



National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

NAWAC 24/16

General Meeting

17 February 2016
10:30 am – 4:30 pm

Meeting Room 17.2
Pastoral House
25 The Terrace
Wellington

MINUTES

Committee members: John Hellström (Chair), Sue Brown, Ingrid Collins, Graeme Doole, Penny Fisher, Katie Milne, Karin Schutz, Grant Shackell, Alan Sharr, Iain Torrance, Julie Wagner

In attendance:), s 9(2)(a)

Apologies: Sue Brown from 11:30am

Welcome: Graeme Doole and s 9(2)(a)

Any Other Business Part One (Public Excluded Agenda)

Any Other Business Part Two (Open to the Public)

PART ONE (PUBLIC EXCLUDED AGENDA)

DRAFT RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

There being no other introductory items of business, it was moved (J Hellström / A Sharr):
That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:

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|-------|--|-------------------------|
| C 1. | Confirmation of previous minutes | J Hellström |
| C 2. | Status of actions arising from previous meetings | J Hellström |
| C 3. | Work programme update | § 9(2) / All |
| C 4. | Systems review | A Sharr |
| C 5. | Breeding paper | K Milne |
| C 6. | Greyhounds request for advice | J Hellström |
| C 7. | Layer hens code interpretation | § 9(2) |
| C 8. | Remote monitoring of traps | P Fisher / § 9(2) |
| C 9. | Animal welfare regulations progress report | J Hellström / § 9(2)(a) |
| C 10. | Animal welfare issues register and discussion | J Hellström / All |
| C 11. | Glueboards update | § 9(2)(a) |
| C 12. | MPI update and discussion of information circulated by MPI | § 9(2) |

THE GENERAL SUBJECT OF EACH MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED WHILE THE PUBLIC IS EXCLUDED, THE REASON FOR PASSING THIS RESOLUTION IN RELATION TO EACH MATTER, AND THE SPECIFIC GROUNDS UNDER SECTION 48(1) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987 FOR THE PASSING OF THIS RESOLUTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

General subject of each matter to be considered		Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
C 1.	Confirmation of previous minutes	To protect the privacy of natural persons.	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA).
C 2.	Status of actions arising from previous meetings	As above.	As above.
C 3.	Work programme update	To maintain the effective conduct	That the public conduct of the relevant

General subject of each matter to be considered		Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
		of public affairs through the protection of Ministers, members of organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment.	part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 9(2)(g)(ii) of the OIA.
C 4.	Systems review report	As above.	As above.
C 5.	Breeding paper	As above.	As above.
C 6.	Greyhounds request for advice	As above.	As above.
C 7.	Layer hens code interpretation	As above.	As above.
	Remote monitoring of traps	As above.	As above.
C 8.	Animal welfare regulations progress report	To maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the free and frank expression of opinions of organisations, officers and employees	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 9(2)(g)(i) of the OIA.
C 9.	Animal welfare issues register and discussion	As above.	As above.
C 10.	Glueboards update	To maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of Ministers, members of organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment.	That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 9(2)(g)(ii) of the OIA.
C 11.	MPI update and discussion of information circulated by MPI	As above.	As above.

I also move that:

s 9(2)(a)

be permitted to remain at this meeting after the public has been excluded, because of their knowledge of meeting procedure and the subject matter under discussion. This knowledge is relevant background information to assist the committee in its deliberations.

O 1. Mini tutorial: s 9(2)(a) on sustainability

s 9(2)(a) gave a presentation titled: Never let a crisis go to waste, animal welfare until 3000.

The topic was sustainable animal welfare. Examples given of issues that needed to be dealt with in order to address underlying causes of unsustainability were: breeding for production, the relationship between animals and people, and making moral decisions.

C 1. Confirmation of previous minutes

The draft minutes of the general 04 November 2015 (NAWAC 101/15) were reviewed and accepted, with no amendments.

Moved (I Torrance and S Brown):

That the draft minutes of the general meetings held on 04 November 2015 be adopted as a true and accurate record of those meetings.

The motion was put: carried.

C 2. Status of actions arising from previous meetings

The committee reviewed the list of actions (NAWAC 07/16). The following updates were provided:

- Action one, to explore the idea of a new animal welfare forum, would be discussed further at the ABWCC meeting in March.
- Action three, to send a letter to GRNZ on live baiting, is complete. No answer has been received yet.
- Action four and five, on dairy housing, are on hold for now; no new houses are being built and the regulations process is taking up a lot of resources. However, the MCDA has been done but not circulated.
- Action six, on the MCDA for farrowing crates, is complete and should be circulated to the whole committee.
- Action seven, to provide feedback to the MPI Director-General on the website, is in progress – letter drafted but not sent.
- Action eight, to organise a meeting to discuss strategic plan, is complete
- Action nine, for the Committee to provide feedback on the latest regulations update, is complete

Action: s 9(2)(a) to obtain MCDA for dairy housing and farrowing to circulate to whole Committee

C 3. Work programme update

The work programme update (NAWAC 08/16) was circulated prior to the meeting. For work programme items not already on the agenda, the following updates were provided:

- Farrowing – The advice to Minister has been reviewed by NZPork and clarified with Policy. The review by NZPork was only to check factually incorrect statements and there weren't many. The advice is being sent back to the Minister in the near future.

- Dairy housing – The code amendments are at the peer review stage.
- Animals in the wild – Work on snare use continues; a document has been drafted and it is likely that changes will be recommended to the Minister
- Temporary housing – Peer review is complete, and there were no major changes recommended. Minor changes will be made and the final copy sent to the Minister's office before the end of March.
- Shelter – Still a work in progress
- Exhibition, Entertainment and Encounter – The format is looking likely to be a consolidated code and opinion piece. Work on the regulations have raised many questions. s 9(2)(a) is sorting through information from industry and codes to share with the subcommittee.

C 4. Systems review

There were three issues to discuss: changes to the NAWAC guidelines; changes to the guidelines for writing codes of welfare; and the creation of a new NAWAC guideline titled 'Levels of Intervention'.

Changes to the NAWAC guidelines had been circulated as paper 09/16. Some of the substantial changes were described – for example, the suggestion that codes should continue to be reviewed (even if it's done quickly rather than completely and formally) every 10 years. A change to the wording was agreed: rather than "all codes should be reviewed after 10 years", Guideline 01 should say "The relevance of the code should be reviewed after 10 years".

Many of the changes were simply to line the guidelines up with changes to the Animal Welfare Act in terms of referencing the correct sections of the Act.

Changes to Guideline 03 were extensive, and it was agreed that it should be revoked (but kept, as many other publications refer to it) and the changes made into a new Guideline 13.

S Brown shared comments on Guideline 04, that the MPI team were referred to extensively and while it was accurate to an unfamiliar reader it could be interpreted as threatening NAWAC's independence. It was agreed that changes could be made, for example, referring to the MPI team as NAWAC secretariat.

Moved (J Hellström / I Torrance):

That the revisions to the guidelines are made, subject to the discussed changes.

The motion was put: carried.

J Hellstrom explained that there was soon to be a real opportunity to review the suitability of codes of welfare and ensure they are fit for purpose; for example, it had been suggested at the strategic planning meeting that codes could contain only recommended best practice and general information, alongside the regulations.

A new subcommittee to address this was formed.

Chair: J Hellström; members: I Torrance, S Brown, A Sharr.

It was noted that Guideline 12 should have been used at the strategic planning meeting in order to prioritise issues for the 2016 work plan and beyond. It was agreed that the systems review subcommittee should do this before the next meeting.

Action: systems review to go through guideline 12 and bring an ordered list of issues raised at the strategic session to present to NAWAC in May

It was agreed that the new subcommittee should finish reviewing the structure of codes before changes to the guidelines for writing codes of welfare could be finalised.

The new guideline, determining the level of intervention, was discussed. One change was suggested: that a new question is added to establish whether NAWAC should act in a leading or supporting role. The question should essentially ask: is anyone else already doing something about this?

Once adopted, this guideline would become Guideline 14.

Moved: (A Sharr / J Hellstrom)

Subject to the above addition, the guideline is adopted by NAWAC.

The motion was put: carried.

C 5. Breeding paper

K Milne described the process so far, from workshops with stakeholders to V Williams leading on drafting the paper. It was rewarding and helpful to be able to talk to breeders and industry directly. Most were forthcoming with information and aware of their particular problem areas with work already happening (with the exception of pigs).

The difficulty around changing some of the more intensive and international practices were noted (e.g. genetics of hens or pigs); their breeding goals are planned years in advance and NAWAC does not have the influence to change international direction.

NAWAC agreed to send the paper to consultation.

The peer reviewer was also discussed; NAWAC should ask someone who has a good understanding of the issues, international if required.

C 6. Greyhounds request for advice

The Minister had sent a letter to NAWAC asking for advice (13/16) on the GRNZ review for 2015. Greyhounds as an issue haven't had priority, so not much has been done, though P Fisher has made initial comments.

Action - Refer advice on the GRNZ review to the 3E's subcommittee. Whole Committee to share their comments to S 9(2) if they have any.

The subcommittee is to recommend in May what the response should be.

It was noted too that GRNZ still does not provide raw data to NAWAC on racing injuries, euthanasia, and greyhound population. NAWAC had expected to receive them at some point. Recently, Aaron Cross submitted an Official Information Request to DIA and while GRNZ refused to provide the numbers they implied that they shared the information with NAWAC when that was not the case.

C 7. Layer hens code interpretation

s 9(2) introduced some questions that have been raised by farmers and industry groups (including EPF) over the interpretation of the layer hens code.

There are 3 areas of confusion:

1. Glossary: The definition of a layer hen also includes pullets, or young birds. Does that mean scratching pads, perches, etc. are required for birds being reared? The intention was not to create this requirement.
2. Range management in free range systems: The code allows for a maximum 2500 hens per hectare. However, range management is practiced - some range shut off to allow pasture to grow and recover. Some farms are set up so that the whole facility meets the standard, but the part actually available to the birds is smaller. However, it is argued that not all birds are outside at the same time. The intention was that the area available to hens would always be at 2500 per hectare. Noted that since there can be 25,000 birds in a shed, it ends up being a large area that needs to be available.

There is a new paper showing that almost 86% of the hens on a series of free range farms used the range on one day; and more than 60% on average. Most hens stayed outside more than 3 hours at a time.

3. Litter management used in barn systems: Some producers don't like to use litter indoors as it increases the amount of dust and ammonia. They instead say that the birds have free access to a winter garden or outside area for litter.

There are now disagreements between farmers and inspectors over whether the farms are compliant.

Action – Form a subcommittee and work through interpretations of the layer hens code.

Subcommittee chair will be J Hellström and members will be J Wagner and G Doole. A holding reply will need to be sent to EPF, and NAWAC needs time to consider the issue. The subcommittee will need to come back with out of session advice as this can't wait until May.

It was noted that the increasing demand for free range eggs is encouraging and these questions need to be clarified before more investment is made.

C 8. Remote monitoring of traps

G Shackell explained the background to the letter sent by NAEAC on remote monitoring (14/16).

NAEAC's position on remote monitoring was that, at the moment, it is still experimental. Since live capture traps must be checked every 24 hours, and any remote monitoring for live trapping is still in testing, their use as described by Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) at the previous NAWAC meeting should have animal ethics approval under an AEC.

G Shackell was impressed at the failsafes in the ZIP system, but it still needs to be established that remote monitoring works through research.

Once a remote monitoring system is approved – probably via a change in the definition of 'inspection' in the Act - then it could be used without Animal Ethics Committee (AEC) supervision. In the meantime, it is likely that an AEC would require physical checking of every trap regardless of whether it's triggered in order to establish that the trigger is working first.

Data on the likelihood of a trap being sprung without being checked in time is needed. To generate it, research would need to be carried out under AEC approval, as technically using remote monitoring would otherwise be in breach of the Act, despite the fact that as shown at the previous NAWAC meeting the likelihood of an animal welfare issue is small. Rather than sanctioning anyone using the system now, they should first be told of NAEAC's opinion and be asked to approach an AEC.

The experiment will likely be allowed to proceed, but anyone using remote monitoring needs to gather data supporting that the system works until the Act can be amended.

NAWAC and NAEAC together should write to ZIP (and others, e.g. OSPRI and DOC) with this information.

Action – J Hellström and G Shackell to draft letter on remote monitoring to send to users

C 9. Animal welfare regulations progress report

s 9(2)(a) and s 9(2)(a) were welcomed for an update on regulations.

It was explained that at the previous meeting, there were 70 matters for proposed regulations that had come from the joint working group.

In addition to those 70 matters, MPI is now looking at some issues related to dairy calves. I Torrance, J Hellström and K Milne have attended additional working group meetings to discuss them. The regulations will address fitness for transport, animal handling, shelter, and the definition of an emergency in emergency on-farm slaughter.

MPI is aiming to have the discussion document up to the Minister in late March with consultation starting in April.

In addition to the discussed regulations, there was one new matter in terms of laparoscopic AI. The definition of significant surgical procedure as it currently stands will leave para-professionals out, as it will only be able to be performed by a vet. This regulation would allow anyone to do laparoscopic AI as long as there is pain relief prescribed (which effectively implies veterinary supervision).

Another extra matter may be raised in regards to farrowing crate size. This came out of the pigs subcommittee work on farrowing. It clarifies that a farrowing crate not only has to be wide enough, it has to be long enough that the sow can't touch both the front and the back at the same time.

It was noted that the final number of regulations may be a little different as some matters are expanded or contracted/combined, in terms of wording, but the intended outcomes will be the same.

There is one matter in regards to dairy calves where it may be useful to amend a minimum standard rather than regulate. This is a possibility that will be raised with NAWAC, but it is so far the only matter that has been thought about in this way – usually minimum standards are changed to regulations.

The discussion document is currently in internal consultation, with inter-agency comment in early March, Minister's office by mid-March, and public consultation in April. As part of the public consultation, NAWAC will be formally consulted.

This opens the possibility for a workshop to be held by NAWC in April.

Action – s 9(2)(a) to organise an all-day workshop for NAWAC to put together a response to the discussion document.

The urgency around having regulations in place before the calf season was noted, although the danger of rushing some regulations too fast was discussed. There is always the possibility to move some back onto another timeline.

C 10. Animal welfare issues register and discussion

The NAWAC issues register (15/16) had been circulated prior to the meeting.

There was a question on whether NAWAC could continue to remain silent on rodeos, or front foot the issue with a press release; NAWAC has after all recently reviewed the code and are happy for them to continue provided that rodeos continue to operate in accordance with it. Everything is clearly specified in the code.

It was noted that s 9(2)(a) has gathered footage of horses with leg injuries at a rodeo and footage of electric prod use. She has threatened to go to the media.

There are two questions to look at here: Is the code robust? And the answer is yes; and are rodeos complying? Most of the time, but not always. MPI can comment on enforcement, but NAWAC can only comment on the code and is not the enforcement agency. NAWAC can make it clear that people should comply with it, and if not should be sanctioned.

It was suggested that NAWAC could release a statement around the Nationals (5th and 6th March). Rather than defending the code, it would state that NAWAC has done a lot of work and that the code is robust and perhaps outline new requirements such as the presence of an animal welfare officer. It was noted that SAFE has on their website that 'NAWAC continues to have reservations around the performance of rodeos'. The statement could also note that there are bigger ethical questions at stake that society needs to discuss.

It was also suggested that these questions on the continuation of rodeos are included in the 3E's opinion piece on animals in entertainment.

Moved (A Sharr / I Torrance):

That NAWAC releases a statement to the media on rodeos, as discussed, subject to discussion with the Minister for Primary Industries.

The motion was put: carried.

The item on the TV shows Topp Country and Country Calendar were noted. Good practice around fish killing should be documented. There was some discussion on other advertisements on TV that feature animals.

C 11. Glueboards update

A memo on the progress of glueboard exemptions for 2016 was circulated prior to the meeting (16/16). s 9(2)(a) has been helping s 9(2)(a) with this work and gave an update that the number of applications had halved from the previous year and 2 applicants so far had been denied as their reasoning to continue using the traps was insufficient.

Reports on their use for 2015 were being gathered and would be shared once all had been received. There have been some complications in the quality of the reporting from DOC.

C 12. MPI update and discussion of information circulated by MPI

There were no comments.

PART TWO (OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)

STRATEGY AND PLANNING

O 2. NAWAC self-review

J Hellstrom suggested there had been a reluctance to fill in the form, as only 2 had been received before the meeting. It was noted that 3 more had been received on the day, but that was not enough time to pull together a report on them.

It was agreed that a self-review is still worth it. Members should send their responses to s 9(2)(a).

OTHER REPORTS AND DISCUSSION

O 3. NAWAC correspondence

There were no comments.

O 4. Committee members' reports on recent presentations and attendance at conferences

Dairy calf workshop: It was interesting to note that MPI, who were previously suggesting a raft of regulation, have come to the conclusion that there is not a lot to be regulated.

s 9(2)(a) gave an update on the National Cat Management Strategy Group (NCMSG), who at their last meeting decided to release their strategy in a pre-consultation step. NAWAC will be included in this preconsultation.

Any other business

Nesting material for pigs was raised. It is not used, and the strong message from industry to the pigs subcommittee was 'don't go there'.

So what will NAWAC do? This is a breach of the code. The industry is clear that they are not complying and they are not being effectively encouraged by NAWAC's recommendations.

It was noted that the advice that has gone back to the Minister is clear that pork producers are not complying. NAWAC has put this back to the Minister but NAWAC is not the enforcement agency.

s 9(2)(a) has been in contact with pig welfare experts in the EU for advice. She has been advised that the slurry management can be managed and it's not quite as hard as New Zealand producers are saying, and that there are options for enrichment that last. s 9(2)(a) is still discussing this and will share feedback as it comes.

With no further items to discuss, the meeting was closed at 2:30pm.