

May 25, 2021

Patricia A. Brown, VMD, MS
Director
Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW)
National Institutes of Health
6700B Rockledge Dr., Suite 2500, MSC 6910
Bethesda, Maryland 20892
Via email: brownp@od.nih.gov; olaw@mail.nih.gov

Dear Patricia A. Brown,

On behalf of Rise for Animals (Rise), I am writing to relay our concern regarding troubling evidence of animal suffering at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) PHS Assurance # D16-00602 (A4149-01) and to respectfully request that you investigate the NIAID Vaccine Research Center's (VRC) refusal to comply with PHS policy requirements for reporting and take appropriate punitive action.

Document We Reviewed

In formulating the recommendation below, Rise reviewed the NIAID-VRC Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) meeting minutes for May 20, 2020, obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request.

Finding: An Entire Cage of Retired Breeder Monkeys Died at NIAID

The document we reviewed reveals that at the May 20, 2020 ACUC meeting, an incident report provided by the VRC was discussed. The report detailed that after a weekend, during a morning check, unexpected deaths were discovered. An entire cage of retired breeder monkeys were found dead. The Attending Veterinarian, Principal Investigator, and the VRC ACUC were notified. The ACUC discussed cage-changing schedules, work shift schedules, and staff retraining on providing animals with adequate food and water to address the situation. These monkeys died because they did not receive adequate care over a weekend. This was not reported to OLAW.

Request: OLAW Investigate the NIAID VRC's Refusal to Comply with PHS Policy Reporting Requirements

In reviewing this record, Rise was disappointed to see that OLAW was not made aware of this failure to adequately care for monkeys, leading to the demise of an entire cage of them. Rise wants to ensure that OLAW knows of this situation.

Rise for Animals.

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riseforanimals.org

Further, we respectfully request that OLAW look into the NIAID-VRC's failure to comply with PHS Policy reporting requirements. Incidents such as this—an entire cage of monkeys dying because of staff incompetence (failure to provide the appropriate basic necessities (food and water) for life)—should be reported to OLAW under the PHS Policy. As such, we respectfully request that OLAW take appropriate punitive action against NIAID for this failure.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Frances Chrzan', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Frances Chrzan, J.D.
Legislative & Public Policy Associate
Rise for Animals