



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 662287.



## EJP-CONCERT

European Joint Programme for the Integration of Radiation Protection Research

H2020 – 662287

# D 9.51 - Detailed work plan for irradiations (Gantt)

**Lead Author: Liz Ainsbury (DH-PHE)**

**With contributions from: Mariateresa Mancuso (ENEA), Jochen Graw and Claudia Dalke (HMGU)**

**Reviewer(s): CONCERT coordination team**

Work package / Task	WP 9	T 9.2
Deliverable nature:	Report	
Dissemination level: (Confidentiality)	Public	
Contractual delivery date:	Month 20	
Actual delivery date:	Month 22	
Version:	1	
Total number of pages:	6	
Keywords:	Ionising Radiation; Lens; Cataract; Mouse Models	
Approved by the coordinator:	Month 22	
Submitted to EC by the coordinator:	Month 22	

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## Abstract

The lens of the eye is known to be more radiosensitive than previously thought but, despite a substantial reduction in occupational dose limits based on recent epidemiological information and reanalyses, the mechanisms of low dose radiation cataract induction are still unclear. This is an important current public health issue, for instance for medical radiation workers, many of whom will need to amend their working practices despite a clear understanding of the effects of chronic, low dose, ionising radiation exposure.

The LDLensRad project aims to bring together experts from across Europe to answer a number of key research questions on this topic, including: how does low dose radiation cause cataracts; is there a dose rate effect, and how does genetic background influence cataract development after radiation exposure. CONCERT Deliverable 9.51, 5.1.1 of the project, describes the detailed work plan and timing for irradiations of mice for long term and short term models of cataract initiation and development.

The experiments will be carried out in 6 different mouse strains, as described in the Gantt charts, to test the impact of genetic background and further inform the mechanistic understanding. Mice will be exposed to doses of 0 to 2 Gy at an acute, high dose rate (0.3 Gy/min) or at a more protracted, low dose rate (0.063 Gy/min), to assess the effect of dose protraction on the dose response for radiation cataractogenesis. Mice will be irradiated at 10 weeks (when they have fully developed lenses) at PHE and HMGU. At ENEA, mice will be irradiated at neonatal age (postnatal day 2), the age of peak susceptibility to radiation lens injury, and at 10 weeks, a non-responsive age, specifically in order to investigate the ageing effect in this particularly age-sensitive strain. The mice will then be followed for up to 18 mth post exposure, with Scheimpflug imaging taking place at 1 mth intervals to track the appearance and development of cataracts. Behavioural testing will be carried out concurrently and, at the end of the long term study, the lenses of surviving mice will be analysed for histological and morphological changes and further pathological analysis of organs will be carried out, to test the hypothesis that lens effects can be used as an indicator of global radiation effects.

In addition, for each strain, dose and dose rate, lenses extracted from groups of mice will be assessed for: initial DNA damage at 0, 4 and 24 hrs following exposure; intracellular communication, cell cycle effects, biochemical analyses and genetic pathway analyses at 0, 4 and 24 hrs, 4 and 12 mth; proliferative and morphological effects at 24 hrs, 4 and 12 mth; miRNA content using Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) at 4 hrs and qRT-PCR at 24 hrs, 4 and 12 mth. The results and associated analysis of these studies will be made available as further Deliverables as the project progresses.





