



National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

General Meeting

13 February 2019
09:30 am – 4:30 pm

Level 1, TSB Building, 147 Lambton Quay
Wellington

MINUTES

Committee members: Gwyneth Verkerk (Chair), Graeme Doole, Katie Milne, Ruth Palmer, Nick Poutu, Karin Schutz, Grant Shackell, Iain Torrance

In attendance: Privacy

Apologies: Ingrid Visser, Julie Wagner

Welcome:

Any Other Business Part One (Open to the Public):

Any Other Business Part Two (Public Excluded): Item C1 removed – waiting for further information.

O 1. Confirmation of previous minutes



Moved (G Verkerk / R Palmer)

That the draft minutes of the general meeting held on 13 November (98/18) be adopted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

The motion was put: carried.

O 2. Status of actions arising from previous meetings

The committee reviewed the list of actions (99/18). For action items not already on the agenda, the following updates were provided:

- Action 1, in regards to engaging with the Canterbury University group that were reviewing NAWAC processes, was removed from the action list as NAWAC had been waiting for a response since February 2017. NAWAC has had contact with the group during this time, but no review has been provided.
- Action 2, in regards to reaching out to A&P shows to ensure they are more aware of obligations around the rodeo code, is complete as it was addressed as part of the outreach during the regulations implementation.
- Action 3, in regards to amending NAWAC guidelines 8 and 12, is pending.
- Privacy 
- Action 5, in regards to concerns about the presence of animal welfare on MPI's website, remains in progress. A button has been successfully added to the front page at the bottom of MPI's website. Agreed to defer further discussion regarding NAWAC's public profile until after the LGOIMA agenda item.
- Privacy 
- Action 7, in regards to sharing draft guidelines from NZVA on anaesthetic for disbudding, is pending.
- Action 8, in regards to sharing the surgical and painful procedures summary document, is complete. However note that it has been essentially superseded by a regulations prioritisation meeting the day before the current NAWAC meeting.
- Action 9, in regards to the outcomes paper from the Chief Executives forum, is pending. The forum met again in early December and G Verkerk attended. Industry groups indicated that they want to take a lead in reviewing and updating their current codes.

- Action 10, 11 and 12, in regards to the Farm to Processor forum, sharing the leaflet PDFs, and sending the glueboards report respectively, are complete.

O 3. NAWAC correspondence

A letter from SAFE regarding the chicken barn fire was noted.

There was also a letter from Sri Lanka raising concerns about cattle that have been exported there from New Zealand, which was referred to MPI.

There were no further comments.

O 4. Work programme update

The work programme update (04/19) was circulated prior to the meeting. For work programme updates not already on the agenda, the following updates were provided:

- Regulations – The regulations subcommittee members attended the MPI prioritisation exercise for Surgical and Painful Procedures on Tuesday 12 February. NAWAC is happy with progress so far. Noted that it is complicated work programme with a hard deadline (9th May 2020).
- Dairy cattle code amendment – The amendment is in its final stages, currently the secretariat team is working with MPI's animal welfare policy team and anticipates that the amendment can be recommended to the Minister in the coming weeks.
- Wild animals – The wild animals subcommittee has been working on the trap testing guideline, in particular the section that they were asked to clarify (regarding marking of traps). Another issue has been raised in regards to the description of how to welfare score restraining traps and so that section will be reworded as well. Once the guideline is done, it will be presented to the Committee again, possibly for agreement out of session. In terms of new priorities, the subcommittee has decided that for this year they would prioritise setting up a new guideline for humane pest control, engaging with new trap developers, etc., in particular with a view to have traps and instructions available for community groups. Regarding glueboard traps, Privacy is collecting 2018 usage reports. It is positive to see that for 2019 there has only been one request for sale and use of traps.
- Poultry – The Poultry Industry Association of New Zealand have drafted a broiler breeder code and is ready to discuss this with the subcommittee. They have also identified potential issues for further discussion with NAWAC regarding the existing layer hen and meat chicken codes.
- Exhibition, entertainment and encounter – Workshop to be discussed. Privacy has taken over the greyhound work. In particular the greyhound welfare committee is working on a socialisation policy.
- Implementation of standards – Privacy has completed a report on the shade & shelter operational research project and he will present the findings to NAWAC. G Doole noted that Privacy has developed a comprehensive draft discussion paper on body condition score. Privacy suggested that not much more work needs to be done, considering the codes review work coming down the pipeline from industries.
- Positive welfare and sentience – The sentience workshop report is available online. The videos are almost ready as well, they just need transcripts and captions added.

- Codes review – Privacy has put together a summary/draft prioritisation of the codes of welfare (05/19) for NAWAC's review. Privacy

Privacy In terms of the Painful Husbandry Procedures code of welfare, it was noted that we need to capture the principles of the code, while specifics could be covered by regulations. In regards to the zoo code, the Zoo and Aquarium Association has already written to NAWAC to do a code review; a meeting is being arranged. Sheep and goat milking was raised as an addition to codes – Privacy

Privacy G Verkerk considered that it will be important to see what the existing industry says about new milking animals, and in the meantime it is still on NAWAC's watching brief. A suggestion was made to pay attention to emergency management sections in each code. Privacy noted suggestions in the MPI update to consider emergency situations when developing / reviewing all codes.

Action: Privacy to add emergency management provisions to the general updates that should be considered across all codes.

Regarding new codes, I Torrance noted the ongoing work on a new rabbit code. There is a draft code that the SPCA is considering Privacy

Privacy An emerging wildlife/pest management issue was noted – there is an increasing need for culls of rabbits in urban areas i.e. in public sight, as they affect regenerating bush.

Action: secretariat to follow up with Privacy on timeline of rabbit code of welfare.

O 5. Committee members' reports on recent presentations and attendance at conferences

K Milne – Visits to Argentina and Uruguay, and to Rome and Berlin for World Farm Animal Organisation. Noted focus on climate change and resulting impacts on farming, and on balancing livestock vs. grain growing in the right locations. Noted growth in alternative proteins (e.g. rabbit farming). Has had the opportunity to interact with full spectrum of farmers, from peasant farmers through to a similar level to New Zealand. Is potentially attending World Animal Health Forum in May. Noted that the World Farm Animal Organisation has just completed an Anti-Microbial Resistance policy.

N Poutu – Heading to Nelson/Marlborough on 14 February to 'train the trainers' on delivering courses on pest management for community groups. Will teach about NAWAC guidelines and gather further information on what they need to know.

G Doole – Involved in a trees on farm project, noted the Dairy Tomorrow strategy.

G Shackell – Shared information from recent rodeo attendance.

K Schütz – Recently gave a presentation to DairyNZ regarding heat stress in cattle. Is trying to get the message across that animals try to cool down earlier than humans. Is also educating in regards to farmers seeing cows out grazing even in the heat by explaining the trade-offs that cows must make as they have high motivation to feed. Has also been working on projects regarding heat stress inside goat sheds.

G Verkerk – Contributed to red meat sector strategy. New Zealand Animal Law Association ran a summer school on animal welfare law and invited G Verkerk to answer questions of this group which had a particular focus on rodeos and in particular raised questions about the report and advice to the Minister.

O 6. MPI update and discussion of information circulated by MPI

Noted inclusion of compliance statistics. Suggestion that the relevant information should be able to be shared with owners/farmers after they send animals to the works.

G Verkerk updated the Committee in regards to SAFE taking NAWAC and Minister to High Court on the processes around developing the farrowing crate regulations. This is a recent development, will keep committee updated. It is the first time NAWAC has been taken to court.

Noted the potential referendum question on 1080.

O 7. 2018 review

G Verkerk summarised the 2018 review results, stating that the general sense from the responses was that NAWAC is tracking along, with a few concerns regarding transparency. This will be discussed later in the meeting.

O 8. 2019 confirm work plan and subcommittees

A memo with the final draft of the work plan had been circulated prior to the meeting (08/19).

NAWAC agreed to confirm the 2019 work plan.

The subcommittees were also updated and are available to view on Workspace.

The Committee noted growing concerns with fish farming, bee farming and insect sentience.

G Shackell updated NAWAC in regards to NAEAC's work on zebrafish and how this affects the definition of 'Animal' in the Animal Welfare Act 1999.

Action: Secretary to publish 2019 work plan on NAWAC's website.

O 9. Issues register

The issues register (09/19) was taken as read and there were no further comments.

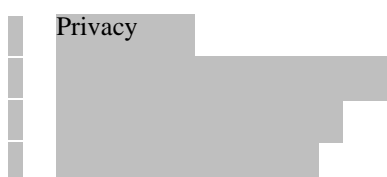
O 10. 3E's workshop update

G Doole updated the Committee on the work regarding animals in exhibition, entertainment and encounter. The subcommittee is looking to develop their opinion piece by end 2019 and include comments from potentially affected parties. Progress was noted with a new animal welfare committee for rodeos.

G Doole wants to work on a framework to approach the ethical issues in this space, particularly regarding how to weigh up benefits and costs (e.g. costs to animals vs. benefits to society). It is important to ensure this framework is robust and understood in the same way by everyone. G Verkerk suggested this framework could also update NAWAC's guidelines as it would apply to future work as well. It was suggested that other committees internationally may have done this already.

Action – secretary to ask EuroFAWC if other animal welfare committees have done something similar.

At this time, the main priority is workshop day in May. Speaker suggestions were welcomed and the following were suggested:





A facilitator was considered a necessity.

O 11. Appointment of deputy chair

G Verkerk explained that with I Torrance's resignation, another deputy chair needs to be appointed. She nominated J Wagner for the position.

Moved (K Milne / G Shackell)

That Julie Wagner is appointed as Deputy Chairperson of the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee.

The motion was put: carried.

PRESENTATIONS AND UPDATES

O 12 12:30 – 1:15 Virtual fencing

Privacy (Agersens) presented NAWAC with information on the "eShepherd" virtual fencing system, currently being tested in Australia, with a particular focus on animal welfare, behaviour and learning.

O 13. 1:15 – 2:00 Greyhound Racing New Zealand

Privacy (Head of Welfare, Greyhound Racing New Zealand) updated NAWAC on the industry progress against the recommendations of the Hansen report, including the most recent policies and procedures for greyhound trainers.

O 14. 2:00– 2:45 LGOIMA and transparency

Gareth Derby (Principal advisor, Ombudsman's office) held a discussion with NAWAC on transparency and open meetings.

Points noted, including those from subsequent discussion include:

- Before 1982, default position was that information did not go out (Official Secrets Act). The 1982 Official Information Act was passed as it was realised that this position was untenable, and that in practice most Government agencies were breaching the Act. The Official Information Act made the default position that information must go out to build and promote effective Government.
- NAWAC as a committee, and its purposes, are relatively unique in New Zealand policy development and governmental processes. This includes no specific requirement to publicise meetings; and in their role of providing advice to the Minister, independently from MPI.

- The OIA position is that meetings should be open unless there is good reason otherwise, with the recognition that an item can be closed if it is discussion to determine advice for the Minister.
- While the Act does not require NAWAC to advertise meetings, it does not prohibit it either. The principles of open government suggest that NAWAC should provide public advice of its meeting agendas in some manner.
- Public advice of meeting agendas could be problematic because there are a large number of stakeholders and provision would need to be made for their attendance. There is an assumption that people who turn up can be accommodated, though if large numbers attended it is unreasonable for them to expect to all fit. The room currently used for meetings is only sufficiently big for the current attendees, so venue might need to be changed. Additionally there would be an expectation that, as well as the agenda, papers relating to the open parts of the meeting would be available. These can be provided electronically but hard copies would need to be available at the meeting.
- Information about meeting dates is published in the quarterly web update and most of the agenda is open, but no members of the public have attended.
- NAWAC is not restricted by prescribed rules in terms of notification, which is a positive in terms of being creative. Possibilities include electronic mechanisms for notifying when committee agendas are available and managing RSVPs, inviting particular stakeholders if they have advised their interest in certain agenda items, and possibilities to livestream parts of meetings,
- There are powers in the LGOIMA Act allowing the Chairperson to remove people if there is belief (on reasonable grounds) that the meeting is being disrupted. There would need to be a protocol developed to guide the Chairperson in carrying out these proceedings. Many local bodies have such procedures already.
- To be genuinely transparent there is a need for meaningful interaction with those attending as a means for them to add value to the proceeding; e.g. Q+A sessions NAWAC needs to decide the extent to which they want public participation to be more than simply attendance
- Noted that NAWAC has acknowledged on its websites/guidelines already that some issues are not for discussion (e.g. whether or not animals can be used), so there is an existing framework to focus conversation.
- Notification and proceedings of the subcommittees are not subject to LGOIMA. That Act only applies to meetings where final decisions are made, although the subcommittee's memo to NAWAC could still be subject to discovery under the OIA (as it is now).
- Publication of (confirmed) minutes of previous meetings was discussed with a view that they should be published in redacted form as though they were requested under the OIA, and that this should be done retrospectively, particularly if they have already been released under the OIA. It was also noted that the rules differ where minutes are released proactively as there is no requirement to justify what is redacted (although it is good practice to reference the OIA).
- Most advisory boards are part of a Minister's office, but NAWAC and NAEAC differ as they are required to be independent from the Minister. While the Minister should be consulted on any proposed changes to meeting procedures, the final decision rests with NAWAC.

The Minister of Agriculture was delayed for his visit. The Committee agreed to further discuss transparency and then hear an update on the Tasman fire response.

Discussion - LGOIMA

G Verkerk asked the Committee to discuss the next steps required.

NAWAC asked the secretariat to draft a code of conduct or set of rules for open meetings; this would clearly specify the rules for having people there (e.g. speaking rights, when people leave). NAWAC also asked for an options paper regarding how agenda notifications might be made.

NAWAC discussed expanding the annual report to include more information.

NAWAC agreed to proactively release full 2018 minutes.

G Verkerk to discuss with key stakeholders whether concerns about lack of transparency would be resolved by additional notification of agendas and their expectations of and for attendance at open meetings,

Action – Secretariat to draft options paper for May 2019 for NAWAC, including a set of clear rules for how agendas should be laid out and a potential code of conduct for open meeting attendees.

Action – Secretariat to organise release of 2018 minutes

Action – G Verkerk talk to stakeholders regarding transparency and NAWAC meetings

Discussion - Tasman fire response

Privacy gave an overview of the ongoing Tasman fire animal welfare response.

- MPI has been really well supported by VERT, SPCA and Animal Evac. First time that Animal Evac has been officially stood up in a response.
- Incredible that everyone was allowed to evacuate with their animals; official word was to take your pets. Asked to phone MPI with animal concerns.
- However, scope of the issue soon became apparent. Huge number of calls to deal with; huge numbers of animals at Richmond showgrounds. Richmond became almost an attraction/petting zoo which was its own situation.
- 6 commercial farms involved but lots of lifestyle blocks.
- Huge community response, lots of offers of help.
- Infrastructure damage and ongoing issues from not just the fire, but the firefighting effort, e.g. firebreaks/fire retardant/water use
- Planning is key – people responsible for their own animals and to seek help if they need it – MPI can help facilitate this.

O 16. 4:50 – 5:15pm Visit from Minister of Agriculture

Damien O'Connor (Minister of Agriculture) arrived to speak to NAWAC. He thanked NAWAC for their work and considerable effort in animal welfare, discussed some recent and upcoming animal welfare work, and took several questions.

G Verkerk and the Minister acknowledged I Torrance's last meeting and thanked him for his service to the Committee.

With no further items to discuss, the meeting was closed at 5:15pm.