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Purpose / Scope

The purpose of this document is to outline the roles and responsibilities of institutional stakeholders involved in crisis response specific to animal holding and procedure areas associated with animal-based science activities that take place within Laboratory Animal Facilities, Extra-Vivarial Spaces and Field locations at Western and its affiliates.

Affiliates include:

- Lawson Research Institute (St. Joseph's Healthcare) – LRI (SJHC)
- London Health Sciences Research Institute (Victoria Hospital, University Hospital) – LHSCRI (VRL, UH)

Rationale

Section 10. of CCAC's policy statement for senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs¹ states "the institution and its ACC must have in place a crisis management program for...the animal care and use program in conjunction with any general institutional crisis management plan(s)"².

¹ Canadian Council on Animal Care. Policy statement for senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs. Retrieved 17JUL2026 from https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Senior_administrators.pdf

² Canadian Council on Animal Care. Policy statement for senior administrators responsible for animal care and use programs. P. 9. Retrieved 17JUL2026 from https://ccac.ca/Documents/Standards/Policies/Senior_administrators.pdf



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Policy

Those responding to crises must follow:

- Institution-specific crisis response policies and procedures, and
- For those working at Western, *Western's Crisis Management Program for Animal Holding / Procedure Areas and Field Locations* (ADM-SAF-501), or
- For those working at the hospital-based affiliates, *LHSCRI Disaster Plan and LRI Emergency Management plan*.

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Responsibilities and Authorities at Western University

Western's Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG)

The Emergency Operations Control Group is composed of Senior Administrative Leaders whose roles are to coordinate all essential resources and support the ERT to effectively mitigate the emergency.

Western's EOCG fulfills its mandate as outlined in Section 1.8.6 of the [Master Emergency Response Plan](#)

. EOCG priorities are to:

- **Support Incident Command.** Provide support functions such as notifications, public information, media relations, resource coordination, staff call ins, and record keeping, etc.
- **Monitor, Inform and Alert.** Gather and share information to identify risks, keep managers and staff informed, and ensure the Western community and external partners are aware of the emergency and response.
- **Verify and Document Response.** Record actions taken during the emergency to ensure accountability and support continuous improvement through best practices.

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Western's Emergency Response Team (ERT)

The Emergency Response Team consists of members representing the Emergency Response Groups on Campus.

Western's ERT fulfills its mandate as outlined in Section 1.8.2 of Western's [Master Emergency Response Plan](#), ERT's priorities are to:

- **Manage the emergency:** Oversee and direct the response to emergency incidents.
- **Protect people and assets:** Safeguard individuals, property, research, and information by working as a team and ensuring appropriate resources, personnel, and compliance with relevant policies and requirements.
- **Coordinate response efforts:** Work with internal teams and liaise with external emergency services.
- **Activate leadership support:** Assemble the EOCG when required.
- **Maintain operations:** Set up and manage the Emergency Operation Centre.

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Responsibilities and Authorities at Hospital Based Affiliates

As LRI and LHSCRI are the research departments within the respective hospital spaces, hospital resources are utilized to effectively manage any crisis. These teams are responsible to then inform and utilize any of the required administrative departments as well as the relevant hospital resources. The list below shows the vivarium team representation as well as the Hospital resources that should be utilized depending on the crisis. During any crisis the hospital wide Emergency Response Codes are utilized.

- Vivarium Teams
 - SJHC Facility Supervisor and Facility Manager
 - LHSCRI Vivarium Coordinator, MMC Vivarium Supervisor and LHSCRI Facility Manager
- Administrative Resources
 - COO
 - Facilities Department
 - Health and Safety Department
 - Communications Department
- Hospital Resources
 - Security Departments
 - Facilities Departments
 - Privacy and Risk Departments
 - Emergency Management Teams
 - Occupational Health and Safety Teams

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Responsibilities and Authorities in All Areas

Western's Animal Research Crisis Management Team (AR-CMT)

Western's AR – CMT provides senior-level oversight of the Animal Ethics & Care Program's (AECPP) crisis response.

Preparedness & Prevention

- Holds at minimum biannual meetings to:
 - Identify risks and develop mitigation strategies.
 - Review *Crisis Response Scenario Records* submitted by Animal Area Crisis Response Teams (AA-CRTs)
 - Ensure alignment with internal and external requirements (e.g., institution-specific emergency response teams, Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC), Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA), Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)).
- Host annual *Crisis Response Round Table Sessions* using mock crisis scenarios.
 - Engage stakeholders representing all levels of response.
- Promote awareness of the AECPP Crisis Response Program within the animal-based research community.
- Provide resources, guidance, and educational opportunities to Animal Area Crisis Response Teams (AA-CRTs) to support preparedness, response capabilities, and continuous improvement.

During a Crisis

- Convene when a moderate to high impact event affects the AECPP (as determined by the AR-CMT Chair).
- Engage institution-specific emergency response teams as appropriate.
- Provide support to the AA-CRTs.

Post Crisis

- Within four weeks of a high impact event, meet to review causes, impacts, response effectiveness, and remaining risks.
- Document and share recommendations with institutional stakeholders, including actions to mitigate future risks.

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Animal Area Crisis Response Teams (AA – CRT)

The AA-CRT is responsible for preparing for and responding to real-time, on-the-floor emergencies. Teams are established in advance to ensure a timely and effective response.

Mitigation & Preparedness – Prior to a crisis:

- Identify potential risks that may threaten human or animal life, property, and the environment.



- Develop and test response plans with institutional subject matter experts to reduce risks.
 - Use the ***Crisis Response Scenario Record (FRM-022)*** to document and store area-specific plans
 - Reference ***Crisis Response Mock Crisis Scenarios (FRM-021)*** as applicable
- Review ***Quick Guide – Emergency Procedures for Animal Areas (FRM-020)***, at least annually to ensure contact information is current.
 - Update door signage and provide AA – CRT contact information to Campus Safety and Emergency Services (CSES) and its affiliate administration.
- Maintain up to date:
 - Area maps
 - Contact lists (staff and researchers and their staff)
 - Emergency supply inventories
 - Relevant procedures
- Ensure institutional security has records of designated areas where staff may remain with animals during fire alarm (as per SOPs and/or institution-specific protocols).
- Conduct mock crisis exercises at least annually (or more frequently based on area complexity).
- Provide annual training to AA-CRT members and area personnel on emergency procedures and related documentation (e.g., *Crisis Response Scenario Records (FRM-022)*).

Response – During a crisis:

- Provide immediate front-line response within the area.
- Follow response priorities:
 - Priority 1 - Protect human life,
 - Priority 2 - Minimize harm to animals,
 - Priority 3 - Safeguard research, critical records, valuable materials
 - Priority 4 - Protect critical infrastructure and the environment.
- Maintain timely communication with applicable institutional emergency response teams in alignment with SOPs and AR-CMT direction.

Recovery & Analysis – Following a crisis:

- Document the incident using *Crisis Response Scenario Records (FRM-022)* and send to the AR-CMT Incident Manager via aecp@uwo.ca within four weeks of occurrence.
- Immediately notify institutional emergency response teams if there are ongoing risks as outlined in Western's [Master Emergency Response Plan /](#) hospitals LHSCRI Disaster Plan and LRI Emergency Management Plan.
- Review and update response plans as needed and share updates with AR-CMT (aecp@uwo.ca) and relevant AA-CRT.

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Crisis Response Teams Membership

Western's Emergency Operations Control Group (EOCG)

Western's EOCG consists of:

- VP, Operations and Finance/EOCG Chair*
- AVP, Facilities Management*
- AVP, Human Resources*
- AVP, Institutional Planning & Budgeting*
- Vice Provost, Academic programs*
- Associate VP, Student Experience*
- Registrar*
- AVP, Housing and Ancillary Services*
- AVP, Research*
- AVP, Financial Services*
- Chief Communications Officer, Western Communications*
- Director, Campus Safety and Emergency Services (CSES)*
- Director, WTS (Western Technology Services) Application Services*
- Director, WTS Cyber Security and Business Services*
- Director, WTS Infrastructure Services*
- Manager, Emergency Management & Continuity of Operations
*or designate

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Western's Emergency Response Team

Western's ERT consists of:

- Director, Campus Safety and Emergency Services
- Manager, Fire Safety
- Director, Health, Safety and Well-being*
- Executive Director, Facilities Operations*
- HazMat Team Leader*
- Manager, Emergency Management & Continuity of Operations*
- Operations Leader, Western Special Constable Services



*or designate

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Hospital Based Affiliates Vivarium Teams

LHSCRI Vivarium Team consists of:

- VRL and Cancer Center assigned veterinarian,
- LHSCRI Vivarium Coordinator,
- LHSCRI Facility Manager,
- LHSCRI COO, and
- Other roles as deemed appropriate.

LRI Vivarium Team Consists of:

- SJHC assigned veterinarian,
- Supervisor, Animal Care Facility,
- Manager, Research Operations, and
- Other roles as deemed appropriate.

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Animal Research Crisis Management Team (AR – CMT)

The AR – CMT consists of:

- University Veterinarian (Chair)
- Incident Manager
- Western's Associate Vice-President Research (Health)
- LHSCRI Vivarium Coordinator and Facility Manager
- Lawson/SJHC Manager, Research Operations
- Western's Director, Campus Safety and Emergency Services
- Representatives of citywide working groups – Chair and/or applicable designate(s):
 - I. ACC Chair
 - II. Animal Users Group Leader Representative
 - III. Communications
 - IV. Security
- Other roles as deemed appropriate.

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Animal Area Crisis Response Teams (AA – CRT)

AA – CRTs consist of:

- Animal holding / procedure area supervisor(s) and/or manager,
- Institutional Veterinarians, or Animal Health Technician, as available,
- Animal Care Technician(s) or Researcher Staff/Student(s), and
- Building supervisor(s), as applicable

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References

Canadian Council on Animal Care's:

- Terms of Reference for Animal Care Committees (2006)
- Policy for Senior Administrators Responsible for Animal Care and Use Programs (2008)

Western University's [Master Emergency Response Plan](#) (2022)

LHSCRI Disaster Plan (2026); Appendices 1-5

LRI Emergency Management Plan (2026)

Animal Care Committee

- Western's Crisis Management Program for Western's Animal Holding/Procedure Areas & Field Locations (ADM-SAF-501)

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Revision History

Version	Date <i>dd-mm-yyyy</i>	Description of Changes	Authors
00	13-04-2023	New Policy	LT, BW, SD, TAC
01	08-08-2024	Updates made to affiliate-specific information	LT, LE, DC, SD
02	03-09-2026	Transfer document ownership from ACC Policy to VPR Requirements document; remove AECP-CRT, split Lawson org elements, update AR-CMT membership and mandate	LT, AA, EB, SD