

# How AWERBS can support Named Persons

**Named Animal Care and Welfare Officers (NACWOs), Named Information Officers (NIOs), Named Training and Competency Officers (NTCOs), Named Veterinary Surgeons (NVSs)**

An important AWERB task is to support Named Persons (NPs), and other staff dealing with animals, on animal welfare, ethical issues and provision of appropriate training [1]. With respect to Named Persons, this support can include:

- Ensuring that there is adequate training, Continuing Professional Development and resources for all roles and responsibilities to be discharged properly, especially for people with multiple NP roles
- Making sure that NPs are able to contribute meaningfully to AWERB meetings
- Ensuring that issues raised by NPs are properly discussed and addressed, either within the AWERB or elsewhere in the establishment
- Recognising compassion fatigue, or emotional labour, and supporting staff appropriately

However, NPs often do not receive the resources and support that they need. For example, they often have multiple roles and can be overladen with tasks, which stops them from working proactively. But these are important, statutory roles that are essential for ensuring compliance with the ASPA and a good Culture of Care, including improving animal welfare.

We held an online workshop for around 20 AWERB members, to explore how AWERBs could fulfil the above task more effectively. This began with presentations on the NC3Rs/LASA survey on supporting the NIO [2], training opportunities for NPs from the IAT, and a NACWO's perspective on how it feels to be well-supported.

In the following discussion, all agreed that many NPs needed more resource, time and support. Positive suggestions included:

<p>The AWERB creating an <b>annual plan</b>, with tasks allocated to individuals with specific roles, to identify whether people are overloaded (and address it if they are)</p>	<p>The AWERB to <b>promote the importance of the NPs</b> to the wider establishment, especially those in senior management, and help to create a <b>business case</b> to ask for more resource for these roles</p>
<p>NPs asking for <b>tasks to be shared</b>, or saying 'no' to tasks, or the role itself, if they do not have capacity - and the <b>AWERB to support them</b> in this</p>	<p>NPs <b>networking with other NPs</b>, to see how they are supported, including AWERB exchanges (if the NP sits on an AWERB)</p>
<p>The AWERB <b>engaging with the requirement to support NPs</b>, benchmarking this and setting itself targets</p>	

Participants identified their own action points in five areas:

- **Exchanging** NP roles, or AWERB exchanges, between establishments
- **Achieving more support, and time**, for NPs; raising this at the AWERB
- **Awareness raising and communicating**: reminding the AWERB that support of Named Persons is a required AWERB task, raising the topic of too many tasks falling onto one or two people
- **Emotional support**; finding out more about compassion fatigue and ensuring all NPs can access Mental Health First Aiders
- **Reviewing training** for NPs

See also:

1. Supporting staff and training; p.45 in the RSPCA/LASA Good Practice Guidelines for AWERBs - [tinyurl.com/AWERB-RSPCA-LASA](https://tinyurl.com/AWERB-RSPCA-LASA)
2. Survey results: Supporting the Named Information Officer - [nc3rs.org.uk/3rs-resource-library/survey-results-supporting-named-information-officer](https://nc3rs.org.uk/3rs-resource-library/survey-results-supporting-named-information-officer)