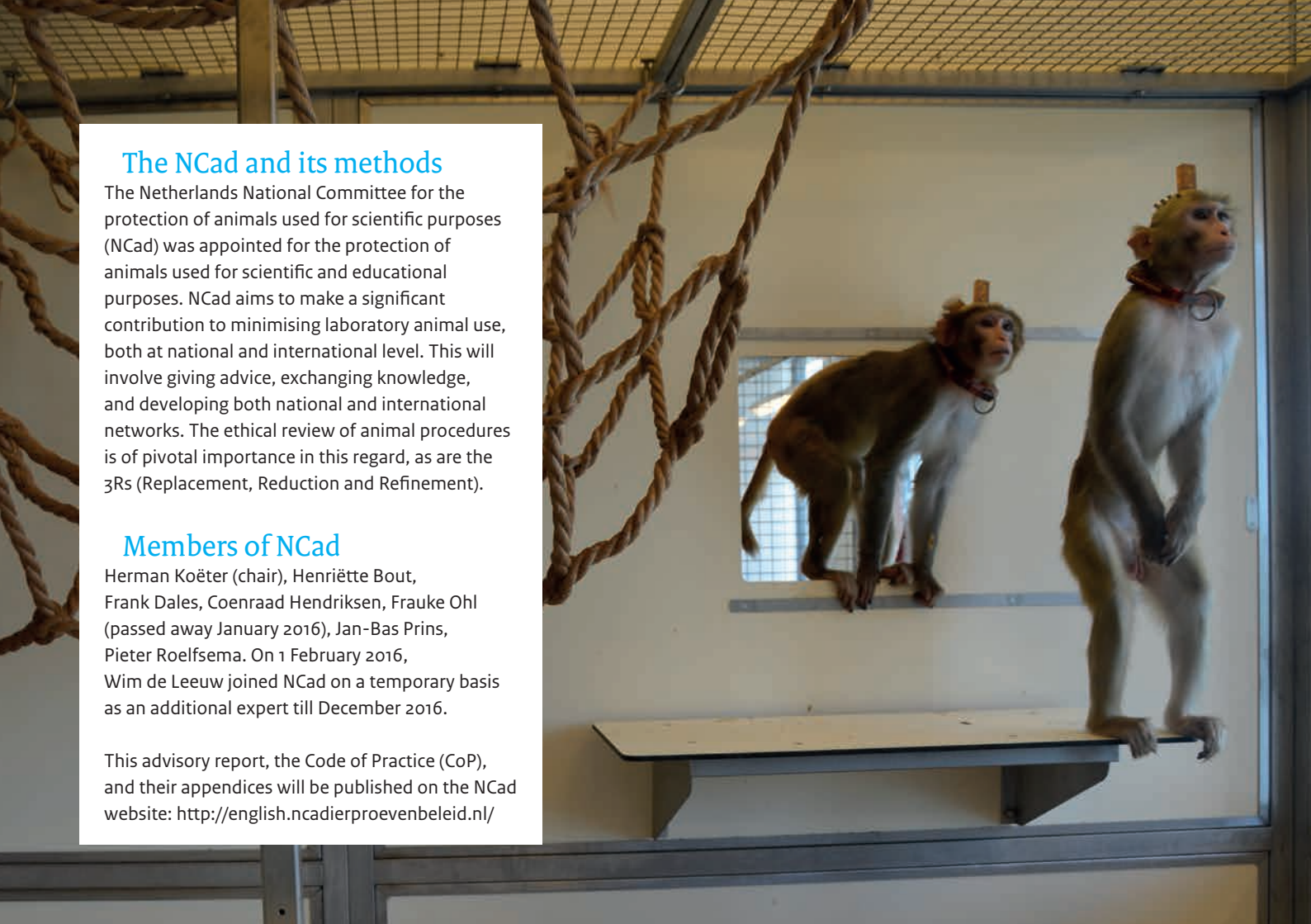
Netherlands National Committee
for the protection of animals
used for scientific purposes

Rehoming of former laboratory animals

Opinion of the Netherlands National Committee
for the protection of animals used for scientific purposes
(NCad)

Photo by UMC Utrecht, Thomas Dobber



The NCad and its methods

The Netherlands National Committee for the protection of animals used for scientific purposes (NCad) was appointed for the protection of animals used for scientific and educational purposes. NCad aims to make a significant contribution to minimising laboratory animal use, both at national and international level. This will involve giving advice, exchanging knowledge, and developing both national and international networks. The ethical review of animal procedures is of pivotal importance in this regard, as are the 3Rs (Replacement, Reduction and Refinement).

Members of NCad

Herman Koëter (chair), Henriëtte Bout, Frank Dales, Coenraad Hendriksen, Frauke Ohl (passed away January 2016), Jan-Bas Prins, Pieter Roelfsema. On 1 February 2016, Wim de Leeuw joined NCad on a temporary basis as an additional expert till December 2016.

This advisory report, the Code of Practice (CoP), and their appendices will be published on the NCad website: http://english.ncadierproevenbeleid.nl/

Summary

The aim of this opinion is to guarantee the quality of life of non-human primates (NHPs), dogs and cats that remain alive at the end of an animal procedure. The terms 'putting up for adoption' and 'retiring' are often used for such situations. In this advisory report we use the term 'rehoming', by which we mean that, remaining alive at the end of an animal procedure, an animal is able to spend the rest of its life at a location suitable for its needs without being subjected to any further animal procedure.

However, for various reasons, not all animals that remain alive at the end of a procedure are – or can be – rehomed.

For example, the necessary infrastructure may be lacking, the establishment concerned may be unaware of the opportunities for rehoming or there may be an unwillingness to invest in this process.

Various options exist in the Netherlands for rehoming a former laboratory animal. Establishments offering these opportunities develop their own guidelines and procedures, which include how the animals are selected. As a result, rehoming procedures and protocols vary greatly, and therefore rehoming of former laboratory animals takes place in many different ways.

To establish a coordinated and transparent rehoming process, NCad has drawn up a framework that provides a general description of the rehoming process applicable to several different types of animals. In addition, specific Codes of Practice have been established for dogs, cats and NHPs.

Based on the viewpoint that animals have intrinsic value and should therefore always be treated as sentient beings, one should assume that all animals are kept alive (the 'yes, unless' principle) also adopted in this opinion on dogs, cats and NHPs. Due to the special circumstances that, for the time being, still complicate the rehoming of NHPs, the implications and scope of the provisions for NHPs differ from those for cats and dogs.

There are also situations in which, for good reasons, rehoming is not an option. These include:

1. The experiment requires the animals are killed because, for example, an autopsy provides essential information.
2. Reuse is possible, compatible with legal guidelines, and ethically acceptable, with consideration having been given to cumulative distress.[1]
3. Laws and regulations prohibit rehoming, for reasons such as risk to public health.
4. The Animal Welfare Body (IvD) and designated veterinary physician have good reason to believe that the quality of life and life expectancy of the animal will be too low following rehoming.

[1] WExperiments on Animals Act (Wod), article 1e, section 2:
In exceptional circumstances, and by way of derogation from section 1 (a), a project licence may be granted for a project that involves the reuse of an animal if
a. a veterinary physician has examined the animal prior to the animal procedure and
b. the animal is used no more than once in an animal procedure that involves significant pain, anxiety or an equivalent level of suffering.

To encourage the rehoming of eligible cats, dogs and NHPs and to create a coordinated rehoming procedure, the Committee recommends as follows:

1. *That the adoption of the Codes of Practice governing cats, dogs and NHPs be encouraged in practice (see annexes 1, 2 and 3).*

By:
- Calling on the umbrella organisations of universities and industry, as well as individual establishment licensees, to implement the Codes of Practice in their operational activities and to give the Animal Welfare Body (IvD) a leading role in this.

2. *That a change of attitude within the field be encouraged, whereby at the end of an experiment animals do not need to be euthanized and can in principle be rehomed, beginning with dogs, cats and NHPs.*

By:
- Reminding establishment licensees, responsible researchers, breeders, any mediating organisations and other social organisations of their shared responsibility, and consequently of the importance of coordination and collaboration among them with regard to the rehoming of dogs, cats and NHPs.
- Obligating applicants to indicate in project proposals when rehoming is possible, and to provide a reason when stating that it is not.
- Obligating timely socialisation of NHPs, dogs and cats that are eligible for rehoming.
- Encouraging the rehoming of other eligible animal species by means of the general rehoming framework drawn up by the Committee (annex 4).

3. *That an environment be created within which various parties endeavour to make rehoming possible, including a balanced division of the attendant costs.*

By:
- Obligating the parties in the field to draw up a sustainable system for the balanced division of the costs of rehoming.
- Considering an expansion of the remit of the laboratory animal-free innovation fund (Fonds Proefdiervrije Innovaties), as proposed by the laboratory animal procedures and alternatives think tank (Denktank Dierproeven en Alternatieven) to include the rehoming of laboratory animals in areas that the system does not already cover, such as:
  - Bear part of any unforeseen additional costs incurred by private accommodation sites for the rehoming of dogs and cats
  - Improving the rehoming infrastructure for NHPs and, in the near future, expanding the options for their rehoming.

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Introduction

The premise of the EU Directive and consequently the Dutch Experiments on Animals Act (Wod) is that animals have intrinsic value and should always be treated as sentient beings.[2,3] This means it is assumed that animals can experience positive and negative feelings and that, to a certain extent, animals exhibit consciousness.[4]

In addition, it is clear that provisions should be present in Dutch society for the rehoming of eligible animals that are not killed for the purpose of the experiment and when it is in the best interest of the animal's welfare.

Rather than speaking of 'adoption,' the term 'rehoming' is used in this advisory report, meaning that remaining alive at the end of an animal procedure, an animal is able to spend the rest of its life at a location suitable for its needs without being subjected to any further animal procedure.

[2] Directive 2010/63/EU, recital 12:
Animals have intrinsic value which must be respected. There are also the ethical concerns of the general public as regards the use of animals in procedures. Therefore, animals should always be treated as sentient creatures and their use in procedures should be restricted to areas which may ultimately benefit human or animal health, or the environment. The use of animals for scientific or educational purposes should therefore only be considered where a non-animal alternative is unavailable. Use of animals for scientific procedures in other areas under the competence of the Union should be prohibited.

[3] Experiments on Animals Act (Wod), article 1a:
Upon exercise of powers formulated in or pursuant to this Act, the recognition of the intrinsic value of the animal is used as a general principle.

[4] *http://fcmconference.org/img/CambridgeDeclarationOnConsciousness.pdf*

Rehoming is, in practice, a serious alternative to the killing of animals if the necessary infrastructure is present. The term 'infrastructure' is used here meaning the accommodation options, physical facilities, permanence of the accommodation, procedures to be followed and financing options.

Various options exist in the Netherlands for rehoming an former laboratory animal. Establishments offering these opportunities develop their own guidelines and procedures, including the selection of the animals. As a consequence, the rehoming of former laboratory animals is carried out in very different ways. There are various underlying reasons for this, which are set out hereafter.

Sometimes rehoming is not possible because the necessary infrastructure (facilities, accommodation options, procedures, funding) is not present. Sometimes establishments are not aware of the options that are available for possible rehoming and leave opportunities untapped.
Another factor is that in many cases the success of rehoming an former laboratory animal also depends on the dedication of private volunteer organisations that serve as mediators for the rehoming process.
The minimum necessary preparation for rehoming varies depending on the animal species. This also applies for the aftercare provided by the establishment after rehoming.

A final factor is that not every establishment is equally willing to invest in the rehoming process, both financially and in terms of manpower.

A separate group of former laboratory animals is the non-human primates (NHPs). They are not offered to individuals for rehoming and must always be cared for and supervised by professionals. The infrastructure necessary to achieve this is complex.

Based on data provided by the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA), in 2014 there were 93 dogs and 52 cats registered in the category 'Rehomed or returned to the owner.' In that year, three marmosets, 64 rhesus monkeys and 18 cynomolgus monkeys were left alive after the end of a procedure. A large number of these animals will likely be reused; no monkeys were offered for rehoming in that year.
It is expected that the number of animals registered in the category 'Rehomed or returned to the owner' will be higher if adequate rehoming infrastructure is available.

The previously mentioned intrinsic value of animals, which includes laboratory animals, implies that euthanasia other than as part of the animal procedure is not an equivalent alternative for leaving the animal alive.
Therefore, for many people leaving the animal alive[5] is the point of departure for all animals, and thus also in the context of this advisory report for dogs, cats and NHPs (the 'yes, unless' principle). Due to the special circumstances that, for the time being, still complicate the rehoming of NHPs, the implications and scope of the provisions for NHPs differ from those for cats and dogs.

There are also situations in which, for good reasons, rehoming is not an option. These include:

1. The experiment requires the animals are killed because, for example, an autopsy provides essential information.
2. Reuse is possible, compatible with legal guidelines, and ethically acceptable, with consideration having been given to cumulative distress.[6]
3. Laws and regulations prohibit rehoming, for reasons such as risk to public health.
4. The Animal Welfare Body (IvD) and designated veterinary physician have good reason to believe that the quality of life and life expectancy of the animal will be too low following rehoming.

[5] Taking into account the principle of utility and practical and realistic feasibility.

[6] Experiments on Animals Act (Wod), Article 1e, section 2:
In exceptional circumstances, and by way of derogation from section 1 (a), a project licence may be granted for a project that involves the reuse of an animal if
a. a veterinary physician has examined the animal prior to the animal procedure and
b. the animal is used no more than once in an animal procedure that involves significant pain, anxiety or an equivalent level of suffering.

Request for opinion

By letter dated 31 March 2015, the Minister for Agriculture indicated that Directive 2010/63/EU contains provisions for the rehoming of former laboratory animals and the conditions under which this can occur.

These terms and conditions are incorporated in the Experiments on Animals Act (Wod) in various articles (art. 13d, 13e, 14c and 15). Animals that have been used or were intended for use in an animal procedure can be released for rehoming when the state of health of the animal allows it, there is no danger to public health, animal health or the environment and when appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the welfare of the animal (art. 13d).

Experience with the rehoming of former laboratory animals exists both in the Netherlands and abroad. Based on the available information it is clear that drafting a best practice requires, at a minimum, a clear definition of the rehoming process, including the conditions for preselection and socialisation of the animals released for rehoming and the financial responsibilities associated with the rehoming process. A best practice contains therefore a 'roadmap' that clearly shows which decisions are taken at which times before a laboratory animal may or may not be rehomed.

NCad has been asked to also make use of the expertise on confiscated animals present within the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO.nl), the National Animal Protection Inspectorate (LID) and the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) as well as the experience of other EU Member States for the drafting of this best practice.

Given the public interest in the rehoming of primarily dogs, cats and NHPs, the Minister for Agriculture has asked NCad to initially focus on these animal species.

The Minister for Agriculture prefers to receive a brief advisory report with the Codes of Practice as annexes.

Advisory report

NCad advises the Minister as follows:

1. Encourage the adoption of the Codes of Practice governing the rehoming of cats, dogs and NHPs in practice (see annexes 1, 2 and 3).

   By:
   - Calling on the umbrella organisations of universities and industry, as well as individual establishment licensees, to implement the Codes of Practice in their operational activities, and to give the Animal Welfare Body (IvD) a leading role in this.
   - The development of the rehoming practice in the Netherlands can be monitored and publicised through annual analyses of the rehoming data collected by the NVWA.

To achieve effective rehoming in practice, a functioning infrastructure is necessary. The term 'infrastructure' is used here meaning the accommodation options, physical facilities, permanence of the accommodation, procedures to be followed and financing options. The infrastructure is sufficiently developed for the rehoming of dogs and cats, making the "yes, unless' principle feasible for these species.

For NHPs this practice is less developed, and therefore rehoming of these animals requires other measures for the time being.

2. That a change of attitude within the field be encouraged, whereby at the end of an experiment animals do not need to be euthanised and can in principle be rehomed, beginning with dogs, cats and NHPs.

   By:
   - Reminding establishment licensees, responsible researchers, breeders, any mediating organisations and other social organisations of their shared responsibility, and consequently of the importance of coordination and collaboration among them with regard to the rehoming of dogs, cats and NHPs.
   - Obligating applicants to indicate in project proposals when rehoming is possible, and to provide a reason when stating that it is not.
   - Obligating timely socialisation of NHPs, dogs and cats that are eligible for rehoming.
   - Encouraging the rehoming of other eligible animal species by means of the general rehoming framework drawn up by the Committee (annex 4).

3. That an environment be created within which various parties endeavour to make rehoming possible, including a balanced division of the attendant costs.

   By:
   - Obligating the parties in the field to draw up a sustainable system for the balanced division of the costs of rehoming.
   - Considering an expansion of the remit of the laboratory animal-free innovation fund (Fonds Proefdiervrije Innovaties), as proposed by the laboratory animal procedures and alternatives

think tank (Denktank Dierproeven en Alternatieven) to include the rehoming of laboratory animals in areas that the system does not already cover, such as:

- Bear part of any unforeseen additional costs incurred by private accommodation sites for the rehoming of dogs and cats
- Improving the rehoming infrastructure for NHPs and, in the near future, expanding the options for their rehoming.

Substantiation of the advisory report

Re 1: That the adoption of the Codes of Practice governing cats, dogs and NHPs be encouraged in practice

The Minister asked NCad to develop Codes of Practice for dogs, cats and NHPs. Based on the information obtained from two working groups NCad has developed three Codes of Practice: one for dogs, one for cats and one for NHPs.
As overarching document, a framework was drawn up containing general guidelines for rehoming. Here too, both working groups contributed their expertise. The working groups consisted of experts from both the Netherlands and abroad.

The premise is that rehoming should always be in the interest of the welfare of the animal. The Codes of Practice drawn up by NCad describe the approach establishments can take and what aspects they must consider in order to offer dogs, cats and NHPs for rehoming. The Codes of Practice provide clear guidance for designing the best, most efficient process possible and, as such, promoting optimisation and harmonisation.

Acting in its advisory capacity, the Animal Welfare Body (IvD) plays a key role in the potential rehoming (art. 14c, section 1 (e)). Their role encompasses the determination of whether an animal is suitable for rehoming.

In addition, they can also take measures to facilitate the creation of a rehoming structure within an establishment or via an independent party.

The NVWA operates under the administrative responsibility of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, and therefore the Ministry can establish priorities for compliance monitoring that must be honoured in a coming year. A priority can be 'rehoming,' whereby the use of the Codes of Practice can be measured through analysis of the collected rehoming data.

Re 2: That a change of attitude within the field be encouraged, whereby at the end of an experiment animals do not need to be euthanized and can in principle be relocated, beginning with dogs, cats and NHPs.

NCad considers it highly desirable that, in addition to the availability of the Codes of Practice, an active policy aimed at promoting rehoming is pursued. NCad believes that mandating rehoming through legislation is not a viable option; after all, a situation in which procedures are expressly designed to circumvent a legal obligation for rehoming must be avoided.

NCad recommends a policy aimed at creating conditions that make rehoming easier and fostering a positive attitude.
This policy should manifest itself in the form of firm arrangements, in which all parties involved endeavour to facilitate rehoming (see also Re 3).

Point out shared responsibility

Although Animal Welfare Bodies (IvDs) play an important role in the rehoming process, they do not bear the burden of the rehoming of former laboratory animals alone. NCad believes it is important to point out the shared responsibility of the entire chain. Sharing the costs associated with the rehoming process is not only fair, it also reflects the collective responsibility of society for animal welfare. Only through collaboration and optimum coordination between establishment licensees, responsible researchers, breeders, any intermediary organisations and civil society is a successful rehoming process possible. NCad therefore advises the Minister to draw the attention of these organisations to their shared responsibility and, consequently, the importance of coordination and cooperation.

Mandatory early socialisation of non-human primates, cats and dogs

In the case of dogs and cats socialisation means habituation and interaction with humans; in the case of non-human primates it means habituation and socialisation within a colony.

Early socialisation facilitates the rehoming process at a later stage while also being advantageous for the establishments themselves: socialised animals are less stressed and more manageable, which is beneficial to the quality of the animal procedures. Breeders are an important link in the chain, because they often provide young animals to establishments.

Article 13e[7] of the Experiments on Animals Act (Wod) provides that the animals that may be eligible for rehoming must be socialised. NCad advises the Minister to expand the current obligation to socialise animals for the purpose of rehoming to require socialisation from birth of all dogs, cats and NHPs used in animal procedures and to make it mandatory for suppliers, breeders, owners and users of these animals to do so.
This not only increases the range of options for rehoming but also facilitates the handling of the animals during the procedure.

Also encourage rehoming for other animal species, in addition to dogs, cats and NHPs

To help promote a positive attitude towards rehoming, NCad has also drawn up a general rehoming framework in addition to the Codes of Practice for dogs, cats and NHPs. This framework provides establishments with a guide to help make the rehoming of other animal species possible while also contributing to a positive attitude towards rehoming in general.

[7] Article 13e
When the breeder, supplier or user proceeds to release for rehoming of animals that have been used or were intended for use in an animal procedure, they employ a rehoming procedure that includes the socialisation of the animals released for rehoming. In the case of wild animals, they undergo a reintegration programme, if necessary, before they are returned to their habitat.

Re 3. That an environment be created within which various parties endeavour to make rehoming possible, including a balanced division of the attendant costs.

The finances

The NCad recognises that the costs, particularly for the care of NHPs, can be considerable, which could put undue pressure on research funds. If the parties cannot reach mutual agreement on the financial aspects and it appears that financial costs will form obstacles that make rehoming unrealistic, a fund from which compensation can be claimed could be a solution.

NCad believes that the contemplated animal-free innovation fund (Fonds Proefdiervrije Innovaties) as proposed by the laboratory animal procedures and alternatives think tank (Denktank Dierproeven en Alternatieven) could be expanded to include the rehoming of laboratory animals.

To this end, NCad makes the following suggestions:

- The basic principle should be that all parties concerned contribute proportionately to the fund.

- Contributions to the fund could consist of:
  - A general levy on the use of laboratory animals, which relates to the costs of rehoming of the animal and does not interfere unnecessarily with the research
  - Voluntary contributions from parties commissioning the research (usually the health funds, industry) and other civil society organisations, especially the charity funds.

The resources generated in this way could then be used for:

A financial incentive for accommodation locations for dogs and cats

For the time being there appear to be sufficient final accommodation options for dogs and cats. It is mainly the temporary accommodation facilities that require additional financial support.

For dogs and cats, the costs of rehoming in the rehoming process consist of costs for socialisation, making the animals suitable for and/or training them prior to rehoming, any mediation costs and possibly temporary accommodation. The costs of permanent accommodation and care are borne by the new owner, usually a private individual.

In the Netherlands there is one private organisation (SHHH) active in the rehoming of former laboratory animals (dogs and cats) with private individuals. Finding a final accommodation appears not to be a problem; however, sufficient, well-equipped temporary accommodation capacity often is a problem. NCad advises the Minister to solve this problem by means of a financial incentive, through which more temporary accommodation sites can be made suitable.

Improving the rehoming infrastructure and broadening the accommodation options for NHPs.

NCad considers it sensible, for the short term, to work on the necessary rehoming infrastructure for NHPs.

NCad therefore recommends:

- To quantify with the establishments concerned the potential number of former laboratory animals suitable for rehoming that can be expected.
- Taking steps to increase the accommodation options for NHPs. Besides the AAP Foundation, the Biomedical Primate Research Centre (BPRC) should be explicitly involved in this, given their experience and capabilities.
- Stimulating of multi-year agreements between users of NHPs, AAP Foundation and BPRC.

To put the proposed solutions into practice, for both the short and long term, NCad advises the Minister to select an authoritative person with access to the scientific community who has managerial and financial experience and assign this person with the task to ensure people on the ground develop the proposed actions further (of the stated recommendations).

Appendix 1 *Code of Practice Cats*

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Code of Practice | Cats

Socialisation	Although not a legal requirement, it is recommended that cats be socialised before they are used in animal procedures. This contributes to a successful and effective rehoming of ex-laboratory animals. Therefore it is recommended that the socialisation process should begin with the breeder. Users of laboratory animals are advised to acquire animals that have been socialised in preparation for laboratory procedures and life in a domestic environment. It is recommended that the socialisation and training continue during the animal's stay with the licensee.
Selection	Cats that remain alive at the end of an animal procedure and cannot or may not be reused, may be eligible for rehoming. Factors that must be taken into account in the determination of the suitability for rehoming are the age and life expectancy, the overall health and the psychological condition of the animal and, if applicable, the impact of any operations. The Animal Welfare Body (IvD) advises the licensee regarding the suitability of the animal for rehoming. This recommendation is made after consultation with the designated veterinarian, an animal behaviourist and/or the animal's caretaker.
Preparation for rehoming	Once the candidates for rehoming have been identified, the transition process begins, in which the animals are prepared for their new home. This process must take into account socialisation, habituation, training and veterinary care. Before the animal is transferred to the new owner, a health examination is carried out by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned. In addition, a behavioural report is prepared by an animal behaviourist and/or the caretaker who is most familiar with the animal.
A new owner	A good match between the cat and its new owner(s) is essential to the success of rehoming. The cat's new living environment must accommodate the animal's needs and any problems it may have. Therefore it is necessary that relevant information is shared and stakeholders are well-informed. It is advisable to involve a specialised party in the rehoming process. This may be an external party, or it could be a party specialised in rehoming within the licensed establishment.
Overdracht Transfer of ownership	Rehoming is generally accompanied by a transfer of ownership. It is important that the legal aspects of transfer of ownership are taken into account. Documentation concerning the performed health examination, the medical history of the cat and information about its behaviour are given to the new owner(s).
Follow-up	New owners must have the assurance that advice will always be available after rehoming. Conducting a follow-up visit four to eight weeks after rehoming creates an opportunity to assess the animal's behaviour in the new living environment and address any questions and/or problems the owner and/or rehoming organisation may have.

Introduction

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure the quality of life of former laboratory cats that remain alive at the end of an animal procedure and are eligible for rehoming.

I. The internal process

Socialisation and training

Although not a legal requirement, it is recommended that cats be socialised before they are used in animal procedures, to improve the chance of a successful and effective rehoming. Early socialisation also contributes to the proper functioning of the cats in a laboratory environment. It is recommended that users of laboratory animals acquire animals that have been socialised for animal procedures and who are familiar with the stimuli and situations that former laboratory animals are confronted with in a domestic environment. Breeders should therefore have a complete socialisation programme, which continues during the animal's stay with the licensee.

Training of the cats is intended to ensure that they:

1. can function in a laboratory environment
2. can participate in animal testing without exhibiting behaviour indicative of anxiety or distress
3. can function well in a domestic environment after rehoming

Each licensee must determine which combination of skills the cats must learn, depending on the routine with which the animals are confronted. The skills needed to participate in testing will vary greatly between licensees. All animals must be trained so that they are familiar with the procedures to which they are subjected during testing.

During the stay at the licensed establishment skills must be developed that are needed within a domestic environment. The training should be based on positive reinforcement. No use should be made of punishments, referring to aversive techniques such as water spray bottles, 'corrective' collars amongst others.

Cats that are accustomed to people will experience less stress than cats that are not. The probability of a successful rehoming increases when the cat has interaction with as many different people as possible so that it develops confidence in dealing with people.

The training plan must be based both on teaching the cat skills needed to carry out biotech procedures and preparing the cat for transfer to a domestic environment. This Code of Practice includes an example of a socialisation process plus a variety of exercises that can be incorporated into a training plan.

The effectiveness of the training should be evaluated regularly, and any necessary changes can be made to achieve optimum training and ensure the desired final result. The cat's development must be monitored during the socialisation process and the training. This encompasses more than just assessment of the cat's performance during the specific training exercises; the animal's character and behaviour must also be assessed so that the caretaker can determine whether they have improved or worsened.

Eligibility criteria for rehoming

Under Article 13d of the Experiments on Animals Act (Wod) an animal can only be released for rehoming if (a) the state of health of the animal allows it; (b) there is no danger to public health, animal health or the environment, and (c) appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the welfare of the animal.

The quality of life is crucial in the assessment of the suitability of an animal. A former laboratory cat can only become a pet if it can function in a domestic environment. It is therefore necessary to consider the quality of life, not the chance of survival, when assessing the suitability for rehoming. The following aspects of the animal must be included in the assessment:

- the animal's age and life expectancy
- the animal's general health
- the animal's psychological condition
- if applicable, the impact of any operations that will precede rehoming

The animal must be in good, yet not necessarily optimum, health. The new owner will need to be able to deal with a potential disorder. Even if the animal has a medical condition it can still be very suitable for rehoming, provided that a realistic and reasonable treatment plan is available so that the long-term prognosis is good. Also in this regard, the emphasis should be on ensuring the animal's quality of life.

Health reports will be made available, and advice will be given with respect to any zoonotic diseases. A virus status is not, in itself, reason not to proceed with rehoming.

If the decision is taken to release an animal for rehoming, the animal is operated if necessary, to remove implanted instruments for example. There are no legal objections for such operations. The purpose of such an operation is to minimise further suffering. The veterinarian decides whether or not to operate on the basis of an assessment of the expected impact of the operation, the expected quality of life in the long term and the balance between the two.

Selection process

The final decision as to whether or not to rehome an animal rests with the licensee. The licensee is advised by the Animal Welfare Body (IvD). The IvD issue their recommendation after consultation with the designated veterinarian, an animal behaviourist (expert with formal qualifications in the field of normal and abnormal behaviour of an animal species and behaviour management and change) and/or the animal caretaker who is responsible for the daily care of the animal.

- The designated veterinarian contributes to the assessment of the health of the animal. He or she evaluates the options, considering only the animal's quality of life.
- An animal behaviourist and/or the caretaker who is most familiar with the animal or animal species must assess the animal's behaviour and suitability for rehoming. Information can be obtained from other sources, such as the designated veterinarian or, if applicable, the animal's caretaker. Veterinarians and animal caretakers who perform this type of assessment should have a good understanding of species-specific behaviours, including undesirable or abnormal behaviour, behaviour management and change and establishing a prognosis of possible undesirable or abnormal behaviour.

II. The transition process

The process is coordinated by a rehoming organisation. This may be an external organisation – not a private person but rather, for example, an independent organisation with experience in the rehoming of animals (including laboratory animals) – but it may also be part of the licensed establishment that releases animals for rehoming.

It is important that throughout the process the applicable policy and legal frameworks are considered, such as the Animal Holders Decree (Besluit houders van dieren) and the policy rules quality rehoming animals (Beleidsregels kwaliteit opvang dieren).

Preparation for rehoming

Once it is clear which animals will be released for rehoming, they are further prepared for their new home. In preparing the animals, attention must be given to the following aspects:

Socialisation, habituation and training

Under Article 13e of the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD)[8] a rehoming procedure must be followed that includes socialisation of the animals to be released. The importance of socialisation has been highlighted in a preceding section. Sensory stimuli should be part of the training. As part of the normal habituation process it is advisable to expose animals in the laboratory to as many different visual, tactile and aural stimuli as possible. Ideally, all laboratory cats should gain experience with people of both sexes and varying appearance. Men with beards, people wearing glasses, people wearing a variety of clothing and people carrying large objects all provide valuable stimuli for laboratory animals. Animals may also have difficulty adapting to children and animals of a different species. Animal welfare organisations report that this is the most common reason for the failure of rehoming. Tactile stimuli are also important. Consider, for example, different surfaces such as grass or carpet.

Veterinary care

Stringent oversight of the health of laboratory animals is already a prerequisite for their care and use, but additional, specific assessment by a veterinarian and confirmation of vaccination and certification are essential. The animals are dewormed and a suitable form of contraception is considered.

Documentation

A cat is accompanied by a single report, containing relevant information on:

- the health
- the behaviour (including in relation to a domestic environment)
- the welfare
- the medical condition
- the medical history
- medical advice

[8] **Article 13e of the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD):** When the breeder, supplier or user proceeds to release for rehoming of animals that have been used or were intended for use in an animal procedure, they employ a rehoming procedure that includes the socialisation of the animals released for rehoming. In the case of wild animals, they undergo a reintegration programme, if necessary, before they are returned to their habitat.

Before the animal is transferred to the new owner, a health examination must be performed by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned. The veterinarian determines whether the animal is healthy or has a medical condition for which the long-term prognosis is good with a realistic treatment plan. The health report is given to the new owner(s) of the cat. The cat's welfare log, containing information about previous accommodation and the cat's character, is attached. The animal's medical history must be well documented, and accompanied with appropriate advice in the case of any zoonotic diseases.

In addition, a behavioural report is prepared by an animal behaviourist and/or the caretaker who is most familiar with the animal. The cat's behavioural profile describes the imprinted character traits, the interaction with other pets and people, the behaviour in a new or unfamiliar environment and any anxieties, undesirable behaviours or behavioural problems the cat may have. Any cases of aggression must also be included in the report.

Finding a new owner

To prevent laboratory cats from being bought on an emotional whim, only well-informed, trained people should qualify as a potential new owner. The selection of potential new owners can be based on the following criteria:

- motivation
- willingness to seek professional advice when necessary
- the personal/family situation and the area around the house

It is important that expectations are aligned at the beginning of the process and that potential new owners are told what they can expect, also in connection with future home visits.

Characteristics of new owner

- Potential owners must be knowledgeable about keeping and caring for cats. This includes (1) knowledge of cats' general needs, particularly with regard to physical exercise, social needs and preventive veterinary care (vaccinations, worming, etc.). Potential owners should also have an understanding of cats' body language and behaviour. In addition, they must demonstrate that they have (2) the financial resources and time needed to care for a cat. Finally, potential owners must (3) understand the specific needs of the particular cat they want to adopt. This includes the animal's specific behaviours and veterinary/medical needs.
- With a view to points 1 and 2 mentioned above, the rehoming organisation must only place cats with potential owners who have demonstrable knowledge of keeping and caring for cats and have the time and financial resources necessary to do so.

Workshops and training sessions can be arranged to provide potential owners with good information and advice on how to deal with any problems. In order to prevent these animals from being sold for breeding purposes (commercial or otherwise), sterilisation can be considered.

It is the responsibility of the Animal Welfare Body (IvD) and/or the rehoming organisation to carefully assess the cat for any undesirable behaviour that may affect the suitability as a pet. Problems that often occur in former laboratory cats are: anxiety-related behavioural disorders, such as fear of people, objects or animals that are uncommon in a laboratory environment, urinating or defecating in undesirable places, separation-related issues, etc.

Medical file and advice

It is the responsibility of the Animal Welfare Body (IvD) and/or rehoming organisation to inform the potential owner of the cat's medical history. Special emphasis must be placed on existing medical conditions and related care as well as breed-specific medical problems that may arise as the cat gets older. For a successful rehoming it is essential that this information be tailored to the individual cat that is being rehomed.

Transfer of ownership

The rehoming is usually accompanied by a transfer of ownership. It is important to take into account the legal aspects of transfer of ownership.

Costs

The establishment licensee must take into account that there are costs associated with the rehoming of former laboratory animals. Costs are incurred for the internal process, for aspects such as socialisation, training, transportation, and, if applicable, operations, and for the external process, for aspects such as adaptation of the temporary accommodation to make it suitable for the animal, medical costs, etc. All costs must be taken into consideration.

III. The external process

New environment

The suitability of the new home environment is crucial to the success of rehoming. For a good match between cat and new owner it is important to take into account the personal situation of the new owner and the area surrounding his/her home.

Follow-up and aftercare

New owners need to be assured that they can always ask for advice. Advice can be provided by skilled and competent people, for example, a person designated by the establishment licensee, a specially designated local veterinarian or, if a rehoming organisation is involved, an employee of that organisation. If necessary, specialist advice may be sought from an animal behaviourist or veterinarian. Conducting a follow-up visit one to two months after rehoming creates an opportunity to assess the animal's behaviour in the new living environment and address any questions and/or problems the owner and/or rehoming organisation may have.

Every animal responds differently to the rehoming in a new environment. When an animal does not adjust to its new home, other arrangements must be made. In such situations it is possible that the animal will be returned to the rehoming organisation. In that case an assessment is conducted to determine why the animal could not adjust and whether the animal is suitable for a life as a pet. If the

animal is considered suitable, then every reasonable effort must be made to ensure that the next attempt is successful. Possibilities include engaging an animal behaviourist or other specialist to assess the suitability of the animal and the future owner and to supervise the facilitation and management of the pet's behavioural change in the new environment.

IV. Annexes

Annex 1: The socialisation and training of cats

Kittens 0-8 weeks old -> Stay in the care department

Cats undergo an imprinting stage when they are three to eight weeks old (first socialisation period). During this period cats must be given attention every day. They need to be picked up each day and held for a while, preferably by different people. This way the animals can get used to people and being picked up, which will benefit their development. From the age of six weeks a cat must be played with. Kittens are particularly interested in chasing and catching prey.
It is important that hands and feet are not used for this type of play, otherwise the animals may come to regard them as playthings. Prey can be simulated with strings and dangling objects. Kittens must also practice climbing. In addition, it is important to let cats get used to different types of sounds. Background music from the radio is suitable for this, and it is also important to talk to the animals regularly. From the age of seven weeks they will be more inclined to draw back when confronted with a new object. It is therefore important to provide them with new toys regularly.

Kittens 8-16 weeks old -> Stay at the research institute

Cats' second socialisation stage begins when they are between eight and nine weeks old and lasts until they are sixteen weeks.
During this period the cat learns how to behave in social situations and how to deal with aggression. Inadequate socialisation increases the risk of later behavioural problems. Young cats must be played with regularly so they can grow accustomed to their caretakers.
Kittens are most playful when they are between nine and fourteen weeks old. Young cats must receive personal attention every day, from different people. It is important that the cats get used to this change of caretakers.

Cats > 16 weeks

Cats older than sixteen weeks (four months) of age have completed the imprinting stage and the second socialisation stage, although that does not mean that they no longer need attention or socialisation exercises: even older cats can still learn a lot.
You can play with the cats during the daily contact, for example by allowing them to chase a dangling string in the animal room. A laser pointer can be used to project a dot of light on the floor and walls that they can follow, or ping pong balls can be scattered on the floor.
Empty feed bags or boxes are also suitable as toys.
Keep in mind that cats quickly become bored with a toy. It is therefore important to replace toys regularly (preferably daily).

Training exercises

Petting and picking up

Sit quietly on the floor in the animal room. Some cats approach on their own to be petted; others must be enticed. To allow cats to get used to the caretaker's hands, an attempt can be made to get the cat to eat out of his or her hand (make sure not to fill the food bowls until after this exercise!). Try to draw in a cat that does not want to be petted with a piece of string on a stick, where the stick is used as an extension of the arm. The purpose of this exercise is to teach the cat that being petted is nothing to be afraid of. Once the cat is petted, it should be picked up. Do this as gently as possible. If a cat is anxious or uncertain, it can be good to play with it a bit first so the animal gets used to the presence of the caretaker in the animal room.

Restraining on an examination table

Once the cat accepts being petted and picked up, it is time for the second step. See how the cat responds to having its flanks touched as it is being lifted. Once the cat accepts this, the next step is restraining the cat for the various tests, such as taking blood or administering an intramuscular or subcutaneous injection. Remember that this is an exercise: the cat should not be afraid or uneasy. Intensify the exercises gradually so that the cat develops positive associations.

Electric razor

Once the previous exercises have been completed with success the cat can be made familiar with the electric razor. Make sure that the shaver is initially switched off. Rub it gently over the cats neck and both front legs. Once the cat accepts this the shaver can be switched on so the cat can get used to the sound. Then gently rub the back side of the razor over the cat's neck and both front legs.

Practising with transport cage

Put a transport cage in the animal room for several days so the cat can get used to it. This gives the cats the opportunity to investigate the cage and smell it.

At the same time the cage takes on the smell of the cats. Once the cats are used to the cage try to put a cat in the cage and close the door. Once the cat accepts this lift the cage and carry it around for a bit. Then open the door again. Repeat this exercise every day, gradually leaving the cat in the cage for longer periods of time.

Training results and determining the character

The results of each training exercise are noted on the training form. A separate form is used for each animal, with space for training data from several sessions. This makes it easy to see the results of the previous session and determine what requires additional attention. A score of 1 to 3 is granted, with 1 for a very poor training result, 2 for a poor result and 3 for a good result. An indication of the character is also noted on this form so the caretaker can see whether the character of the cat has improved or worsened.

Appendix 2 *Code of Practice Dogs*

Table of contents

Socialisation	Although not a legal requirement, it is recommended that dogs be socialised before they are used in animal procedures. This contributes to a successful and effective rehoming of ex-laboratory animals. Therefore it is recommended that the socialisation process should begin with the breeder. Users of laboratory animals are advised to acquire animals that have been socialised in preparation for laboratory procedures and life in a domestic environment. It is recommended that the socialisation and training continue during the animal's stay with the licensee.
Selection	Dogs that remain alive at the end of an animal procedure and cannot or may not be reused, may be eligible for rehoming. Factors that must be taken into account in the determination of the suitability for rehoming are the age and life expectancy, the overall health and the psychological condition of the animal and, if applicable, the impact of any operations. The Animal Welfare Body (IvD) advises the licensee regarding the suitability of the animal for rehoming. This recommendation is made after consultation with the designated veterinarian, an animal behaviourist and/or the animal's caretaker.
Preparation for rehoming	Once the candidates for rehoming have been identified, the transition process begins, in which the animals are prepared for their new home. This process must take into account socialisation, habituation, training and veterinary care. Before the animal is transferred to the new owner, a health examination is carried out by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned. In addition, a behavioural report is prepared by an animal behaviourist and/or the caretaker who is most familiar with the animal.
A new owner	A good match between the dog and its new owner(s) is essential to the success of rehoming. The dog's new living environment must accommodate the animal's needs and any problems it may have. Therefore it is necessary that relevant information is shared and stakeholders are well-informed. It is advisable to involve a specialised party in the rehoming process. This may be an external party, or it could be a party specialised in rehoming within the licensed establishment.
Transfer of ownership	Rehoming is generally accompanied by a transfer of ownership. It is important that the legal aspects of transfer of ownership are taken into account. Documentation concerning the performed health examination, the medical history of the dog and information about its behaviour are given to the new owner(s).
Follow-up	New owners must have the assurance that advice will always be available after rehoming. Conducting a follow-up visit four to eight weeks after rehoming creates an opportunity to assess the animal's behaviour in the new living environment and address any questions and/or problems the owner and/or rehoming organisation may have.

Introduction

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure the quality of life of former laboratory dogs that remain alive at the end of an animal procedure and are eligible for rehoming.

I. The internal process

Socialisation and training

Although not a legal requirement, it is recommended that dogs be socialised before they are used in animal procedures, to improve the chance of a successful and effective rehoming. Early socialisation also contributes to the proper functioning of the dogs in a laboratory environment. It is recommended that users of laboratory animals acquire animals that have been socialised for animal procedures and who are familiar with the stimuli and situations that former laboratory animals are confronted with in a domestic environment. Breeders should therefore have a complete socialisation programme, which continues during the animal's stay with the licensee.

Training of the dogs is intended to ensure that they:

1. can function in a laboratory environment
2. can participate in animal testing without behaviour indicative of anxiety or distress
3. can function well in a domestic environment after rehoming

Each licensee must determine which combination of skills the dogs must learn, depending on the routine with which the animals are confronted. The skills needed to participate in testing will vary greatly between licensees. All animals must be trained so that they are familiar with the procedures to which they are subjected during testing.

During the stay at the licensed establishment skills must be developed that are needed within a domestic environment. Examples include basic obedience, such as walking beside the caretaker without pulling, greeting people without jumping up on them and walking on a lead past other dogs without pulling. The training should be based on positive reinforcement. No use should be made of punishments, referring to aversive techniques such as water spray bottles, 'corrective' collars amongst others.

Dogs that are accustomed to people will experience less stress than dogs that are not. The probability of a successful rehoming increases when the dog has interaction with many different people. This allows the dog to gain confidence in interacting with people.

The training plan must be based both on teaching the dog skills needed to carry out biotech procedures and preparing the dog for transfer to a domestic environment. This Code of Practice includes an example of a socialisation process plus a variety of exercises that can be incorporated into a training plan.

The effectiveness of the training should be evaluated regularly, and any necessary changes can be made to achieve optimum training and ensure the desired end result. The dog's development must be monitored during the socialisation process and the training. This encompasses more than just assessment of the dog's performance during the specific training exercises; the animal's character and

behaviour must also be assessed so that the caretaker can determine whether they have improved or worsened.

Eligibility criteria for rehoming

Under Article 13d of the Experiments on Animals Act (Wod) an animal can only be released for rehoming if (a) the state of health of the animal allows it; (b) there is no danger to public health, animal health or the environment, and (c) appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the welfare of the animal.

The quality of life is crucial in the assessment of the suitability of an animal. A former laboratory dog can only become a pet if it can function in a domestic environment. It is therefore necessary to consider the quality of life, not the chance of survival, when assessing the suitability for rehoming. The following aspects of the animal must be included in the assessment:

- the animal's age and life expectancy
- the animal's general health
- the animal's psychological condition
- if applicable, the impact of operations that are required prior to the rehoming

The animal must be in good, yet not necessarily optimum, health. The new owner will need to be able to deal with a potential disorder. Even if the animal has a medical condition it can still be very suitable for rehoming, provided that a realistic and reasonable treatment plan is available so that the long-term prognosis is good. Also in this regard, the emphasis should be on ensuring the animal's quality of life.

Health reports will be made available, and advice will be given with respect to any zoonotic diseases. *Campylobacter*, for example, is endemic in most dog populations; it is usually asymptomatic, but it can transmit to humans. A virus status is not, in itself, reason not to proceed with rehoming.

If the decision is taken to release an animal for rehoming, the animal is operated on if necessary, to remove implanted instruments for example. There are no legal objections to such operations. The purpose of such an operation is to minimise further suffering. The veterinarian decides whether or not to operate on the basis of an assessment of the expected impact of the operation, the expected quality of life in the long term and the balance between the two.

Selection process

The final decision as to whether or not to rehome an animal rests with the licensee. The licensee is advised by the Animal Welfare Body (IvD). The IvD issue their recommendation after consultation with the designated veterinarian, an animal behaviourist (expert with formal qualifications in the field of normal and abnormal behaviour of an animal species and behaviour management and change) and/or the animal caretaker who is responsible for the daily care of the animal.

- The designated veterinarian contributes to the assessment of the health of the animal. He or she evaluates the options, considering only the animal's quality of life.
- An animal behaviourist and/or the caretaker who is most familiar with the animal or animal species must assess the animal's

behaviour and suitability for rehoming. Information can be obtained from other sources, such as the designated veterinarian or, if applicable, the animal's caretaker. Veterinarians and animal caretakers who perform this type of assessment should have a good understanding of species-specific behaviours, including undesirable or abnormal behaviour, behaviour management and change and establishing a prognosis of possible undesirable or abnormal behaviour.

II. The transition process

The process is coordinated by a rehoming organisation. This may be an external organisation – not a private person but rather, for example, an independent organisation with experience in the rehoming of animals (including laboratory animals) – but it may also be part of the establishment licensee that releases animals for rehoming.

It is important that throughout the process the applicable policy and legal frameworks are observed, such as the Animal Holders Decree (Besluit houders van dieren) and the policy rules quality rehoming animals (Beleidsregels kwaliteit opvang dieren).

Preparation for rehoming

Once it is clear which animals will be released for rehoming, they are further prepared for their new home. In preparing the animals, attention must be given to the following aspects:

Socialisation, habituation and training

Under Article 13e of the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD)[9] a rehoming procedure must be followed that includes socialisation of the animals to be released for rehoming. The importance of socialisation has been highlighted in a preceding section.

Sensory stimuli should be part of the training. As part of the normal habituation process it is advisable to expose animals in the laboratory to as many different visual, tactile and aural stimuli as possible. Ideally, all laboratory dogs should gain experience with people of both sexes and varying appearance. Men with beards, people wearing glasses, people wearing a variety of clothing and people carrying large objects all provide valuable stimuli for laboratory animals. Animals may also have difficulty adapting to children and animals of a different species. According to animal welfare organisations, this is the most common reason for the failure of rehoming. Tactile stimuli are also important. Consider, for example, different surfaces such as grass or carpet.

Veterinary care

Stringent oversight of the health of laboratory animals is already a prerequisite for their care and use, but additional, specific assessment by a veterinarian and confirmation of vaccination and certification

[9] **Article 13e of the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD):** When the breeder, supplier or user proceeds to release for rehoming of animals that have been used or were intended for use in an animal procedure, they employ a rehoming procedure that includes the socialisation of the animals released for rehoming. In the case of wild animals, they undergo a reintegration programme, if necessary, before they are returned to their habitat.

are essential. The animals are dewormed and a suitable form of contraception is considered.

Documentation

A dog is accompanied by a single report, containing relevant information on:

- the health
- the behaviour (including in relation to a domestic environment)
- the welfare
- the medical condition
- the medical history
- medical advice

Before the animal is transferred to the new owner, a health examination must be performed by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned. The veterinarian determines whether the animal is healthy or has a medical condition for which the long-term prognosis is good with a realistic treatment plan. The health report is given to the new owner(s) of the dog. The dog's welfare log, containing information about previous accommodation and the dog's character, is attached. The animal's medical history must be well documented, and accompanied with appropriate advice in the case of any zoonotic diseases.

In addition, a behavioural report is prepared by an animal behaviourist and/or the caretaker who is most familiar with the animal. The dog's behavioural profile describes the imprinted character traits, the interaction with other dogs and people, the behaviour in a new or unfamiliar environment and any anxieties, undesirable behaviours or behavioural problems the dog may have. Any cases of aggression must also be included in the report.

Finding a new owner

To prevent laboratory dogs from being bought on an emotional whim, only well-informed, trained people should qualify as a potential new owner. The selection of potential new owners can be based on the following criteria:

- motivation
- the personal/family situation and the area around the house
- willingness to take classes at a dog obedience school
- willingness to seek professional advice when necessary

It is important that expectations are aligned at the beginning of the process and that potential new owners are told what they can expect, also in connection with future home visits.

Characteristics of new owner:

- Potential owners must be knowledgeable about keeping and caring for dogs. This includes (1) knowledge of dogs' general needs, particularly with regard to physical exercise, social needs and preventive veterinary care (vaccinations, worming, etc.). Potential owners should also have an understanding of how to train dogs through positive reinforcement as well as dogs' body language and behaviour. In addition, they must demonstrate that they have (2) the financial resources and time needed to care for a dog. Finally, potential owners must (3) understand the specific needs of the particular dog they want to adopt. This includes the animal's specific behaviours and veterinary needs.

- Keeping in mind points 1 and 2 above, the rehoming organisation must only place dogs with potential owners who have demonstrable knowledge of keeping and caring for dogs and have the time and financial resources necessary to do so.

Workshops and training sessions can be arranged to ensure that potential owners receive good information and advice on how to deal with any problems. In order to prevent these animals from being sold for breeding purposes (commercial or otherwise), sterilisation can be considered.

It is the responsibility of the Animal Welfare Body (IvD) and/or the rehoming organisation to carefully assess the dog for any undesirable behaviour that may affect the suitability as a pet. Problems that often occur in former laboratory dogs are: anxiety-related behavioural disorders, such as fear of people, objects or animals that are uncommon in a laboratory environment, urinating or defecating in undesirable places, separation-related issues, etc.

Medical file and advice

It is the responsibility of the Animal Welfare Body (IvD) and/or rehoming organisation to inform the potential owner of the dog's medical history. Special emphasis must be placed on existing medical conditions and related care as well as breed-specific medical problems that may arise as the dog gets older. For a successful rehoming it is essential that this information be tailored to the individual dog that is being rehomed.

Transfer of ownership

The rehoming is usually accompanied by a transfer of ownership. It is important that the legal aspects of transfer of ownership are taken into account.

Costs

The establishment licensee must take into account that there are costs associated with the rehoming of former laboratory animals. Costs are incurred for the internal process,
for aspects such as socialisation, training, transportation, and, if applicable, operations, and for the external process, for aspects such as adaptation of the temporary accommodation to make it suitable for the animal, medical costs, etc. All costs must be taken into consideration.

III. The external process

New environment

The suitability of the new home environment is crucial to the success of rehoming. For a good match between dog and new owner it is important to take into account the personal situation of the new owner and the area surrounding his/her home.

Follow-up and aftercare

New owners need to be assured that they can always ask for advice. Advice can be provided by skilled and competent people, for example, a person designated by the establishment licensee, a specially designated local veterinarian or, if a rehoming organisation is involved, an employee of that organisation. If necessary, specialist

advice may be sought from an animal behaviourist or veterinarian. Conducting a follow-up visit one to two months after rehoming creates an opportunity to assess the animal's behaviour in the new living environment and address any questions and/or problems the owner and/or rehoming organisation may have.

Every animal responds differently to the rehoming to a new environment. When an animal does not adjust to its new home, other arrangements must be made. In such situations it is possible that the animal will be returned to the rehoming organisation. The reasons that the animal could not adapt must be carefully analysed. If the animal is considered suitable, then every reasonable effort must be made to ensure that the next attempt is successful. Possibilities include engaging an animal behaviourist or other specialist to assess the suitability of the animal and the future owner and to supervise the facilitation and management of the pet's behavioural change in the new environment.

IV. Annexes

Annex 1: The socialisation of dogs

There are several ways to socialise and train dogs. Examples of aspects that can be addressed in a socialisation programme follow hereafter.

Every dog that is acquired by a licensee as a puppy must undergo a socialisation and training programme that to the best of their knowledge is sufficient to ensure that the dog develops the skills necessary to live in a research institute and later in a home environment. If this does not happen, the result will be future undesirable behaviour and risks to the welfare of the dog. Particularly for dogs up to four months of age, a tailored socialisation programme is necessary, plus a training and exercise programme designed specifically for young and young adult dogs.

Tailored socialisation programme for dogs up to four months of age

Aim	Parts of socialisation programme
Develop skills for living in a laboratory environment	Exposure to all aspects of the laboratory environment Familiarisation with different types of people so the dogs are not afraid of strangers (such as visitors) Become familiar with a kennel from a young age, for the development of an appropriate bonding profile (confident in interacting with people, without excessive bonding or distress when no people are present) Interaction with littermates and various types of adult dogs for the development of the appropriate social skills
The development of skills for the grooming/care that is to be provided and participation in testing	Early positive associations with the interaction with people so the dogs can be examined by a veterinarian or used for a procedure without fear Beginning training for special testing requirements at an early stage so the dogs are fully trained for participation in procedures
Developing skills for living in a domestic environment	Exposure to aspects of a domestic environment that differ from those of a laboratory environment (noise and the presence of household appliances, etc.) Basic obedience training and skills training that are expected of a dog as a pet (walking on a lead, sitting up, etc.)

Training and exercise programme for young and young adult dogs

a. To continue the socialisation.
b. In order to meet the need for physical exercise and to prevent undesirable behaviour as a result of too little stimulation and high tension.
c. In order to meet all the training needs. This includes specific, consistent training using positive feedback to prevent undesirable behaviour that makes a dog less suitable for animal testing or a domestic environment.

Annex 2: The socialisation and training of dogs

There are several ways to prepare dogs for testing. An example of a possible design for a training programme is provided hereafter.

Socialisation

Puppies 0-8 weeks old -> Stay in the nursery

The socialisation process in dogs begins immediately after birth, when the puppies are helped to get used to people. After the mother dog has given birth and licked the puppies dry, they can be picked up to determine their sex and health.
While doing so, talk to the puppies with a soft, calm voice.

The condition of the mother dog and the puppies is checked each day. Talk to the puppies soothingly during this process.

Start petting and picking up the puppies when they are three weeks old. Keep the contact moments short: pick them up briefly, pet them and talk to them, and then put them back in the whelping box.

From the age of four weeks the pups may come out of the whelping box and they receive extra milk. The puppies are trained to drink milk from a metal bowl by placing them next to the bowl.
The socialisation training is also intensified:

- The puppies are picked up one by one and held slightly longer while being gently petted.
- The puppies are placed on their backs.
- Their front legs a grasped one by one and lifted slightly (to let them get used to having blood taken).
- The tail is lifted a little bit (to let them get used to rectal temperature measurement).
- The head is held and pushed back slightly while the neck is stroked (to let them get used to having blood taken).
- If they are carried to the play area, a lead is still attached.

During all of these interactions the handler speaks with a soft voice, which serves as a reward. This socialisation exercises are initially very short, but each exercise is extended by about a minute each week.
After the preceding exercises have been completed the caretaker plays with the puppies in the kennel or play area.
The puppies tug on the caretaker's boots, etc. and learn to play with toys.

From the age of six weeks the puppies are trained to walk on a lead. This is done by means of positive reinforcement.

These training exercises are done daily, until the puppies are eight weeks old and leave the care department. If the puppies remain in the care department longer than eight weeks, it is important that the training exercises continue until the time they leave the department.

Puppies 8-16 weeks old -> Stay at the research institute

After the puppies arrive in a new building, it is important that something is done with them regularly, and preferably daily. It is very important to help them get used to their new caretakers.
In addition, the puppies must become accustomed to the new toys. To arouse the interest of a puppy in a toy, the caretaker can pull it away, triggering the puppy's hunting instinct.
When the kennels are being cleaned the puppies can be let loose in the animal room together with the other puppies (provided that the test procedure allows this) to develop socialisation skills in the context of a group. Even at these times toys should be present for the puppies.

Young adult and adult dogs >16 weeks old

When the kennels are being cleaned the dogs can be let loose in the animal room together with the other dogs (provided that the fertility cycle and test procedure allow this) where they are given toys to play with. The toys should be changed regularly to prevent habituation and boredom. Each animal room has two crates of different toys: one crate for the even weeks and one for the odd weeks. The caretaker keeps a close eye on the dogs while cleaning the kennels and intervenes if they begin to fight.
The caretaker maintains contact with the dogs by communicating with them and petting them regularly.

Training exercises

General

A dog learns faster when it is accustomed to being rewarded with food. Because we do not always do this, our voice is also an important way to reward a dog. The caretaker decides based on their own experience and insight whether the dog is rewarded with food or by voice during the training.

Reward with food

The danger of rewarding with food is that the dog can, in a manner of speaking, train the caretaker to feed it, for example by exhibiting unruly behaviour until it is rewarded or by performing certain tasks without being commanded to do so because it knows those behaviours will be rewarded. Therefore, the moments at which food is provided as a reward must be chosen carefully. An unjustified reward can reinforce unwanted behaviour.
If food is used as a reward, the dog should not be trained immediately after its morning or evening feeding. Reduce the daily amount of food by the amount given as a reward.
Train the dog so that it only accepts food when it is calm and, for example, is sitting or standing calmly next to the caretaker. Dogs that behave well can also be given food through the bars of the kennel at random times throughout the day to reward them (i.e. to train them).

Rewarding by voice

Dogs should not be continually rewarded with food. If they perform a task quickly or well, they can also be rewarded with the voice (depending on the caretaker's experience; see above, under 'General').

8 weeks and older

Stand

The command 'stand' is trained so that the dog can be effectively evaluated for local reactions, in order to make it easier to take the rectal temperature and to weigh the dog or conduct biotechnical tests.
To prevent puppies developing into irascible dogs, they are only picked up (rewarded) when they behave calmly.
Put the puppy on the examination table and let it stand quietly. If the puppy is restless, it is not corrected with the voice but rather lifted briefly, with both hands under its armpits.
The caretaker does not make eye contact and holds the dog away from him. Once the dog no longer offers resistance and quietly hangs in the caretaker's hands, he puts it down again.
Another method is to pick up the puppy by its chest and hindquarters, wait until it calms down and then put it on the table again.
Do not train the dog to do anything else before it has learned to be calm. Fearful puppies are an exception: such puppies should be spoken to during this training exercise to put them at ease.

Sitting

Once the dog has been trained to stand quietly, it is time to train it to sit. Train the dog by gently pressing on its hindquarters with one hand while pushing its chest backwards with the other hand.
Once the dog has learned this, it can be further trained by merely pressing its hindquarters to get it to sit.

Getting the dog accustomed to the electric shaver for drawing blood

Once the dog can sit quietly, its neck can be gently stretched in order to increase the pressure on the jugular vein. Rub the back of the shaver slowly over the dog's neck. If the sound of the shaver makes the dog nervous, it can be useful to switch it on while it is still at some distance from the dog and only then move it closer.
Stretch the front legs out one at a time and rub the back of the razor gently over the vein in the foreleg.

Walking the dog on a lead

Remove the dog from the kennel and put a collar with lead around its neck. Do not put pressure on the dog by pulling on the lead; first allow the dog to get used to the situation. Use a calm command or a toy to get the dog to follow. Walk around with the dog without pulling on the lead, and stop every time he resists. Then get it to walk again with some quiet words or a toy.

If the dog absolutely refuses to walk on a lead, wrap it loosely around his neck or let him drag it along the ground behind him so the dog can get used to it. Detach the lead, walk away from the dog and call it or roll a toy away from it on the floor. Ensure that the dog relaxes once it cautiously starts walking by throwing a toy or walking away and calling it. Once the dog relaxes again and is cooperative, the lead can be taken in hand again and the dog can be walked around on the lead.

Stop walking if the dog begins to run and pulls on the lead, and only continue to walk again once the dog has calmed down. If the dog sits down when he is stopped next to the caretaker, this may be rewarded with a positive word. This also applies when the dog calmly walks alongside the caretaker while on the lead.

Climbing onto the examination table with a ramp

A ramp can be used to enable the dog to walk onto the examination table itself so the caretaker does not need to lift it. There are two ways to train this: 1) independently, without lead, or 2) on a lead.

1. Independently, without lead, the caretaker sets the puppy on the ramp and entices it to walk up with a verbal command, a toy or a dog biscuit, possibly helping with the hand. Once the puppy can do this fairly well, a second caretaker can set the puppy a few metres from the table and then enthusiastically call it from the other side of the table while offering a toy or dog biscuit. If the puppy then tries to climb the ramp, he may need help from the second caretaker. Once a puppy is finally standing on the examination table, he can be enthusiastically rewarded with positive words and/or a toy or dog biscuit. Repeat this several times (maximum three). Do not let the puppy walk down the ramp; that is not good for its bones, which are not yet fully developed. Dogs twelve months of age and older can walk down the ramp.
2. On a lead: this only works if the puppy has been trained to walk on a lead. Walk slowly to the ramp with the puppy and lead it up with calm verbal commands. It may be necessary to support the pup with the hand. Dogs twelve months of age and older can be trained to walk down the ramp in the same way.

Getting the dog to roll onto its back

It may be necessary to have the dog lie on its back on the examination table so its abdomen can be examined. A special pad can be used to comfortably hold the dog in position. Note: this should be done carefully, as the dog may experience it as an extreme form of dominance if it is laid on its back and held there; puppies will accept this more easily than adult dogs. Do not keep the dog lying on its back longer than necessary.

A puppy can be easily turned over with one hand under its belly and placed on its back on the pad. If the caretaker keeps a hand on the puppy's belly, it will quietly remain on the pad. In most cases, it will also have a soothing effect when the attendant gently strokes the dog's belly.

Adult dogs first stand on the examination table. Bend over the dog and hold the two front legs in one hand and the two rear legs in the other; then carefully lay the dog on its side on the pad. Then roll the dog onto its back. Keep one hand on the dog's chest if it resists. The less the dog resists, the less pressure should be put on its chest.

Transportation

Laboratory dogs are moved from one kennel to another many times during their lives. If the dog is moved to another kennel in the same building, it can walk there on a lead. If it must be transported to another location (or if it is rehomed), it must be transported in a transport cage. To be able to transport a dog in a transport cage without stress throughout its entire life, it is advisable to repeat this exercise regularly, even after the puppy has left the care department. Leave the dog in the transport cage for a few minutes in a quiet place. It may be useful to reward the dog for this exercise with food. If the dog quietly accepts that he is in the cage, the exercises can be kept brief. For restless dogs, try to find a quiet time for this exercise. Never respond to agitated behaviour, and reward the dog when it is calm again.

Determining the character

For laboratory dogs, we distinguish between four different character types:

Type **A**: The dog comes to the caretaker voluntarily and willingly undergoes biotechnical tests.

Type **B**: The dog comes to the caretaker voluntarily but is very restless, making it difficult to conduct biotechnical tests.

Type **C**: The dog hesitates but eventually comes to the caretaker. This type of dog undergoes tests voluntarily but exhibits submissive behaviour.

Type **D**: The dog is nervous and does not come to the caretaker. This type of dog must often be kept in check and bites (or will do that later). It is difficult to control and test, and it tries to escape when it sees the opportunity.

Training results and determining the character

The results of each training exercise are noted on the training form. A separate form is used for each animal, with space for training data from several sessions. This makes it easy to see the results of the previous session and determine what requires additional attention. A score of 1 to 3 is granted, with 1 for a very poor training result, 2 for a poor result and 3 for a good result. An indication of the character is also noted on this form so the caretaker can see whether the character of the dog has improved or worsened.

Appendix 3 *Code of Practice Non-human primates*

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Code of Practice | Non-human primates

Socialisation

Non-human primates are animals with complex social structures. The animals should be born, grow up and live their lives in conditions that mimic those of the natural group structure to the extent possible, and this is also important with respect to their psychological state at the time of possible rehoming. It is therefore recommended that non-human primates be obtained from centres that provide this. Also as concerns the accommodation at the research institute, a stimulus-rich environment (including a wide range of social stimuli) is not only beneficial to the animal welfare in general but also to the later likelihood of successful rehoming.

Selection

Suitability for rehoming is assessed individually based on:

- the animal's age and life expectancy
- the animal's health
- the animal's psychosocial condition
- if applicable, the impact of rehabilitation operation

The licensee is advised by the Animal Welfare Body (IvD). The IvD issue their recommendation to the licensee after consultation with a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned and/or an animal behaviourist, the colony manager (if employed), those responsible for monitoring health, daily care and/or training and researchers. The final decision as to whether or not to rehome an animal rests with the licensee.

Preparation for rehoming

Prior to the rehoming a health examination must be conducted by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned. In addition, a declaration of behaviour is to be issued by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned or an animal behaviourist who has determined that the animal exhibits normal individual and species-specific behaviour.

External rehoming and Follow-up

In the case of external rehoming, the organisation from which the transfer originates decides which receiving organisation is chosen. The receiving organisation must have qualified staff with all the necessary expertise.
The following aspects are mandatory:

- the organisation that will provide the accommodation has the required permits for keeping primates,
- social housing
- spacious accommodation (3D), with varied décor and various forms of environmental enrichment

If a non-human primate is transferred to another location where it will spend the rest of its life, it is important that the complete documentation accompanies the animal.

Introduction

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to ensure the quality of life of NHPs that remain alive at the end of an animal procedure and are eligible for rehoming.

Internal and external rehoming

NHPs can spend the remainder of their life at the establishment where they stayed during the animal procedure without being involved in an animal test. In this case, the code uses the term 'internal rehoming'; retirement must then be explicitly documented. A retired animal can no longer be used as a laboratory animal. The code uses the term 'external rehoming' when an NHP is rehomed outside the establishment. The same conditions apply to both types of transfer.

I. The internal process

Socially housed

NHPs are animals with complex social structures. The animals should be born, grow up and live their lives in conditions that mimic those of the natural group structure to the extent possible, and this is also important with respect to their good psychological state at the time of possible rehoming. It is therefore recommended that NHPs be obtained from centres that provide this, even if this involves higher cost. Also as concerns the accommodation at the research institute, a stimulus-rich environment (including a wide range of social stimuli) is not only beneficial to the animal welfare in general but also to the later likelihood of successful retirement.

Eligibility criteria for rehoming

Due to various developments in scientific research, in the field of imaging (NMR) for example, euthanasia at the end of a study is no longer always necessary.

At the end of an animal experiment, consideration is given to whether an animal can be used as a laboratory animal again. In order to assess this, information about the nature of the study and the specific procedures the animal has undergone are of decisive importance. An important additional aspect is the expected distress the animal will suffer in the case of reuse and the total effect including the distress already experienced (*'cumulative suffering'*).
In 2015, the ethical position in the Netherlands is that it is preferable for more animals to be used so that each animal suffers less, than to use fewer animals (or reuse animals) that suffer more distress per animal. Rehoming can be considered if reuse is not possible or desirable.

Under Article 13d of the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD) animals may only be released for rehoming if (a) the state of health of the animal allows it; (b) there is no danger to public health, animal health or the environment; and (c) appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the welfare of the animal.

In all cases, an assessment is made of the suitability of each animal individually.

The assessment takes place on the basis of the following criteria:
- the animal's age and life expectancy
- the animal's health
- the animal's psychosocial condition

To this end, an overall picture is formed of factors that include:
- the long-term health prognosis
- the extent to which the animal can exhibit normal individual and species-specific behaviour
- the extent to which the animal has physical or psychological trauma, including the chance of recovery
- if applicable, the need for a rehabilitation operation and the impact of such on the animal
- the necessary accommodation requirements
- availability of an appropriate rehoming option

Responsibility for decision-making

The final decision as to whether or not to rehome an animal rests with the licensee. The licensee is advised by the Animal Welfare Body (IvD). The IvD issue their recommendation after consultation with:
- a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species
- an animal behaviourist with expertise in the animal species
- the colony manager (if employed)
- person responsible for overseeing the welfare and care
- person responsible for daily care and/or training
- investigator(s) responsible for animal procedures performed

In its advice, the IvD also takes into consideration the conditions at the receiving establishment, such as:
- staff expertise (animal care, veterinary care)
- facilities for accommodation
- initial intake / quarantine
- strategy for socialisation/resocialisation
- long-term objectives, which may be of potential influence on the care of animals

II. The transition process

Preparations for rehoming and documentation

When the animal is transferred it is accompanied by a document containing all relevant information on:
- the animal's health
- the behaviour
- a summary of the welfare log
- the medical condition and history
- medical advice

Prior to the rehoming a health examination must be conducted by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned. He or she determines whether the animal is healthy or has a medical condition with a realistic therapy and good long-term prognosis. The welfare log, containing information about past accommodation and the animal's personality must accompany the animal. The animal's medical history must also be well documented, and accompanied with appropriate advice in the case of any zoonotic diseases.

Non-human primates can carry viruses such as herpes B, which can be deadly to humans. However, a virus status does not automatically have to result in an animal's loss of eligibility for rehoming.

In addition, a declaration of behaviour must be issued by a veterinarian with expertise in the animal species concerned or an animal behaviourist who has determined that the animal exhibits normal individual and species-specific behaviour. Among other things, this means that the animal

- exhibits social behaviour
- is explorative
- is not overly anxious
- is not excessively aggressive

When a non-human primate is transferred to another location, it is important that all relevant information accompanies the animal.

Costs

It is up to the supplying and receiving establishments to reach agreement on the accompanying costs, such as:

- the preparatory procedures per animal
- possible rehabilitation operation
- the health examination
- the transport
- the preparatory procedures per animal at the new home
- finding a buddy
- continued medication
- if necessary, making the accommodation suitable

Knowledge of the supplying institution remains available to the receiving institution.

It is important to investigate and lay down the legal aspects concerning the transfer of ownership. These include responsibilities in respect of long-term medical care, choosing a final home and the possible failure of a rehoming.

III. The external process

External rehoming and follow-up

In the case of external rehoming, the organisation from which the transfer originates decides which receiving organisation is chosen. This may be a temporary home provided by an intermediary organisation or a permanent home. The receiving organisation must have qualified staff with all the necessary expertise. In addition, the housing of the receiving organisation must be equivalent or better. It is important that throughout the process the applicable policy and legal frameworks are observed, such as the Animal Holders Decree (Besluit houders van dieren) and the policy rules for protected native animals (Beleidsregels kwaliteit opvang beschermde inheemse diersoorten).

Before a decision concerning transfer is taken, the receiving establishment is visited in consultation with the IvD to inspect the future accommodation. An observation of the future buddy or group is also conducted.

The following elements are required with respect to the accommodation:

- the organisation that will provide the accommodation has the required permits for keeping primates
- social housing
- spacious accommodation (3D), with varied décor and various forms of environmental enrichment

A plan must be present at the receiving establishment for introduction to the new buddy/group. This should include consideration of the type of policy (contact/hands-off) which is suitable for the non-human primate in question.

Appendix 4 *Rehoming framework*

Inleiding

Under Article 13e of the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD)[10] licensees can release laboratory animals for rehoming.
Some licensees have been doing so for years. According to the Netherlands National Committee for the protection of animals used for scientific purposes (NCad), this should be encouraged. For a harmonious, transparent process, NCad has designed a general rehoming framework. This aim of this framework, together with the Codes of Practice for the rehoming of dogs, cats and NHPs, is to promote the development of a rehoming programme.

The 'yes, unless' principle

Directive 2010/63/EU and the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD) are based on the idea that animals have intrinsic value which must be respected.[11] By extension, it is self-evident that there must be rehoming options for eligible animals that are not killed for the purpose of the experiment and when this is in the best interest of the animal's welfare.
Taking this into account, it is reasonable to adopt a 'yes, unless' principle for the rehoming of former laboratory animals. There are also situations in which, for good reasons, rehoming is not an option. These include:

1. The experiment requires the animals are killed because, for example, an autopsy provides essential information.
2. Reuse is possible, compatible with legal guidelines, and ethically acceptable, with consideration having been given to cumulative distress.
3. Laws and regulations prohibit rehoming, for reasons such as risk to public health.
4. The Animal Welfare Body (IvD) and designated veterinary physician have good reason to believe that the quality of life and life expectancy of the animal will be too low following rehoming.

Aspects of a successful rehoming programme

In rehoming, the emphasis is on the quality of life of former laboratory animals. Therefore, procedures must be developed that ensure the welfare of the animals. The main factors to be considered for rehoming are set out in this framework. In this framework, these factors are described in general terms.

Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific purposes states that if an EU Member State allows rehoming of former laboratory animals, it is essential that the breeder, supplier or user has a scheme in place to provide appropriate socialisation. According to the Wod, a breeder, supplier or user that releases former laboratory animals for rehoming is required by law to employ a rehoming

[10] **Article 13e of the Experiments on Animals Act (WoD):** When the breeder, supplier or user proceeds to release for rehoming of animals that have been used or were intended for use in an animal procedure, they employ a rehoming procedure that includes the socialisation of the animals released for rehoming. In the case of wild animals, they undergo a reintegration programme, if necessary, before they are returned to their habitat.
[11] Directive 2010/63/EU, recital 12.

procedure.[12] It is recommended that such a procedure be clearly defined and to allow for a full assessment of all the costs and benefits per animal. Ideally, this is done in the context of a rehoming programme, which includes but is not necessarily limited to the following legal and practical considerations:

1. competence of the licensee to release animals
2. the selection of suitable animals
3. preparation for rehoming
4. assessment of the suitability of the new living environment
5. rehoming through a third party
6. follow-up
7. financial and legal aspects

1. Competence of the licensee to release animals

The Wod states that at the end of an animal procedure a veterinarian or other relevant expert decides whether the animal shall be kept alive. An animal is killed if it is probable that it will continue to endure moderate or severe pain, suffering, distress or lasting harm. The criteria for keeping an animal alive after a procedure are established at the beginning of the project. In practice, the decision as to whether or not the conditions for release have been met is made in consultation with the project licensee. If an animal is kept alive, it must receive the care and living environment that meet the needs of the animal in its current state of health.

[12] Article 26 of the Directive: Should Member States allow rehoming with families, it is essential that the breeder, supplier or user has a scheme in place to provide appropriate socialisation to those animals in order to ensure successful rehoming as well as to avoid unnecessary distress to the animals and to guarantee public safety. See also Article 13e of the Wod, referred to in footnote 1.

The final decision on whether or not to release an animal for rehoming is taken by the establishment licensee. The Animal Welfare Body (IvD) advises the licensee regarding the suitability of the animal for rehoming. Before issuing this recommendation, the IvD must contact the designated veterinarian, an animal behaviourist with expertise in the animal species concerned (expert with formal qualifications in the field of normal and abnormal behaviour of an animal species and behaviour management and change) and/or the animal caretaker who is responsible for the daily care of the animal concerned.

- An animal behaviourist with expertise in the animal species concerned and/or the caretaker who is most familiar with the animal or animal species must assess the animal's behaviour and suitability for rehoming. Since not all establishments work with an animal behaviourist, it may be necessary to obtain information from other sources, such as the designated veterinarian or the animal caretaker. Veterinarians and animal caretakers should have a good understanding of species-specific behaviour, including undesirable or abnormal behaviour, behaviour management and change and providing a prognosis for possible undesirable or abnormal behaviour when conducting this review.

- The designated veterinarian contributes to the assessment of the health of the animal. He or she evaluates the options, considering only the animal's quality of life.

- The decision of whether an animal is suitable for rehoming must be taken before a potential new owner has presented itself.

2. The selection of suitable animals

Under Article 13d of the Wod, an animal can only be released for rehoming if (a) the state of health of the animal allows it; (b) there is no danger to public health, animal health or the environment, and (c) appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the welfare of the animal.

The quality of life is crucial in the assessment of the suitability of an animal. The suitability for rehoming must be carefully assessed, and only animals that are expected to be able to adapt to and flourish in a new living environment should be considered eligible.

There are various ways to assess the suitability of animals. Moreover, the tools for such assessments differ by species. In general, it is recommended that the following criteria be taken into consideration when assessing the suitability of an animal:

- The age in relationship to the life expectancy:
  the age of the animal is relevant in order to ensure a balanced life cycle.
- The animal's general health:
  The animal must be in good, yet not necessarily optimum, health. Even if the animal has a medical condition it can still be very suitable for rehoming, provided that a realistic and reasonable treatment plan is available so that the long-term prognosis is good.
- The animal's psychological/social condition:
  for example, the effects of the tests on the animal, the species and the species-specific behaviour.
- If applicable, the impact of operations that are required prior to the rehoming.

3. Preparation for rehoming

Once it is clear which animals will be released, they must be further prepared for their new home. When preparing animals for their relocation or rehoming, account must be taken of socialisation, habituation, training and veterinary care.

a. Socialisation, habituation and training

An institution that releases animals for rehoming is required by law to employ a rehoming procedure that ensures the socialisation of the animals to be released. Habituation and training are also important. Programmes for socialisation, habituation and training

reduce the stress response of animals that are confronted with a new situation, such as contact with visitors to the establishment and undergoing procedures. The socialisation programme should be aimed at reducing the stress during the stay in the laboratory/the course of the animal procedures and contributing to the adaptation to the living environment. Minor changes may be made to the programme to specially adapt it to rehoming by mimicking situations that might arise in the animals' new living environment. As part of the normal habituation process it is advisable to expose animals in the laboratory to as many different visual, tactile and aural stimuli as possible.

b. Veterinary care

Stringent oversight of the health of laboratory animals is already a prerequisite for their care and use, but additional, specific assessment by a veterinarian and confirmation of vaccination and certification are essential. The animals must be dewormed and a suitable form of

contraception must be considered. Health reports will be made available, and advice will be given with respect to any zoonotic diseases. *Campylobacter*, for example, is endemic in most dog populations; it is usually asymptomatic, but it can transmit to humans. In non-human primates it is possible they carry viruses, such as herpes B, which can be deadly to humans. A virus status is not, in itself, reason not to proceed with rehoming. If an animal has a medical condition for which there is a realistic and reasonable treatment plan available, the animal can still be very suitable for rehoming. Policy must be agreed for such cases, including treatments that must be performed prior to the release of the animals.

It is possible that prior to being released for rehoming an animal must undergo an operation to remove implanted instruments. Legally, there are no a priori objections to such operations.[13] The purpose of such an operation is to minimise further suffering. The veterinarian decides whether or not to subject the animal to the operation on the basis of an assessment of the expected impact of the operation, the expected quality of life in the long term and the balance between the two. The pain and suffering that such an intervention can cause must therefore be offset by the benefit to be achieved. It is advisable to develop policy for the ethical framework in order to determine whether such intervention should or should not be performed.

4. Assessing the suitability of the new living environment

The suitability of the new living environment is crucial to the success of rehoming. In that respect, ensuring the welfare of the animal has absolute priority, and it is essential to specify criteria that make this possible.

Criteria that must be taken into account when selecting a new home include:

- The motivation of the new owner
- Insight into the general, species-specific needs
- Insight into the individual needs of the animal that is rehomed
- The financial resources and time available to take responsibility for an animal
- The extent to which the environment of the new home meets the needs of the animal.

The animal's new living environment must meet the animal's needs (and accommodate possible problems). Therefore it is necessary that relevant information is shared and people are well-informed and equipped. It is recommended that relevant information about the animal, as set out in the Codes of Practice, be provided to the new owner(s) of the animal, along with advice about meeting the animal's individual, specific needs.

[13] Although a rehabilitation operation is not an animal procedure, the Experiments on Animals Act (Wod) is essentially based on Article 1b of the Wod. Under Article 13d of the Experiments on Animals Act (Wod) an animal can only be released for rehoming if (a) the state of health of the animal allows it; (b) there is no danger to public health, animal health or the environment, and (c) appropriate measures have been taken to ensure the welfare of the animal.

5. Rehoming through a third party

It is advisable to involve a specialised party having experience in the area of rehoming of former laboratory animals in the process. This may be a party that specifically handles rehoming within the licensed establishment, or an external party. This includes registered charities and nature parks, which have specific expertise for assessing the suitability of an animal for rehoming, can provide advice about training, can draw up plans for behaviour management, socialisation processes and rehabilitation programmes and can assess the appropriateness of animals' final home or temporary accommodation.

6. Follow-up

Every animal responds differently to the rehoming to a new environment. To ensure that the welfare of the animal is not compromised, a follow-up visit is recommended after the animal has spent a certain amount of time in the new environment. By conducting a follow-up visit on location, the animal's behaviour in its new environment can be assessed, while this also serves as an opportunity to discuss any incidents or problems.

Advice can be provided by skilled and competent people, for example, a person designated by the establishment licensee, a specially designated local veterinarian or, if a rehoming organisation is involved, an employee of that organisation. If necessary, specialist advice may be sought from an animal behaviourist or veterinarian.

When an animal does not adjust to its new home, another solution must be found. In such situations it is possible that the animal will be returned to the rehoming organisation. In that case an assessment is conducted to determine why the animal could not adjust and whether the animal is suitable for a life as a pet. The reasons that the animal could not adapt must be carefully analysed. If the animal then appears suitable for a new rehoming, every reasonable effort must be made to ensure that this attempt is successful. This may involve engaging the services of an animal behaviourist or other specialist to assess the suitability of the animal and the future owner and to supervise the facilitation and management of the animal's behavioural change in the new environment.

7. Financial and legal aspects

It is the responsibility of all parties involved in the rehoming to reach agreement over the costs associated with the rehoming. This may include costs for aspects such as:

- the preparations for each animal
- An operation (if applicable)
- The preparation of the documentation on the animal's health, behaviour, character and the medical/general history
- Transportation
- Medications the animal needs (if applicable)
- Follow-up visits

It is important to examine and document the legal aspects of ownership. This may include the responsibilities for long-term medical care, decision-making concerning the animal's permanent, final home and the procedure to be followed in the event of a failed rehoming.

It is recommended that breeders, establishment licensees, rehoming organisations and other stakeholders work together to find a solution for sharing the costs of the rehoming process.

Appendix 5 *Recommendations arising form the consultation of community groups*

The consultation of community groups was held in The Hague on 27 November 2015. During this meeting the following organisations provided their input.

The NCad reviewed the sound recordings from the meeting and summarised the recommendations, which were then submitted to the relevant groups for approval. PETA and Holland BIO, neither of which attended the consultation, submitted their input in writing.

The recommendations as approved by the participating organisations are listed by topic below, and each is followed by an indication of whether the particular recommendation was included in the NCad's advisory report. When a recommendation was not included, a brief explanation is provided.

- Biomedical Primate Research Centre (BPRC)
- Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA)
- Ministry of Economic Affairs
- Dutch Association for Laboratory Animal Science (NVP)
- Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres (NFU)
- Three R's Alternatives Initiating Network (TRAIN)
- Wil Research, on behalf of industry
- Stichting Stimuleringsfonds Alternatieven voor Proefdieren
- Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) Netherlands Institute for Neuroscience (NIN)
- Central Authority for Scientific Procedures on Animals (CCD)
- Department of Pathobiology (Anatomy & Physiology), Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht University
- Stichting Hulp en Herplaatsing Huisdieren (SHHH)
- Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals
- Animal Welfare Body, Utrecht University
- AAP Foundation
- Een DIER een VRIEND (EDEV)
- Animal Rights foundation
- Stichting dierenasiels en internet
- Stichting DierenVangnet
- Dierencoalitie

1. The 'yes, unless' principle

Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres (NFU)

- After completion of an experiment, other applications may also follow, such as reuse. Reuse is permitted because it is meaningful and useful, in order to prevent the breeding of larger numbers of laboratory animals than necessary.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Quality of life should be leading; good assurance of the quality of life is important to avoid creating endless suffering.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Public support could be reflected in fundraising, through which the public plays a part in the financing.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Dogs are trainable, while cats are much more autonomous in their behaviour. The predictability of the behaviour of a cat in a home as opposed to the living conditions of a laboratory animal may be more limited than that of dogs.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Stichting Stimuleringsfonds Alternatieven voor Proefdieren

- It is important to also look at the legal aspects. Liability is an important factor to consider.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Stichting dierenasiels en internet

- It is important that ownership of the animal is properly established, via a contract for example. It is also important that the liability, which is particularly a problem in the case of medical expenses, is clearly defined.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Wil Research, on behalf of industry

- Reuse should be prioritised above adoption, because it contributes to reduced use of laboratory animals. It is also beneficial to the quality of follow-up studies when one knows more about an animal.
  Included in recommendations: *yes, unless reuse is not ethical.*
- It is also important that consideration is given to ending the responsibility of the establishments upon departure of an animal. Unending responsibility could become a problem.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Stichting Animal Rights

- We consider it important that adoption be legally mandated so that there is no choice as to whether or not animals are offered for adoption.
  Included in recommendations: *No, the NCad considers a legal requirement too expedient at the present time.*

Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals

- Animals that come from a laboratory environment require special attention.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Once the scope of the care for and rehoming of animals reaches a certain threshold, the Animal Holders Decree (Besluit houders van dieren) applies. This is the case from approximately twenty animals per year.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Being provided with as much good information as possible up front is very important in situations where you cannot go see for yourself.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

AAP Foundation

- Those who are active in the care for and rehoming of animals can also provide valuable assistance for determination of whether an animal is suitable for adoption.
  Included in recommendations: *NCad partly included this point in the recommendations; the involvement of external parties in the evaluation of an animal's suitability for rehoming is left to the discretion of the licensee.*

Stichting Hulp en Herplaatsing Huisdieren (SHHH)

- Early socialisation makes a huge difference in the adoption process. It is therefore important that this process begins with the breeder.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Dutch Association for Laboratory Animal Science (NVP)

- For adoptions to occur, there must be sufficient numbers of adopters in society.
  Duly noted.
- There are also alternatives: older dogs, for example, if they cannot be made suitable for placement in a home, could be retired in a large group.
  Duly noted.

Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Utrecht University

- To train good veterinarians, education in anatomy is badly needed. At this time we do not have enough dogs and cats for educational purposes. We need to have them before the body temperature cools to be able to embalm them with formalin; such a specimen is used for three years.
  Duly noted.

Central Authority for Scientific Procedures on Animals (CCD)

- When an animal is placed with a private person it is important to have a clear follow-up strategy. Unforeseen circumstances can always occur, even with laboratory animals. The question is whether normal animal shelters are the right place to send these animals. Expertise is required, especially when it comes to rehoming laboratory animals.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

2. Which parties play a role in the adoption process?

Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres (NFU)

- The Animal Welfare Body has an important task, which is to establish a policy for the institution. It would be advisable to define a process that does not merely begin when the animal is offered for rehoming but rather also includes aspects such as socialisation of animals from an early stage.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- The rehoming process must develop in practice; it cannot be legally mandated.
  Included in recommendations: *yes, NCad is of the opinion that it is currently inappropriate to legally mandate the rehoming of animals.*

Dierencoalitie

- It would be good to come to some sort of life-cycle approach: the responsibility towards laboratory animals begins at birth and ends when they reach their final home.
  Included in recommendations: *NCad incorporated the 'chain approach' in its recommendations. This perspective was also adopted in connection with responsibility for the animals.*
- Animal shelters, which can assist in the rehoming process, should have a say in the determination of whether an animal should be euthanised or offered for adoption. Their expertise makes them well-suited to assess this.
  Included in recommendations: *NCad partly included this point in the recommendations; the involvement of external parties in the evaluation of an animal's suitability for rehoming is left to the discretion of the licensee.*
- It would be to their credit if the authorities concerned would take responsibility.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Good conditions for laboratory animals early in life make possible future retirement not only easier but less expensive. After all, problems that are prevented do not need to be resolved.
  Included in recommendations: *yes, NCad considers good conditions to be an inherent part of the socialisation process.*

Een DIER een VRIEND (EDEV)

- Civil society organisations should be more closely involved in the implementation; they could consider the interests of the individual animal.
  Included in recommendations: *NCad partly included this point in the recommendations; the involvement of external parties in the evaluation of an animal's suitability for rehoming is left to the discretion of the licensee.*

Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals

- I would not advocate more direct influence in the implementation process but rather just involvement in the assessment of whether an animal is suitable to be offered for rehoming.
  Included in recommendations: *NCad partly included this point in the recommendations; the involvement of external parties in the evaluation of an animal's suitability for rehoming is left to the discretion of the licensee.*

AAP Foundation

- Animal welfare organisations feel it is important that the rehoming process in no way lessen the reduction and replacement of animal procedures with alternatives.
  Duly noted.

Animal Rights foundation

- We consider it important that a common position is established so that individual licensees do not all follow their own policies and so it is clear what is expected of everyone. If medical centres, universities and industry each follow policies established for their sector, it will not be necessary for each establishment to reinvent the wheel.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Dutch Association for Laboratory Animal Science (NVP)

- It would be good to seek to make use of existing infrastructure. The infrastructure just needs to function properly. You can create rules and define conditions, but the implementation must, above all, be functional. If there are existing systems, we should try to mesh with those.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

3. The cost allocation

Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals

- In addition to direct costs, it is also important to look at the entire system and how certain costs can be incorporated into the system. It is important to facilitate organisations that are involved in rehoming.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Stichting Hulp en Herplaatsing Huisdieren (SHHH)

- Society also has an interest in laboratory animal use. The person who is going to care for the pet pays a fee; that indicates a sense of responsibility. Moreover, as an organisation that rehomes laboratory animals you do not want to become a source of free animals; that would distort the way people thing about rehoming.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

AAP Foundation

- Laboratories should contribute to the cost of the animal's further care, even after the procedures. Such costs should be included in the research budgets and thus be passed on to the end user and/or society.
  Included in recommendations: *The NCad uses the chain approach for the animals' care-related costs.*

Een DIER een VRIEND (EDEV)

- If you use animals in an experiment, you have the responsibility to ensure that the care for the animals is properly arranged until the end of life.
  Included in recommendations: *The NCad uses the chain approach for the responsibility for the animals' care-related costs.*

Stichting DierenVangnet

- It is important that laboratories contribute to the costs as well.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- There is a distinction between laboratories and establishments that develop drugs themselves; the latter have a somewhat stronger financial position. The animal rehoming process must be affordable for an academic faculty.
  Included in recommendations: *no.*

Dutch Association for Laboratory Animal Science (NVP)

- The licensee obviously has a responsibility in this. Care must be taken to ensure that the costs are not so high that establishments decide to handle possible rehoming themselves rather than make use of the services of existing, successful rehoming organisations. Otherwise, you get fragmentation in the field that makes it difficult to maintain quality. After all, there are already systems that have proven to work.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Netherlands Federation of University Medical Centres (NFU)

- There is an essential difference between the adoption of animals by private individuals, involving a transition that takes attention and money but is also finite, and the rehoming of laboratory animals, which entails the difficulties of unknown duration, events and costs.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Moreover, in the Netherlands, 70 per cent of research funding is dependent on grant money. The costs of research Netherlands must be competitive.
  Duly noted.
- There is public demand for animal testing, often indirectly; society as a whole is also responsible, and the responsibilities and dilemmas can be shared more broadly, through fundraising or government funding for example.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Written contributions

PETA

- It is essential that a definition of 'rehoming' is adopted that creates a clear precedent for the preservation of the interests of the animal.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Founding, promoting and maintaining good care culture is essential if the legal, ethical and animal welfare requirements are to be met. Moreover, the promulgation of a care culture among staff of laboratory animal establishments can help to promote the integrity and conduct of staff to improve animal welfare.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- Registered animal organisations and wildlife sanctuaries can offer establishments an opportunity for collaboration and can help with specific expertise in the assessment of the suitability of the animal for rehoming or release, in advising on training and behaviour management, in the design of appropriate socialisation and rehabilitation programmes and in the assessment of the suitability of housing or living environment locations to receive the animals.
  Included in recommendations: *NCad partly included this point in the recommendations; the involvement of external parties in the evaluation of an animal's suitability for rehoming is left to the discretion of the licensee.*
- It makes sense to assess the suitability of the living environment in the new home. Assessment of the suitability of the new caretaker and environment can be of crucial importance for the successful rehoming of animals. Ideally, the new caretaker will have experience with the needs of the species, access to appropriate veterinary care and competence in the care, treatment and feeding of the animal or animals.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- The establishment must provide the new caretaker with guidelines on the care of the animal, such as references to appropriate websites about animal care and links to common sources of advice.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- When animals are adopted as pets, establishments must define a point of contact within the organisation, in the event that the new caretaker's veterinarian requires additional information about the history of the animal to assist with ongoing care.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- As good practice, an establishment must have an emergency plan for cases in which animals are unable to adjust to their new home.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

HollandBIO

The welfare of the animal – the quality of life – should always come first. Important aspects of this are:

- Consideration of whether the possible additional suffering that an animal would still have to endure before it is suitable for rehoming outweighs the quality of life afterwards.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

- The degree of socialisation needed for a successful rehoming.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*
- The possibility of reuse. This limits the number of laboratory animals and also the number of animals to be bred.
  Included in recommendations: *yes, unless reuse is not ethical.*
- Providing and regulating the rehoming of former laboratory animals should be done by an independent organisation. This is to protect both the laboratory animal itself and the organisation from which the animal comes.
  Included in recommendations: *No, the NCad considers it more important that it is an organisation with relevant expertise.*

Written input supplemental to the input provided during public consultation

Animal Rights foundation

- If rehoming is not established as a binding requirement, every licensee will implement their own policy. This means that a large number of healthy former laboratory animals will not be rehomed. In our experience, with the code for animal testing transparency (Code Openheid Dierproeven) for example, we have found that every licensee handles this differently.
  Included in recommendations: *No, NCad is of the opinion that it is currently inappropriate to legally mandate the rehoming of animals.*
- The costs should be clear to all parties so that rehoming can proceed smoothly.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

Stichting dierenasiels en internet

- For some laboratory animals specific efforts are made to supply 'clean' animals in order to exclude disruptive influences during the animal procedure. When they are discharged they will have to learn to eat certain foods; in such cases it is appropriate that they are accompanied by dietary advice.
  Included in recommendations: *yes.*

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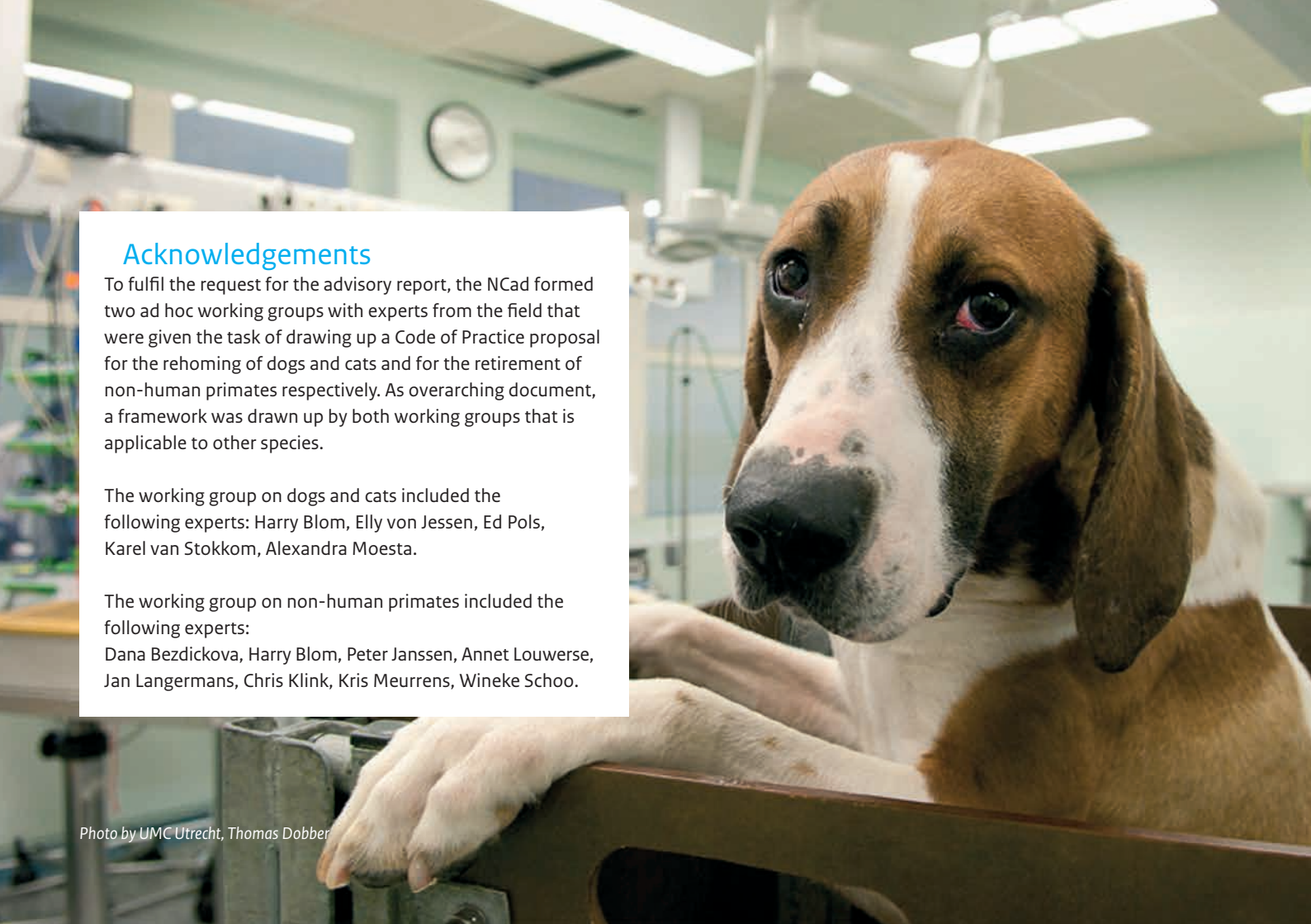
Acknowledgements

To fulfil the request for the advisory report, the NCad formed two ad hoc working groups with experts from the field that were given the task of drawing up a Code of Practice proposal for the rehoming of dogs and cats and for the retirement of non-human primates respectively. As overarching document, a framework was drawn up by both working groups that is applicable to other species.

The working group on dogs and cats included the following experts: Harry Blom, Elly von Jessen, Ed Pols, Karel van Stokkom, Alexandra Moesta.

The working group on non-human primates included the following experts:
Dana Bezdickova, Harry Blom, Peter Janssen, Annet Louwerse, Jan Langermans, Chris Klink, Kris Meurrens, Wineke Schoo.



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