



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE WITH PETA

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VICTORY! COLLEGE OF SURGEONS PLEDGES TO STOP USE OF LIVE ANIMALS IN TRAUMA COURSE

Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Will Replace Live Animals With Simulators

Melbourne – Following an extensive, nearly four-year campaign by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), PETA US, and Humane Research Australia (HRA), the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS) has announced that it will phase out the use of live animals for its Early Management of Severe Trauma (EMST) programme by 2018. The programme trains physicians and Australian Defence Force (ADF) medical officers on treating traumatic injuries. After looking into advanced human-simulation technology, RACS President Philip Truskett has confirmed that EMST participants in RACS courses will no longer use live animals in training. Up until this time, training involved cutting holes into the throats, chests, and limbs of live animals including dogs and pigs.

The announcement follows pressure from both HRA and PETA – which included thought-provoking [ads, protests, and](#) the delivery of a [PETA petition](#) with more than 100,000 signatures to the RACS headquarters calling for an end to live-animal trauma training. It also comes just in time for World Week for Animals in Laboratories.

Australian regulations require the use of non-animal training methods whenever available. Senator Lee Rhiannon also pressed the ADF to replace the use of animals in EMST training, and the agency agreed once RACS had changed its policy.

"Modern simulators will allow surgeons to practice procedural skills on models designed to replicate human anatomy and physiology", says Robyn Kirby, spokesperson for HRA. "This is great news, not only for animals, but also for humans who will benefit from the advanced human-relevant technology."

"Australia's surgeons will finally have access to the same gold-standard human-patient simulators that benefit other medical personnel around the world", says PETA Australia Associate Director of Campaigns Ashley Fruno. "Mutilating and killing pigs and sheep is no way to train surgeons to treat human patients."

PETA – whose motto reads, in part, that "animals are not ours to experiment on" – publicly offered last year to provide RACS, free of charge, with the popular TraumaMan simulator, which is designed specifically for this training and replicates a breathing, bleeding human torso, complete with realistic layers of skin and tissue, ribs, and internal organs. Studies show that doctors who learn life-saving surgical skills on simulators are more proficient than those who mutilate animals.

For more information, please visit PETA.org.au or humaneresearch.org.au.