

UPDATE ON THE HEALTH STATUS OF BARRIER ROOM W07 AT CHARLES RIVER GERMANY

This communication serves as a follow-up to our recent notification from 07 March 2017. As previously summarized, a routine health monitoring conducted on the VAF/Plus CD[®] IGS rat colony in W07 confirmed a positive finding of *Bordetella bronchiseptica*. Immediately following the identification of the presence of this opportunistic organism, an extensive biosecurity investigation was initiated.

Root Cause Analysis

To date, our investigation has revealed the following:

- Initial and confirmatory testing involving culture of nasopharyngeal washings as well as PCR testing of such samples confirmed a very low prevalence in adult animals, but not in younger animals.
- In culture-positive animals, growth on select media was low to medium in nasopharyngeal wash with absence of detection in lung tissue or bronchoalveolar samples (culture and PCR), suggesting that this strain of *B. bronchiseptica* is not consistent with invasive strains described in the literature.
- Fixed tissue from the two rats with positive microbiological results and one negative sample were processed for histopathology. No bacteria were noted in the tracheal or lung sections from all three rats. There was no microscopic evidence of tracheitis or pneumonia in the rats that tested positive for *B. bronchiseptica*.
- We have conducted a thorough inspection of the W07 room, support area and processes and strongly suspect that floor drains may have been the reservoir for *B. bronchiseptica*. Our assumption is supported by the following:
 - Samples from waste water drain swab tested by qPCR yielded a positive result of the order of 100 copies, while other environmental swabs failed to detect the organism.
 - *B. bronchiseptica* is present in vegetative form and has been shown to survive for 24 weeks in phosphate-buffered saline and lake water at 10°C and at 37°C, without any nutritional supplement. *B. bronchiseptica* can also survive in soil for 45 days. (PSDS-Public Health Agency of Canada; Porter et al., 1991)
- Biosecurity audit and root cause analysis has excluded sterilisation processes, pest control and the animals as a possible source of *B. bronchiseptica* in W07.
- We are continuing with testing to further define the source of colonisation and to optimise diagnostic methodologies.

Diagnostics Recommendations at User Facilities

Oral swabs for PCR testing is the best non-terminal sampling method. For post-mortem testing, the nasopharyngeal wash is recommended as the optimal sample type for detection by culture or PCR.

Animal Supply Update

In order to guarantee the supply of CD® IGS rats, we have increased our production and availability from European breeding sites located in Italy and UK. In addition, we are starting a new breeding colony of CD rats in W02 at our facility in Sulzfeld, Germany. We anticipate availability of the first stock in early October. As *B. bronchiseptica* is a bacteria considered of unlikely health consequence in immunocompetent rodents, we will continue to make CD® IGS rats available from room W07 for those clients who have expressed a preference to continue receiving these animals until the replacement colony is established.

For questions regarding animal availability, please contact your local Customer Service Team. For all other questions, please contact our Veterinary Professionals Service at +49 9761 406 39.