



National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

The National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

Te Komiti Tohutohu Hauora Kararehe ā-Motu

MINUTES / MINETI

General Meeting / Tikanga hui

Date / Rā: 15 July 2025

Time / Tāima: 09:30 – 16:00

Venue / Whaitua o rēhia: Wellington

Committee / Komiti: Matthew Stone (Kairuruku/Chair), Katherine Littlewood, Stuart Taylor, Tim Scotland, Mhairi Sutherland, Craig Johnson, Carolyn Eyre, Natalie Waran and Peter Mason.

Attendees / Nuinga: s9(2)(a)

[Redacted list of attendees]

Guests / Manuhiri: None.

Public attendees / Tūmatanui tangata I tae atu: s9(2)(a)

[Redacted list of public attendees]

Apologies / Matangaro: Kathryn Bicknell, Sandra Faulkner

Any Other Business (Open to the Public): No additional items of business were identified for discussion under Part One of the agenda.

Any Other Business (Public Excluded): No additional items of business were identified for discussion under Part Two of the agenda.

PART ONE: OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

O1 Welcomes and farewells

M Stone opened the meeting at 09:35 and welcomed attendees.

Updated on the apologies. Mindful of quorum.

Noted recusals during the Dairy Code decision.

Noted late request for public attendee that was declined to protect secretariate resources.

Open session will run until morning tea at 10:45am

Considering dairy code and work program items in the closed session.

No comments on the agenda.

O2 Updates to register of interests

The following updates were provided:

- T Scotland:
 - o Correct the spelling of 'XL'
 - o NZVA Board Member
- K Littlewood:
 - o Correct spelling 'AkoVet' Ltd & move to top of list
 - o Correct spelling 'Member' (Policy Advisory Committee)
 - o Add: WSAVA Animal Welfare Committee - Member
 - o Add: AWNA Organising Committee - Member
 - o Add: ANZCVS Animal Welfare Chapter - Fellow
 - o Add: MAF Animal Welfare Advisory Board - Member
 - o Add: LIFT COST Action (positive farm animal welfare) - Member

O3 Confirmation of previous minutes

The document **17.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

C Eyre requested that on page 25 'regional council' is amended to 'territorial authorities' and that the slides from the Racing Integrity Board presentation at the last general meeting are circulated to NAWAC.

Moved (M Stone): That the draft minutes of the general meeting held on 11 and 12 March 2025 be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting, pending the requested amendment.

The motion was put: carried.

Actions:

- Secretariat to update the minutes as requested.
- Secretariat to circulate the RIB presentation slides.

O4 Status of actions arising from previous meetings

The document **18.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

The committee reviewed the status of actions agreed to in previous meetings, noting the traffic light system that had been introduced. M Stone invited the Committee to provide comment on the actions and clarified that completed actions will be removed once reviewed and agreed to by the committee.

Action list updates

#1- 7: Complete.

#8: Live Animal Exports: MPI to provide an update to NAWAC on this and NAWAC will determine if a paper is still required.

#9 – 17: Complete.

#16 This action has not been progressed and can be closed out. NAWAC acknowledged that pain relief for the procedures of tail docking and castration for lambs and calves has economic and practicality impacts. M Stone advised this topic may be addressed through the consultation process for the Code of Welfare: Sheep and Beef Cattle and it may be appropriate for an economic analysis to be undertaken in the future. NAWAC do not have the budget for an economic analysis, as such it may be recommended that MPI conduct the analysis, and this would depend on funding availability.

#18: MPI operational diagram: MPI are still working out an operational diagram following the restructure. NAWAC clarified the purpose is to understand the distribution of the Animal Welfare system across the Ministry.

#19: GPG for wildlife: Noted that the sub-committee (SC) no longer has a Chair, following A Dale's term on NAWAC ending. This piece of work needs to be considered in the context of the workplan and resourcing and will be discussed later in the meeting.

#21: To be discussed in the context of the MPI update later in the meeting.

#22 & 23: Both paused. 23 will be discussed later in the meeting.

#24: This action has been closed as there is sufficient information already on the website regarding sentience. C Johnson advised of recently received funding for student research into opinions on what effect the inclusion of the word "sentience" in the Animal Welfare Act 1999 (the Act) has had.

#25: Ostrich CRMS: Noted that A Dale was leading this piece of work and NAWAC are unsure on how to progress this work as it has not yet been prioritised.

#26: M Stone proposed that action is changed from paused to deleted due to resourcing and current priorities. The committee agreed.

#27: NAWAC discussed the Painful Husbandry Procedures Code (PHP) and agreed that as species specific codes are reviewed, the PHP minimum standards (MS) will be brought across to the relevant code.

#28: MPI provided apologies for the overdue paper on committee member fees structure.

#29 – 30: In progressed and on hold.

No further comments raised.

Actions:

- MPI to provide an update on LAE when there is information available.

05 Issues register

The document **19.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

Common source of intelligence – in a watching brief state. Can inform prioritisation discussion.

Aquaculture / Fin-fish Code of Welfare: C Johnson noted the comments (news article was circulated in NAWACs internal weekly update) by Minister Shane Jones regarding a farmed fish code of welfare. NAWAC discussed the importance of addressing social license as the aquaculture industry continues to expand.

NAWAC have been unable to prioritise a farmed fish code of welfare but noted that the salmon farming industry have developed their own voluntary code of practice and discussed if other species-specific industries could be encouraged to develop voluntary codes.

M Sutherland requested that octopus farming is included on the watching brief, noting MBIE are funding related research and SAFE are also raising awareness on this topic.

C Johnson raised ornamental and hobby fish as an industry which would need to be captured in future work.

Electronic Boluses: M Stone updated committee on the discussions on rumen boluses that have taken place in the dairy code SC. Boluses that release medicine are covered by the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines Act (ACVM), but data recording devices are not. This is the case for several emerging agricultural technologies that need to be considered under this topic.

Fish larvae: N Waran advised NAEAC have sent a letter to the Minister outlining concerns and recommending that a working group is established to review the use of fish larvae in research and this should be considered in any development of the fish code of welfare. NAEAC recommended that consultation is undertaken with those who use fish larvae in RTT.

N Waran proposed that NAWAC and NAEAC jointly discuss fish welfare.

Bees: P Mason raised the Bee Code item, and it was noted that NAWAC recommended ApiNZ provide report on compliance / implementation of COP. The committee agreed to keep this on the register.

Emissions mitigation for livestock: M Stone informed NAWAC that a report he was involved in as contractor to Health for Animals has recently been published, titled "How to Advance NDCs and Climate Strategies through Animal Health" will be shared in due course.

Cat Management: NAWAC requested that the link to the updated National Cat Management Group is circulated.

Any new issues: S Taylor raised the emerging technology for monitoring animals, noting these new technologies can be unpredictable and the risks need to be considered. Examples discussed include a cattle urine dispersal device, intramammary devices and rumen boluses. M Stone advised that the currently the codes can only apply to persons in charge of an animal, not device manufacturers, and was discussed by the dairy SC. However, NAWAC has a role in advising the Minister on these matters.

The committee discussed the importance of determining where responsibility lies, either with the farmer or the manufacturer, in the absence of regulatory framework or strategies that include animal welfare.

T Scotland requested clarity on the process for formalising codes of welfare. M Stone advised that anyone could draft a code and submit it to NAWAC for consideration. NAWAC will either recommend the Code to the Minister as is or determine that it requires further work and inform the submitter.

Actions:

- ~~s9(2)(a)~~, N Waran and M Stone to discuss a potential joint NAEAC and NAWAC meeting on the topic of fish welfare.
- Secretariat to circulate the link to the updated National Cat Management Group website.

O6 Member updates

- S Taylor: Recently visited pig farm (Dunsandel) in a personal capacity and noted a high level of biosecurity. K value / space allowance and farrowing systems, including maternity rings were key areas of discussion during the visit.
- T Scotland: Informed NAWAC that the NZVC is consulting on the definitions of "duty of care", "under the care of a veterinarian" and "working relationship" and this will result in updates to the COP. Also, recently assisted in establishing 160,000-day old chicks in a facility.
- M Sutherland: Finalised factsheet on pain relief options for sheep and beef cattle to be uploaded on the Beef & Lamb NZ website knowledge hub in due course.
- C Eyre: From a council perspective, it is a tough economic time and there have been increasing numbers of dog attacks and reports of menacing and dangerous dogs, as well as a change in land use with lots of land being converted into solar farms. It was noted

that there have been some issues on lifestyle blocks lacking the understanding of how to manage stock.

- C Johnson: Noted several research grants are being funded on the topics of alternative pain free methods of disbudding (surgical alternative) and sentience.
- P Mason: Met with World Animal Protection in Australia, who maintain an interest in New Zealand.
- N Waran: Advised of the NEIT launch on 1st August and working with Companion Animals New Zealand (CANZ) to establish a scheme. Recently travelled to Santa Fe to observe horse target training / positive reinforcement and is supervising a new PhD student whose researching positive emotions in horses, specifically the phenomena of "Flow". The CANZ impact report is now available online.
- K Littlewood: Informed NAWAC of grants being approved.
 - Spoke at UFAW about "5 Domains Washing", how the 5 domains model is being used as branding and how to safeguard the model. The recording is available on YouTube. K Littlewood recommended that NAWAC could use this protocol.
 - Book chapter published in *Mental health and wellbeing in animals*.
- M Stone: Advised the Committee that Animal Welfare Network Aotearoa (AWNA) has been invited into the New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA) umbrella and now all AWNA seminars and workshops will be available on NZVA website.
 - Spoke at NZVA on topic of agri-tech and Countrywide will be publishing a story on this.
 - The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) held its general session in May 2025 and the Terrestrial Code section 7.1 was revised and will be on the WOAH website in due course.
 - Presented on emergency management.

~~s9(2)(a)~~ arrived at 10.47am and introduced herself to the Committee as the Acting Manager Animal Welfare.

07 Annual Report

The document **20.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. M Stone invited NAWAC to provide any comments and feedback.

Moved (M Stone): That the NAWAC Annual Report 2024 is finalised and uploaded to the NAWAC website and sent to the Minister.

The motion was put: carried.

The committee adjourned for morning tea at 10:55am

The committee reconvened at 11:20am.

PART TWO: PUBLIC EXCLUDED AGENDA

RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC

Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

There being no further introductory items of business to discuss, it was moved (M Stone – committee consensus):

A. *That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely, —*

- C 1. NAWAC Correspondence
- C2. MPI Update
- C3. SC Reports
- C4. Dairy Code of Welfare – Approve to recommend for issue
- C5. Poultry code review high level plan
- C6. Slaughter & Transport code review high level plan
- C7. Work programme 2025-2026

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
C1, C2, C3, C5, C6 and C7,	<i>That the public conduct of the whole or 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)(a)(ii) of the LGOIMA.</i>	<i>The withholding of information is necessary under section 9(2)(f)(iv) of the OIA, and that the public interest is not found to outweigh the need to withhold the information.</i>
C4	<i>The exclusion of the public from the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting is necessary to enable the local authority to deliberate in private on decisions or recommendations where it is required to make a recommendation by any enactment.</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) of the LGOIMA.</i>

B. *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.

The motion was put: carried.

C 1. NAWAC Correspondence

The document **21.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

S9(2)(f)(ii)

[REDACTED]

N Waran requested further information on the OIA request relating to NAWAC member guidelines for attending rodeo. **s9(2)(a)** advised this OIA request sought guidelines for NAWAC members attending rodeos and the emails and minutes relating to any attendance at rodeos was released for this OIA request, as there are no guidelines.

M Stone thanked the secretariat for their collaboration in managing the NAWAC inbox.

C2. MPI Update

The document **22.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

Animal Welfare

It was noted that **s9(2)(a)** is now the Acting Manager Animal Welfare.

NAWAC were advised that the Animal Welfare (AW) team are now taking on the role of implementing the Codes, starting with the Deer Code. This will impact resourcing availability. The AW team are working with the Sector Liaison and On-farm Support team to learn the implementation process.

M Stone raised that there has not been a Farm-to-Processor Animal Welfare Forum (FTPAWF) meeting this year and it previously operated on a quarterly-basis, with Lyndsey Burton as Chair. NAWAC signalled the importance of this forum.

s9(2)(a) advised that Sector Liaison provided the secretariat for FTPAWF and as the team have moved directorate, consideration is still being given as to where this forum should sit for continuity and suitability.

M Stone proposed that NAWAC would like to make recommendation on this, reiterating the importance of this forum.

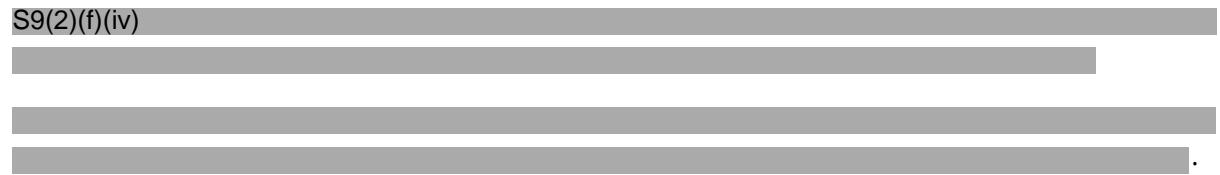
s9(2)(a) recommended M Stone raises this matter with **s9(2)(a)** at their meeting later today.

Animal Welfare Policy

S9(2)(f)(iv)

[REDACTED]

S9(2)(f)(iv)

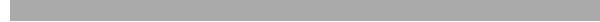


LAE: M Stone advised NAWAC that once the Bill and proposed regulations go out for public consultation, NAWAC will publish their advice that was provided to the Minister.

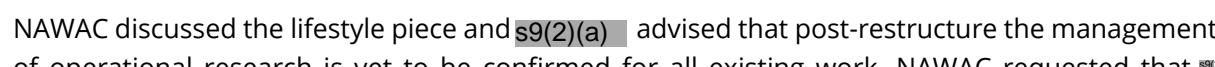
S9(2)(g)(i)



S9(2)(g)(i)



S9(2)(f)(iv)



NAWAC discussed the lifestyle piece and s9(2)(a) advised that post-structure the management of operational research is yet to be confirmed for all existing work. NAWAC requested that s9(2) follow up and provide NAWAC a report on the operational research project and operational research projects to be re-integrated into the MPI report.

Actions:

- s9(2)(a) to provide an update at the next NAWAC meeting on the dog tethering regulations.
- Secretariat to publish NAWAC advice to Minister on LAE on the NAWAC website, once the proposals go out for public consultation.
- s9(2)(a) to develop a communication plan to inform the Minister and stakeholders of the available tools to assist stakeholders in understanding their legal requirements (e.g., Ask Reg) and discuss this plan with M Stone.
- Secretariat to provide NAWAC with the survey results for conveyor washes for sheep preslaughter if available.
- Secretariat to integrate OpsResearch into the MPI Report.

C3. SC Reports

Rodeo: P Mason (Chair)

The document **23.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

S9(2)(g)(i)

N Waran left the meeting at 12.38pm.

Pigs: C Johnson (Chair):

There have been several meetings over the last few months and the SC is currently waiting for confirmation on the content of the finalised Code.

Deer: M Sutherland (Chair):

The Minister has approved the Code for issue.

Sheep and beef cattle:

Today is the last day of public consultation and so far, has received approximately 140 submissions. C Eyre noted there has been a lot of regulatory reform in the primary sector and this may have impacted the number of submissions. S9(2)(f)(iv)

Companion animals: No update.

Dairy: M Stone (Chair): To be discussed under agenda item C 4.

Poultry: M Stone (Chair): To be discussed under agenda item C 5.

Business: C Eyre (Chair): To be discussed under agenda item C 7. The Committee were reminded the Conflict-of-Interest guideline work is currently on pause.

Greyhounds: P Mason (Chair):

Greyhound Racing New Zealand (GRNZ) have applied for a judicial review of the government's decision to ban greyhound racing. It is now estimated that approximately 3000 dogs will need to be rehomed. The plan is for the dogs to be retained by their current kennels, but this would require the current dog owners to be paid during this time (estimated \$5million cost).

On 31st July 2026 GRNZ will be dissolved and a temporary entity will need to be established to see this process through.

C Eyre advised that council kennels have consent conditions and cannot exceed these numbers.

Wildlife: No Chair

C Johnson advised that stakeholders have provided clear ideas on the direction of the guidelines for humane pest management. This work would require s9(2)(a) to have available resource to take this forward.

The committee adjourned for lunch at 12:49pm

The committee reconvened at 01.31pm.

M Stone requested that NAWAC review the draft minutes from the meeting held on 3rd April 2025 to discuss the regulations associated with the pig code of welfare, as this was missed during agenda item O 2 earlier in the meeting.

Moved (M Stone): That the draft minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2025 be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

The motion was put: carried.

C4. Dairy Code of Welfare – Approve to recommend for issue

The documents **24.25 and 25.25** were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

M Stone thanked **s9(2)(a)** on behalf of the SC for their work in supporting this Code review.

S9(2)(g)(i)



S9(2)(g)(i)



S9(2)(g)(i)



NAWAC commended the presentation of the material.

M Stone informed NAWAC of the conflict-of-interest process.

Declarations of COIs:

- C Eyre: Participating in dry stock grazing to dairy farming
- S Taylor: Participating in dairy farming
- T Scotland: Indirect; works as a veterinarian across many species, including dairy cattle.

NAWAC agreed that:

- C Eyre and S Taylor are recused, and both left the meeting at 2.31pm.
- T Scotland remained present for the discussion and decision, with transparency considered sufficient to address any indirect pecuniary interest derived from changes to welfare standards that might be construed for veterinarians.

M Stone opened the floor for discussion.

S9(2)(g)(i)



C Johnson commended the process that has been taken to address the feedback received on this Code.

Moved (M Stone): That the Dairy Cattle Code of Welfare and post-finalisation report, pending the amendments agreed to today, is recommend to the Minister for issue.

The motion was put: carried. (Quorum of M Stone, T Scotland, M Sutherland, C Johnson, N Waran and K Littlewood present).

The committee adjourned for afternoon tea break at 2:50pm.

The committee reconvened at 3.09pm

M Stone invited the recused members to email through any feedback for inclusion to the Minister.

Actions:

- S9(2)(g)(i)



C5. Poultry code review high level plan

The document **26.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

M Stone presented NAWAC the high-level plan for the review of the poultry codes of welfare, noting the last time the layer hen and meat chicken codes were reviewed and the phase out of conventional cages.

M Stone raised fast- and slow-growth chickens and end the cage age EU campaign as key concerns to be considered during the review of these codes. K Littlewood noted that NZ may not have access to the slow growing breeds. S Taylor questioned if there are biosecurity blocks on poultry genetics and M Stone confirmed there are open biosecurity pathways for importation of poultry genetics into NZ.

M Stone informed NAWAC that the breeder chicken code is in draft form, following drafting by industry that was presented to NAWAC in 2018.

NAWAC agreed to work on all the poultry codes in tandem and work with key affected parties. The review will also need to consider new housing and husbandry systems, such as multi-storey barns.

M Stone met with MPI's Chief Veterinary Officer, and Director Animal Health and Welfare to discuss the contingency plan for HPAI, which may direct chickens to be housed indoors in the event of an outbreak as a HPAI risk management measure.

The poultry code plan lays out who NAWAC recommends be included on the working group for the review. M Sutherland recommended the NZ AW Science Network to be included as a key stakeholder.

The committee acknowledged that the poultry codes have been on NAWACs work programme for a long time and have sought feedback from the poultry industry on the high-level plan. In 2024 the industry recommended work on these codes is paused due to the HPAI outbreak, but industry have now advised this work can recommence.

C6. Slaughter & Transport code review high level plan

The document **27.25** was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

C Johnson talked to the high-level plan and advised that by combining these codes, it will address the issue of there not being a code that covers saleyards. The disadvantage is that it may be difficult to not result in a lengthy, unwieldy Code.

Other areas of concern to be addressed include alternative stunning techniques that are available internationally, micro-abattoirs, and slaughter without stunning. Shechita slaughter of limited numbers of lambs and poultry for supplying the needs of the Jewish community was accepted when a Minister's decision was challenged previously. This is a sensitive topic, not well understood amongst members of the public, and often conflated with Halal slaughter. Meat companies, MPI and Halal Associations have worked over many years to develop and standardise stunning techniques in commercial slaughter operations that are accepted by Halal organisations and export partners.

M Stone noted the operational research project on stock crates highlighted the current stockcrate standards are inadequate. M Stone recommended that NAWAC, MPI and stakeholders consider the review of the stockcrate standards and the codes in parallel.

s9(2)(a) raised that the slaughter code includes species that are not farmed, and **s9(2)(a)** noted this is also applicable for the transport code.

S Taylor queried if this code would include home kill.

The committee discussed the inclusion of religious organisations in the key stakeholders (e.g., FIANZ) and MPI were asked to consider and provide suggestions of key stakeholders to include.

M Stone confirmed as the Chair for the poultry SC.

C7. Work programme 2025-2026

The documents **28.25 and 29.25** were circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

M Stone raised that NAWAC works to two-year work programs, that are reviewed annually.

M Stone invited committee members to provide their top three priorities for the next Code reviews:

- P Mason: Rabbits, Post-farmgate, Poultry
- C Johnson: Post-farmgate, Poultry, Rabbits
- C Eyre: Post-farmgate, Dogs, Rabbits
- M Sutherland: Post-farmgate, Poultry, Rabbits
- T Scotland: Post-farmgate, Poultry, Cats or Dogs
- S Taylor: Post-farmgate, Poultry
- N Waran: Post-farmgate, Rabbits, Dogs
- K Littlewood: Poultry, Post-farmgate, Dogs
- M Stone: Poultry, Post-farmgate, Rabbits

S9(2)(f)(iv)



M Sutherland left the meeting at 4:04pm

NAWAC discussed the current stage in the review the rabbit code has been paused at.

M Stone raised the matter of resourcing and asked the Committee to consider how many active reviews of Codes could be sustained at one time and therefore should be incorporated into the work programme. All members were in agreement that active reviews of two codes in parallel would be achievable.

S9(2)(f)(iv)

NAWAC agreed that it will recommend to the Minister that the next priority will be reviewing the poultry code, followed by either a review of the post-farmgate codes or one of the companion animal codes (either dogs or rabbits).

NAWAC agreed to continue the wildlife work prior to the next code review being initiated. C Johnson and C Eyre will discuss the chairing arrangements for the wildlife SC.

The committee closed the meeting at 04.32pm.