



National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

General Meeting

20 August 2020
10:00 am – 2:00 pm

Meeting held via Zoom

MINUTES

Committee members: Gwyneth Verkerk (Chair), Arnja Dale, Craig Johnson, Sandra Faulkner, Peter Mason, Ruth Palmer, Nick Poutu, Karin Schutz, Grant Shackell, Ingrid Visser, Julie Wagner (Deputy Chair)

In attendance: ^{s 9(2)(a)}

Apologies:

Welcome:

Any Other Business Part One (Open to the Public): Add item O11: Cetaceans memo. Noted that Grant McCullough, incoming NAWAC member, will join the meeting as an observer after 12pm.

Moved (G Verkerk / A Dale) to accept the agenda.

PART ONE (OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)

GENERAL

O 1. Confirmation of previous minutes

Moved (G Verkerk / G Shackell)

That the draft minutes of the general meeting held on 19th May 2020 (28/20) 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 (29/20). For action items not already on the agenda, the following updates were provided:

- Action 1, regarding amending Guideline 08, is on hold until the court case brought by SAFE and the New Zealand Animal Law Association is closed.
- Action 2, regarding posting NAWAC agendas online, is complete. Suggested that there should be a process for letting people know they are online.
- Action 3, regarding G Verkerk talking to stakeholders regarding transparency, is ongoing.
- Action 4, regarding contacting NZVA about animal sentience, is pending.
- Action 5, regarding SPCA statistics being included in MPI updates, is complete – regulation infringements are reported on.
- Action 6, regarding updates on fires in meat chicken sheds, is in progress.
- Action 7, regarding information on donkey milking, is complete. s 9(2)(a) reported that Verification Services and New Zealand Food Safety record that there are no Risk Management Plans registered with MPI for donkey milking farms. SPCA is aware of only one farm. Discrepancy may be explained if the milk is not used for food.

Action: s 9(2)(a) / G Verkerk – Follow up with Donkey and Mule Protection Society; ask whether they can provide more information on whether there are farms in NZ.

- Action 8, regarding extra information on one aspect of the glueboard report, is complete.
- Action 9, regarding writing to Greyhound Racing New Zealand, is complete.
- Action 10, regarding extra information on one aspect of the transport statistics, is complete.
- Action 11, regarding bees as a work item, is in progress. s 9(2)(a) has been working within MPI to raise bee welfare. Reports that 13 million died in Auckland because food couldn't move through the border.

There was further discussion around the covid-19 resurgence response and associated animal welfare risks, with concern that animal welfare has not been appropriately prioritised (e.g. issues with veterinarians crossing the border). Is it NAWAC's role to raise these risks to the Minister?

s 9(2)(a) summarised MPI's role in the overall Civil Defence and Emergency Management framework and the ongoing national and regional work. The broad issues at the moment were around inter-regional travel, and animal care when people are quarantined.

How about looking forward to future issues? MPI is doing a lot of readiness planning as well as response planning. ^{s 9(2)(a)} suggested that it would be useful for NAWAC to use any connections that they have to get the message out to prepare for your animals, and that it's important to look after animals in order to look after the people; and to represent these priorities in codes of welfare.

From a farmer perspective, remembering that labour is specialised, it was pointed out that you cannot always have other people step in and adequately care for the animals.

Is there anything NAWAC can do as a committee – media release, letter to the lead agency?

Suggestion to link wage subsidy to paying for extra stockperson in case a farmer is sent to MIQ. This is one of the options MPI is considering.

It was agreed that, since there was likely to be a review of the government response to covid-19, NAWAC should prepare to submit into this process. This will avoid getting 'in the way' of an ongoing response but still allow NAWAC to raise concerns at the appropriate time.

Action: Secretariat to advise NAWAC if/when there is a review or debrief for the covid response.

O 3. NAWAC correspondence

Recent correspondence to and from NAWAC had been circulated prior to the meeting.

There was one question regarding the crustaceans/commercial slaughter code of welfare complaint, and it was agreed that this will be discussed later in the meeting (MPI Update).

O 4. Work programme update

The work programme update (32/20) was circulated prior to the meeting. For work programme updates not already on the agenda, the following updates were provided:

- Animals in the wild – The good practice guidelines have been reviewed by N Poutu. The next step is for the guidelines to be reviewed by the rest of the subcommittee. There is also a review of which stakeholder groups have published an interpretation of generally accepted practice, or a code of ethics, etc. for their members. ^{s 9(2)(f)(iv)}

- Poultry – The draft code was due to go to NAWAC before the covid resurgence - the AWA requires Ministerial approval to go to public consultation and there are other priorities at this time. With the election following, unfortunately MPI would be looking at this later in the year to coordinate the consultation. J Wagner is chair of this subcommittee, and while her term expires at the end of October, she will be co-opted to be part of the subcommittee. It is best if a NAWAC member is chair, so K Schutz will become the chair of this subcommittee.
- Fish – Update is the same as last time with suggestion of a farm visit in Feb 2021. It was suggested that at its next planning meeting (November) NAWAC could consider a Plan B to progress NAWAC's introduction to the finfish industry in preparation for drafting a code in case there is limited opportunity for travel in 2021. Speakers were suggested including ^{s 9(2)(a)}. Noted that there was a fish farm featured on Country Calendar. Volunteers were

requested to pull information and suggestions together: R Palmer, A Dale, and K Schutz volunteered.

Action: Suggestions for progressing fish welfare work to be presented in November.

- Codes review – A discussion on codes & regulations is later on the agenda. Noted that [redacted] is working on the review of the dairy cattle and sheep & beef codes, and [redacted] is working on the review of the pig code. [redacted] is working on the process for codes review that will apply to all codes. Draft process will be presented at the November meeting.
 - Farrowing crates – Waiting for the verdict from the Judicial Review.
 - Live animal exports – MPI advised that the review has been suspended due to covid and any further steps are anticipated after the election. MPI has been working on guidance for the export of horses by air.
 - Dairy cattle fractures – A report has been received from DairyNZ which will be circulated to the Committee but note it is confidential. DairyNZ's capacity to follow up on the preliminary results is constrained with covid and other priorities. J Wagner noted a story on this issue in Dairy Exporter. J Weston and others at Massey have been researching the issue.
 - Sentience – [redacted] has been working on sharing NAWAC's sentience information.
 - Rodeos – the rodeo welfare committee is focussing on the governance process around how the welfare committee gets info to the Rodeo Cowboys New Zealand board. [redacted]
- [redacted]
- [redacted] Next meeting is 25 September.
- Veterinary paraprofessionals – with MPI Policy.

O 5. MPI update and discussion of information circulated by MPI

There was some discussion and questions around the role of MPI's Chief Veterinary Officer and OIE Delegate functions.

There were questions around why the live export review has been delayed. MPI explained that it was on pause due to covid-19, and then New Zealand entered the pre-election period followed by an election delay. There is no-one available to make a decision on the review during the election period.

There was discussion regarding the complaint on crustacean slaughter to the Regulations Review Committee, including on process and next steps. C Johnson, A Dale and I Visser volunteered to help draft the response.

[redacted] passed on a question from the animal welfare coordinators regarding the compliance statistics. Is this presentation OK and is there any other information NAWAC would like? G Verkerk responded that the information was good and comprehensive. I Visser supported the use of graphs presenting the data in different ways. A Dale suggested that it would be good to see outcomes – e.g. prosecutions vs education etc. K Schutz suggested that it would be good to break down the mud complaints by species and region – and include outcomes.

There was a question on whether there was a targeted compliance programme in Southland for mud complaints? MPI confirmed that there wasn't a proactive programme. But there has been an updated set of tools and assessments for Animal Welfare Inspectors to use when responding to calls.

PRESENTATIONS AND UPDATES

O 6. Regulations and Codes

§ 9(2)(a) provided an update on the progress of the surgical and painful procedures regulations and how they will interact with codes of welfare.

The new regulations have been issued but are not yet in force. The consequential amendments to the codes of welfare are contained in the appendix of these regulations.

The next step is for NAWAC to review other parts of the codes such as Recommended Best Practices, General Information and other minor amendments that do not change the intent of the code, to ensure they all align with the new regulations. These changes can be made by the Minister with NAWAC's approval.

The regulations will come into force in May 2021. By that time, NAWAC will have needed to review all of the codes. The proposal is to do this process via the regulations subcommittee, and then all of the codes with all of the changes will be brought to the November 2020 meeting. The memo (34/20) sets out the timeline. There is a two week period for NAWAC to review the changes.

There were no comments on the proposal in the memo.

STRATEGY AND PLANNING

O 7. Greyhound welfare advice

§ 9(2)(a) updated the committee according to paper 35/20. The background of the welfare issues were provided, including the history of the Hansen report and associated quarterly updates. NAWAC sits on the greyhound welfare committee as an observer.

Greyhound Racing New Zealand has closed reporting to Ministers on the Hansen report because it is their view that all recommendations have been met. However, it is difficult to confirm whether this is correct, because reporting to the welfare committee has been poor.

GRNZ have suggested that they may contract an independent person to review their progress against the Hansen recommendations. § 9(2)(a) has drafted a letter from NAWAC to the Minister to say that NAWAC cannot support ceasing of reporting without further information, but does support the independent review.

There was a suggested change to last paragraph – from “how the recommendations have been met” to “whether the recommendations have been met”.

There was discussion around tone – is it clear NAWAC is unhappy? It was noted that the industry did meet some recommendations. Until more evidence comes through – tone is OK.

Regarding the independent review – has it been accepted or recommended?

Action – § 9(2)(a) to ask GRNZ for a timeframe on the independent review.

It was agreed that with a change to the letter to strengthen the expression of NAWAC's concerns, the letter could be sent within the next few days.

There was a break for lunch and Grant McCullough joined as an observer from this point.

O 8. Animals in Exhibition, Entertainment and Encounter

P Mason provided an update on the process of the 3E's assessment tool. The document was sent out for targeted consultation and was met almost immediately by a wide-ranging OIA request from the New Zealand Animal Law Association and an enquiry on the process from the Zoo and Aquarium Association. Two meetings were set up with these stakeholders to discuss the process to date and both meetings went well. ZAA were helpful and wanted to send through more information. The NZALA is putting together a group to submit.

G Verkerk reported on another meeting with the Equine Health Association, who were planning a workshop to put together a submission. This group has input into sport horses, pony clubs etc.

It was thought that the thing that seems to be surprising people is that NAWAC has made an effort to consult widely very early in the thinking; people are wondering about process.

The OIA request from the NZALA has been closed after the meeting, and NAWAC requested to please make narrower requests if they want more information.

The NAWAC inbox has received several submissions to date and more are expected as the deadline approaches.

Once the date closes, the next step will be getting the subcommittee together to discuss the submissions.

Following the subcommittee meeting, there should be a NAWAC workshop to try out examples using the tool and see how it works, and then use this to develop a set of principles for decision-making. Plan for this to be aligned with a future NAWAC meeting.

§ 9(2)(a) noted a DIA workshop she recently attended that examined the future of gambling; they used scenario modelling – § 9(2)(a) is setting up a meeting with the person who ran the meeting to learn from their process.

O 9. Mātauranga Māori

The subcommittee met on the 22nd June, and discussed increasing the use of Te Reo Māori, translating the committee names and including karakia in meetings. The NAWAC and NAEAC subcommittees for this have merged and will share the same information.

A glossary is underway; it has gone to the subcommittee but § 9(2)(a) is seeking a peer review by someone more fluent in Te Reo before it is shared with everyone.

Further advice on translations, karakia etc is being sought and the subcommittee is hoping to have more concrete proposals at the next meeting.

The research of § 9(2)(g)(i)

G Shackell suggested a Te Reo statement in the contents/introduction section of codes of ethical conduct and codes of welfare talking about New Zealand's approach to animal welfare.

§ 9(2)(a) mentioned the work of MPI's Māori Agribusiness team – they recently met with the animal welfare team and described an MPI-funded project in Taranaki to trial regenerative agriculture on iwi-owned land, including the use of mātauranga Maori alongside Western science.

O 10. Animals in the Wild – Broadcasting Standards Authority

Two letters have been drafted (36/20) to ask the Game Animal Council and the Broadcasting Standards Authority to provide feedback on animal welfare considerations. N Poutu asked for feedback - are we asking the right people and asking in the right way.

Question – what is NAWAC hoping to achieve? Explained that concern has come from practices shown on hunting and fishing shows on TV. NAWAC would like to know what the framework is for considering animal welfare when broadcasting these shows

This is also related to “generally accepted practice” as per the Animal Welfare Act – these programmes could be seen to set an example of what is accepted, particularly if unchallenged. It would be best if they can show good examples. The Broadcasting Standards Authority has huge education potential.

Agreed to send the letter and organise a mini-tutorial at some stage late 2020 or early 2021.

O 11. Cetaceans

s 9(2)(a) summarised memo 37/20. It is asking for agreement for exploratory steps like a meeting with DOC to discuss cetaceans in captivity. DOC is the key Ministry here who administer the Marine Mammals Protection Act.

It was questioned whether there is an issue to fix? If DOC won't issue a permit for cetaceans in captivity, then there does not appear to be any priority to this. What about keeping it as an issue to be considered when the relevant Act is next reviewed?

It was considered that there is no harm to having the meeting – if NAWAC can lodge their concerns with cetaceans in captivity and DOC can affirm that a policy would not be issued then that would help at least – DOCs statement on this issue is out of date.

Agreed that a meeting with DOC should go ahead.

With no further items on the agenda, G Verkerk noted that this was J Wagner's last meeting. J Wagner was thanked for her significant work on the committee, including on the pig welfare review, regulations and poultry.

The meeting was closed at 1:10pm.