



# National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

## General Meeting

22 May 2019  
09:30 am – 4:30 pm

Level 1, TSB Building, 147 Lambton Quay  
Wellington

## MINUTES

**Committee members:** Gwyneth Verkerk (Chair), Arnja Dale, Ruth Palmer, Nick Poutu, Karin Schutz, Grant Shackell, Ingrid Visser, Julie Wagner

**In attendance:** s9(2)(a)

**Apologies:** Graeme Doole, Katie Milne

**Welcome:** Arnja Dale

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

**Any Other Business Part Two (Public Excluded):**

## PART ONE (OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)

### GENERAL

#### O 1. Confirmation of previous minutes

*Moved (R Palmer / K Schutz)*

*That the draft minutes of the general meeting held on 13 February (16/19) 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 (17/19). For action items not already on the agenda, the following updates were provided:

- Action 1, in regards to amending guidelines to incorporate positive welfare, is in progress. It was noted that Guideline 8 is under review s9(2)(g)(i) [REDACTED]. It was also explained that Guideline 12 is potentially not the right place to put a reference to positive welfare. It was suggested that Guideline 6 (wider issues relevant to setting minimum standards) would be more appropriate. Guideline 5 is also relevant.

*Action: Change Action 1 to remove Guideline 12 and add 5 and 6.*

- Action 2, in regards to concerns about disbudding and dehorning regulations, is complete. G Verkerk has discussed with stakeholders. NZVA have released guidelines for veterinarians. Still concerned that some opportunities for training farmers has been lost, but it is good to see that guidelines are complete. Noted that s9(2)(a) [REDACTED] can discuss in safeguarding update.
- Action 3, in regards to concerns with the MPI website, is complete.
- Action 4, s9(2)(g)(i) [REDACTED]
- Action 5, in regards to sharing NZVA guidelines for anaesthetic in disbudding and dehorning, is complete.
- Action 6, in regards to sharing an update from the Chief Executive's Forum, is in progress.
- Action 7, in regards to the emergency management provisions being added to the codes review process, is complete.
- Action 8, in regards to checking in with the SPCA about a rabbit code of welfare, was completed. A Dale explained that the SPCA's science and education team has reviewed the draft code and consider it to be ready to submit to NAWAC: however, it focuses on companion rabbit welfare, and SPCA is aware that NAWAC's concern has been for meat rabbits. If NAWAC would not prioritise the code, SPCA is happy to use it as guidance on their website. There was discussion on whether there is need for the legal effect of the code. NAWAC asked whether the SPCA could investigate whether the code could be made wider to cover all rabbits. The secretariat was asked to investigate the rabbit meat situation.

*Action: secretariat to check with animal products – has there has been any change to the number of rabbit farms in New Zealand?*

- Action 9, in regards to publishing NAWAC's work plan, is complete.
- Action 10, in regards to asking EuroFAWC for examples of work around the world for animals in exhibition, entertainment and encounter, is in progress.
- Action 11, in regards to drafting an options paper for NAWAC about open meetings, is complete.
- Actions 12 and 13, regarding release of minutes and asking stakeholders about their opinion on the transparency of NAWAC meetings, remain in progress.

### **O 3. NAWAC correspondence**

There were no comments on recent NAWAC correspondence.

### **O 4. Work programme update**

The work programme update (31/19) was circulated prior to the meeting. For work programme updates not already on the agenda, the following updates were provided:

- Dairy cattle code amendment – Anticipating that the amendment will be recommended in the next couple of weeks.
- Animals in the wild – The snares report is on hold, to go to Minister after dairy housing has been recommended. The trap testing guideline amendment notification and media release is due to be released in the next week or so. Regarding glueboard traps, all user statistics have been received, report will be compiled.
- Poultry – The subcommittee has had a thorough conversation with industry and an animal behaviourist. They plan to go and visit a breeder farm and look at beak tipping, spur removal and toe tipping.
- Farrowing crates – Waiting for recommendations from the Primary Production Select Committee on SAFE's petition. Their response may have been delayed due to the ongoing judicial review process brought by SAFE and the New Zealand Animal Law Association. MPI is expecting the judicial review to continue for the remainder of 2019.
- Live animal exports – The Minister and the Prime Minister have asked for a review of live animal exports in response to a recent story regarding exports to Sri Lanka. MPI is providing information to the Minister about different options that could be taken to improve the welfare of the animals during transport.
- Sheep milking – Beef + Lamb leading an industry review of the sheep and beef code s9(2)(g)(i) [redacted]
- Animal sentence – s9(2)(a) [redacted] is working on getting the videos on MPI website. (Monday).
- Greyhounds – At the last NAWAC meeting, s9(2)(a) [redacted] talked to NAWAC, and following this NAWAC provided comment to Minister on the industry's latest progress report; this should be available online soon. Since then, s9(2)(a) [redacted] has resigned and s9(2)(a) [redacted] is currently holding the head of welfare position. It was noted that 6

staff members resigned in the last 2 months. s9(2)(g)(i)

- Codes review – s9(2)(a) to cover this work. First code of welfare due for changes is the Painful Husbandry Procedures code due to new regulations, to be discussed later in the meeting.

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

I Visser – s9(2)(g)(i)

Presented in Wellington at a conference on boat strikes on orca. New Zealand has the highest incidence of boat strikes in the world (noting that we have fewer orcas than other places – but a high drive to get close for photos).

A Dale – Attended the Crazy and Ambitious conference in Wellington. Big focus on suppression vs. eradication methods and on cats.

K Schutz – Completed one more farmer focus group on heat stress in the Bay of Plenty. Attended presentation on chickens and broilers by s9(2)(a)

J Wagner – Attended Lincoln Fieldays. Visited Lincoln University model farm regarding high uses of supplements and 'marginal' cost of high input. Attended talk regarding impact of climate change on farming.

N Poutu – Attended PredatorFree ambassador workshop in Nelson. Explained trap testing guideline and methods of implementing humane trap testing. Good acceptance and uptake.

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

The update was taken as read.

NAWAC requested to see the cull cattle report.

*Action: Circulate cull cattle report*

NAWAC requested an update from s9(2)(a) regarding shelter research.

*Action: s9(2)(a) to present at August meeting*

### **STRATEGY AND PLANNING**

#### **O 7. Issues register**

Bees – NAWAC noted that the Minister raised this issue very firmly in February, and asked for an update. MPI Policy is currently managing the issue. s9(2)(a) has put together advice, including that the Minister would need to ask NAWAC formally if he wanted advice, and there would need to be research/review into whether bees and insects are sentient. At the moment there is no action sitting with NAWAC itself, but G Verkerk has been copied into some emails from MPI regarding ongoing background work.

Cattle inductions – Noted that the industry has officially stated that no cattle are to be induced unless it is needed for an individual animal for animal welfare reasons. The practice of routine induction has ended in New Zealand.

*Action: Delete cattle inductions from watching brief.*

Racing – s9(2)(a) added an update regarding two Racing Reform Bills being drafted by the Department of Internal Affairs, and an independent review of the Racing Integrity Unit being carried out by s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(g)(i)

## **O 8. Transparency**

s9(2)(a) summarised paper 34/19: NAWAC memo on the Official Information Act (OIA) and NAWAC meetings.

R Palmer added that under the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act (LGOIMA) and the OIA, all meetings are defaulted to open. If NAWAC meeting agendas are posted online, there is an implied invitation. This does not mean that NAWAC must interact with attendees. This creates a risk of ad-hoc interaction, and so there should be clearly notified areas where people can interact with NAWAC.

Regarding livestreaming, there would need to be somebody dedicated to managing the technology and the people who may be messaging online.

G Shackell discussed open forums at local government. R Palmer added that local councils are elected, and for NAWAC, any addition of the public should be to serve to improve NAWAC's advice to the Minister.

Suggested not to leap into technical solution (livestreaming) straight away, but start in steps: the first being to post agendas online. Make it clear that people can attend, and if people do attend, then there would be a reason for investing into livestreaming or technological solutions.

*Moved (G Verkerk / G Shackell) that NAWAC should:*

- *Advertise meetings to the general public.*
- *Meetings held as usual, with the general public attending in person.*
- *Proactively release redacted versions of the NAWAC committee meeting minutes online following their agreement.*
- *Proactively release the summary of submissions for the codes of welfare online.*

*The motion was put: carried.*

## **O 9. NAWAC website**

NAWAC's webpage is currently part of MPI's site, and for several years NAWAC has held concerns regarding the visibility of animal welfare and NAWAC. MPI's new Director-General, Ray Smith, has instructed MPI to create separate websites for NAWAC and NAEAC.

There was discussion about the format and address of NAWAC's website. Agreed for MPI Secretariat to work with MPI to organise details. The website would likely begin with a copy of available information and build from there.

NAWAC requested an update, and ideally to view and approve a draft version of the site, at their August meeting.

*Action: MPI to update NAWAC regarding an independent website in August 2019.*

## **O 10. Annual report**

The draft annual report had been circulated and was taken as read. It was noted that some subcommittees still needed to add information.

Requested that further comments are sent to s9(2)(a)

## **O 11. Vertebrate Toxic Agents review**

NAWAC has been provided with documents discussed at the 77th Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Advisory Council (AVMAC) meeting.

In particular, AVMAC are looking at the use of inhibitors (products that reduce methane production from ruminants); a review of VTAs including brodifacoum; and advertising of antibiotics.

The Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines group routinely considers animal welfare in its deliberations. It is proposed that G Verkerk writes to MPI to ask to be involved in consultation regarding the use of inhibitors, and that the ACVM team should update NAWAC on the proposal to review brodifacoum.

NAWAC has effectively set the position that if something is less humane than a product that has already been approved, it should not be approved. This is an opportunity to review that position.

*Action: G Verkerk to write to MPI to ask to be involved in consultation regarding the use of inhibitors.*

*Action: Add brodifacoum update as an agenda item for August meeting.*

## **O 12. Painful husbandry procedures code of welfare**

s9(2)(a) explained that changes will be required to codes of welfare due to the Surgical and Painful Procedures regulations. As for the 2018 regulations, consequential amendments will be made to codes of welfare. This time, the Painful Husbandry Procedures code will need the most updates.

MPI's advice has been that consequential amendments to codes of welfare made by regulations don't need public consultation, as they have been consulted on already.

s9(2)(a) is reviewing code to establish the specific changes needed.

There are several options available, but note that the Painful Husbandry Procedures code of welfare does not cover all of the procedures that the regulations will. It may be that NAWAC wishes to keep the first two 'principles' minimum standards and associated advice; and remove specific procedure standards, in favour of referring to regulations.

It was noted that NAWAC is under judicial review for making minor amendments to codes of welfare.

It was agreed that regulations subcommittee would look at the codes. R Palmer happy to help with this work as well.

### O 13. Mātauranga Māori

G Shackell summarised memo 37/19.

NAEAC would like to continue with the joint meeting. MPI had asked for an objective, which is proposed to be: *To improve committee members understanding of mātauranga Māori.*

Regarding the meeting place, NAEAC would like to meet on a marae; particularly an urban marae to begin with, e.g. Pipitea marae.

A list of speakers has been put forward.

NAWAC agreed to continue with the workshop.

s9(2)(a) discussed the role of mātauranga Māori in the next Animal Welfare Strategy for New Zealand.

## PRESENTATIONS AND UPDATES

### O 14. Compliance

s9(2)(a) gave NAWAC an update on compliance statistics.

NAWAC noted concerns around apparent double-up of categories – e.g. why is 'feed issue' and 'low BCS' under separate categories?

s9(2)(a) noted the recent report from Otago University reviewing New Zealand's animal welfare enforcement system. Comparing complaints against prosecutions is considered to be a little blunt, as Compliance considers that there are many potential steps to change behaviour before prosecution, such as infringement and directions.

NAWAC asked where the money goes from infringements. It goes back into the Crown. Point raised that while animals are the victims, the money has no mechanism to help the victims. Asked for ballpark figure of how much is raised. Suggested that there have been 250 or so completed ones, and they are approx. \$500 each.

NAWAC discussed issue of backrub and internal bruising not being used as evidence. Is there scope for regulation to be reviewed?

Action – Align s9(2)(a) future consideration of standards list to NAWAC's code review process.

NAWAC asked whether verification vets are only at export plants? Explained that circuit vets also do non-export plants. This is performance-based verification, they are not there every day.

Action – s9(2)(a) to upload compliance presentation to Workspace.

## O 15. Safeguarding

s9(2)(a) updated NAWAC on the *Safeguarding our Animals, Safeguarding our Reputation* programme.

In particular, s9(2)(a) is raising awareness of back rub. Photos and statistics were shared with NAWAC. Backrub may look like a small injury from the outside, but internally it can create extensive bruising. The term for more severe cases should be significant spinal injury. A large proportion of infringements so far are for backrub.

Next week, the Farm to Processor Animal Welfare Forum and Chief Executive's Animal Welfare Forum are meeting. The major agenda item for the Chief Executive's Forum is to prioritise and agree resourcing for the initiatives that came from workshop in August last year (i.e. the animal welfare framework). One priority was to manage poor performers in farming e.g. by early intervention and sharing information.

Another priority was to review the current application of the codes of welfare. Some people thought that meant reviewing the standards themselves. However, the nine groups looking at codes of welfare are actually identifying whether the sector is achieving minimum standards. If not, why not? What can they do to achieve that? Along the way, gaps will be identified and passed to NAWAC, but the focus of the work will be on what industries are doing to meet minimum standards and how can they improve.

Another priority was to review the "Animal Welfare in New Zealand" document and turn it into an annual report document, including the Research, Testing and Teaching statistics and industry input. This idea was supported by NAWAC.

NAWAC asked if they should expect a document from the Chief Executives? Not necessarily, as the Forum is being encouraged to think of application of the codes at this stage.

## O 16. Policy

MPI is planning further formal consultation in 2019 on new/substantially changed proposals to do with Surgical and Painful Procedures.

Currently seeking Cabinet permission to release discussion document, hoping approval is imminent. There is a hard deadline of 9 May 2020 so MPI would start consultation as soon as that approval comes in. Likely to be 6 weeks of consultation over June/July.

If there are any comments about the regulations, please email them to G Shackell.

## O 17. Dog breeding

s9(2)(a) (DogsNZ) presented to NAWAC. They presented their progress against the recommendations in the 2017 NAWAC Opinion document on animal welfare issues associated with selective breeding. In particular DogsNZ discussed:

- The overall structure and function of DogsNZ.
- The establishment of a brachycephalic working group alongside the existing Canine Health & Welfare Committee. They regularly refer to the 2017 Opinion to gauge progress.
- The difference between an inherited disorder (comparatively easier to test for and deal with) vs. conformational problems (caused by many factors, harder to measure).
- Working with Massey University to import a chamber that can measure respiratory function. Working with NZVA on many of their initiatives.

- Updating the breeder code of ethics (in particular, to make it mandatory). Updating the Bulldog Breed Standard by August 2019.
- Educating on the term “fit for function” – noting that for many breeds, their original function is no longer relevant in a modern environment.
- The Litter Registration Limitation scheme, currently in place for Labrador retrievers, and due to be implemented for Rottweilers. Pugs are also in the early consultation stages. The scheme requires breeders to undertake genetic and health testing for their dogs, and the results are kept in a database and printed on the pedigree certificate.

Following the presentation there was some discussion on the limits to DogsNZ work, in that while there has been excellent progress, only a minority of breeders in New Zealand are part of DogsNZ. There was discussion on educating buyers to buy puppies from registered breeders.

s9(2)(a) (Bulldog Club Combined Taskforce) then presented to NAWAC. Materials including a PowerPoint presentation, breed information and copies of the British and French Bulldog Health Scheme were circulated to Committee members. In particular the Bulldog Club Combined Taskforce discussed:

- The history and recent rising popularity of the French bulldog, which has led to problems in terms of poor quality breeders cashing in on a trend.
- The importance of good breeders to animal welfare, for example in terms of being able to provide support to dog owners for the entire lifetime of the dog.
- The development of a health testing scheme which breeders can voluntarily take to their veterinarians. Dogs can attain a ‘bronze’, ‘silver’, ‘gold’ or ‘platinum’ level based on test results. Tests cover nostril grading, heart, lungs, breathing problems, hips and spines.
- The development of educational resources for the public and for breeders. The public are educated to buy puppies from high-quality dogs and breeders.

Following the presentation there was discussion on the way that the Bulldog Club Taskforce and DogsNZ work together, and whether the bulldog breeds would join the Litter Registration Limitation scheme in the future. It was noted that joining the scheme is a voluntary process triggered by the breed community itself, and that is why there is groundwork being done within the community first.

G Verkerk thanked all groups for their ongoing work and their time in presenting to the Committee.

#### **O 18. MPI Chief Science Advisor**

MPI's Chief Science Advisor, John Roche, spoke to NAWAC about his role and MPI's overall science strategy. He also discussed current animal welfare issues, including the ‘social license to operate’ of the dairy industry, and new technology that can help improve this (e.g. ways to keep calves on the cows for longer).

**PART TWO  
(CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC)**

**DRAFT RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC**

*Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987*

(G Verkerk / I Visser):

*I move that the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:*

s9(2)(g)(i)

s9(2)(a)

s9(2)(a)

*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:*

<b>General subject of each matter to be considered</b>		<b>Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter</b>	<b>Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution</b>
C 1.	s9(2)(g)(i)	<i>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 48(1)(d) by virtue of section 9(2)(ba)(i) of the OIA, and that the public interest is not found to outweigh the need to withhold the information.</i>	<i>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 48(1)(d).</i>
C 2.	s9(2)(g)(i)	<i>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 48(1)(d) by virtue of section 48(2)(a)(ii), and that the public interest is not found to outweigh the need to withhold the information.</i>	<i>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 48(1)(d).</i>

*I also move that:*

s9(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.*

Released under the Official Information Act 1982

Released under the Official Information Act 1982