



National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

General Meeting

Whaitua o rēhia: Online - Microsoft TEAMS

Rā: 17 November 2021

Tāima: 09:00 – 16:00

MENETI | MINUTES

Komiti / Committee: Gwyneth Verkerk (Kairuruku/Chair), Arnja Dale, Peter Mason, Grant McCullough, Nick Poutu, Ingrid Visser, Ruth Palmer, Sandra Faulkner, Craig Johnson, Mhairi Sutherland, Natalie Waran

Nuinga / Attendees: s 9(2)(a)



Matangaro / Apologies:

Sandra Faulkner

COMMITTEE MEMBER REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Member	Interest declared	Role
Gwyneth Verkerk	Lifestyle block farmer Waikato Catchment Ecological Enhancement Trust Predator Free Hamilton Trust	Farmer Chair Trustee Trustee
Craig Johnson	Massey University	Professor
Grant McCullough	New Zealand Veterinary Association Veterinary Hospital Group Troy Laboratories McCullough Farms	President Managing Director Board member Sheep and Beef farmer
Sandra Faulkner	Wairakaia Partnership (Farming: Sheep, Cattle, Annual Crops, Citrus, Farm Forestry) Gisborne District Council Tairāwhiti District Health Board Campaign for Wool NZ Presbyterian Support East Coast (Arohiwi Stn) Gisborne/Wairua Rural Co-ordination Group	Farmer/Partner Councillor Board Member Trustee Board Member Chair
Peter Mason	Royal New Zealand SPCA Incorporated	Manager Animal Welfare and Veterinary Services
Ruth Palmer	Small holding	Farmer
Arnja Dale	National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee Companion Animals New Zealand New Zealand Companion Animals Trust National Cat Management Strategy Group Farm to Processors Animal Welfare Forum Pamu Visionary Veterinary One Health Group Environmental & Animals Sciences, Unitec SPCA NZ Global Animal Welfare Assurance	Board Member Board Member Chair Chair Member Member Research Associate Chief Scientific Officer Board Member
Nick Poutu	Department of Conservation	Technical Adviser
Ingrid Visser	Orca Research Trust (New Zealand) Punta Norte Orca Research (Argentina) Dolphinarium Free Europe (Europe) Free Morgan Foundation (Netherlands) Whale Rescue (New Zealand)	Founder and Principal Scientist Co-founder and Co-director Co-founder and member Co-founder and Chairperson Co-founder and Principal Scientist
Mhairi Sutherland	Beef and Lamb NZ	
Natalie Waran	AEC - Eastern Institute of Technology National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee Companion Animals New Zealand Animal Welfare Sub Committee SPCA NZ International Society for Equitation Science	Chair Chair Chair and Trustee Member Trustee

Opening Karakia:

E te hui
Whaia te matauranga kia marama
Kia whai take nga mahi katoa
Tu maia, tu kaha
Aroha atu, aroha mai
Tatou a tatou katoa

For this gathering
Seek knowledge for understanding
Have purpose in all that you do
Stand tall, be strong
Let us show respect for each other

The Chair opened the meeting with a Karakia at 9.02 am.

GENERAL

O1. NAWAC correspondence/New Appointments

G Verkerk introduced N Waran as the new Chair of the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) and M Sutherland as a new NAWAC committee member. s 9(2)(a) from MPI introduced herself as the new secretariat for both NAWAC and NAEAC.

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

Recently the focus of correspondence to NAWAC has been on:

- Tethered / chained dogs
- Meat chickens

A letter from the SPCA on tethered / chained dogs was also noted along with a policy paper which had been circulated to the industry on 7th November 2021 detailing the issue.

A Dale spoke to this letter and mentioned tethered dogs have been identified as a key issue for the animal welfare team at SPCA due to the large number of complaints received on this matter and a lack of appropriate compliance tools to effectively address this. A Dale noted that 1,500 complaints were received on this matter in the last financial year and accounted for ¼ of all complaints received.

The committee discussed the animal welfare implications of dog tethering, notably a lack of exercise and socialisation. These cases are often referred to animal control and animal welfare inspectors due to excessive barking and the risk they may pose to public safety.

The RSPCA are requesting a change in regulation that would allow for this matter to be addressed from a compliance perspective. MPI compliance support this and share the goal of achieving better animal welfare outcomes.

It was noted that various Ministers have been made aware of this matter and have already been involved in communications.

NAWAC confirmed their support for this regulatory change.

N Waran raised how farm dogs would be managed under this regulatory change and suggested “prolonged” is defined. A Dale referred to the example indicators in Appendix 1 and confirmed the focus is to be on dogs with no opportunity to display normal canine behaviour.

Action: NAWAC to compose a letter of support and circulate to various relevant parties and encourage policy to support the development of a regulation.

O 2. Status of actions arising from previous meetings

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

- Action 2 – NAWAC Website – s 9(2)(a) – This is due to go live in the next week. Content is currently being uploaded and the committee will be given an opportunity to preview this.
- Action 5 – Document was circulated by Grant following the last meeting. This needs to be reviewed by MPI Legal prior to finalisation. s 9(2)(a) will confirm this and report back.
- Safeguarding end of life – Completed
- Zoo to be included on the Gantt chart.

O 3. Confirmation of previous minutes

The minutes from the 17 August 2021 meeting were circulated prior to the meeting and were taken as read.

That the draft minutes of the general meetings held on 17 August are adopted as a true and an accurate record of the meeting.

Moved: (G Verkerk / R Palmer)

The motion was put: carried.

O 4. MPI update and discussion

The MPI update had been circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read.

s 9(2)(a) seconded as Manager Animal Welfare Science whilst s 9(2)(a) is on a six-month secondment to the Racing Integrity Board. s 9(2)(a) is also seconded for six months as Principal Advisor. s 9(2)(a) congratulated s 9(2)(a) and s 9(2)(a) on their new appointments to senior advisers. The impact Covid-19 has had on MPI was noted, as the additional sector liaison required has been resource heavy.

An update was provided on the Winter Grazing action group; this work is almost complete, and the final report will be presented to the Minister before the end of the year. This will result in significant improvements to animal welfare.

s 9(2)(b)(ii)

The Science Team have developed a research proposal on stock crate design, which are currently built to NZ standards set in 1993, prior to the development of the Animal Welfare Act 1999. Raising these to match the European standard would have positive animal welfare outcomes but comes with economic impact. s 9(2)(a) continues to work closely with Workplace Safety and Waka Kotahi as they hold the legislative powers and can improve practices which impact how long animals are transported / stationary.

s 9(2)(a) confirmed the number of incoming complaints has remained static.

O 5. Issues register

Discussed items on the issues register which will not be addressed through the meeting, the issues register was circulated before the meeting and is taken as read.

- Napier Aquarium will be closing and are experiencing issues with rehoming the animals due to the range in species. They are currently liaising with the compliance team, HUHA, SPCA and other stakeholders. A Dale noted the SPCA science team visited and reviewed their plans, if the money been provided these animals would have had a better welfare outcome.
- International updates: Since August there have been several information sharing meeting with the UK and EU. Updates on NAWAC, the Pigs Code and the transition from caged eggs were provided.
- OIE: A chapter on Layer Hens was proposed and rejected by several member countries. This chapter was supported by NZ. Those who opposed the chapter are far away from the proposal.

O 6. 2022 NAWAC meeting dates

G Verkerk suggested the following dates for the NAWAC 2022 meetings; 15th February 2022, 17th May 2022, 16th August 2022 (note, there is potential for this to be a joint meeting with ANZCCART and NAEAC.), 15th November 2022.

Action: s 9(2)(a) *to send out tentative invites for the above dates.*

UPDATES

O 7. MPI policy update including pigs code and Crustaceans

s 9(2)(g)(i)

. Public consultation is expected to take place early 2022 (February for 6 weeks). s 9(2)(a) and G Verkerk will work together on the consultation approach, the face-to-face meetings hosted by MPI were noted which s 9(2)(a) will host. A Dale noted NZ Pork took the lead role on the face-to-face meetings which occurred during pre-consultation s 9(2)(a) highlighted the concerns industry has on the implications of this code and suggested the science which led to this proposal is communicated.

Following discussion, it was agreed some members of the subcommittee would attend the face-to-face meetings. The dates will be confirmed once the date for public consultation has been agreed, this is expected to be 2 weeks into the 6-week consultation.

s 9(2)(a) confirmed MPI will hold independent meetings with the advocacy groups in Wellington. It was noted NAWAC should be at those too.

It was recommended that the consultation and engagement plan is revised to include several options, in the event that engagement becomes difficult.

Dairy Cattle Housing: This is currently with Hon Minister Whaitiri and consultation will begin this year. s 9(2)(a) confirmed a targeted consultation should not be problematic, as Dairy NZ will contact those affected for inclusion. A Dale confirmed there are 7 farms who house dairy cattle 365 days a year and noted some farming groups are considering permanent housing and would not have been included on the original list.

Action: A Dale to send s 9(2)(a) *contact details of farming groups considering all year housing*

Livestock Exports: The Bill has gone through to the house and submissions will remain open until 2nd December 2021. Information continues to be collated and will be reported back on.

s 9(2)(a) (MPI) was confirmed to present to the Select Committee.

The committee discussed if an additional submission to confirm their support of the act being amended to ban live exports will be required. NAWAC are welcome to provide an additional submission to remind the Minister of their stance on this matter. Following discussion the committee agreed an additional brief submission, in line with their original, be submitted with the inclusion of new information from peer reviewed journals which support this.

Action: *A second submission is to be drafted and submitted before 2nd December 2021.*

Crustaceans: Following upholding of the complaint to the Regulations Review Committee regarding the minimum standard for chilling crabs, rock lobsters and crayfish, the standard will be amended to ensure the wording is clear that crustaceans are to be chilled and not frozen. Two wording options were discussed.

Moved: (G Verkerk / A Dale)

NAWAC agrees to recommend that Minimum Standard 22(e)(i) of the Commercial Slaughter Code of Welfare be amended

The motion was: carried.

O 8. Greyhounds

The committee were provided with a recap on the Robertson report. A previous letter to the Minister identified that NAWAC would engage with Racing Integrity Board (RIB) and support the resolution of the situation.

The 3E's subcommittee met with RIB representatives and A Dale and G Verkerk have also engaged multiple times since. G Verkerk is drafting a further letter to the Minister, at the Ministers request to include a table of comparison between comments from the Hansen Report (2017) and the Robertson Report (2021), and NAWAC's further recommendations.

NAWAC will continue to report back appropriately to Hon Minister Whitiri on this matter.

The appointment of Michelle Leger as the Animal Welfare Lead for Greyhound Racing New Zealand was noted. Whilst she is based in Australia and has not visited the NZ tracks, RIB is pleased with her appointment.

O 9.3 E's- NAWACs decision on guidelines

The memorandum on the guideline for the 3E's consultation tool was circulated prior to the meeting and is taken as read.

P Mason confirmed that the memorandum and final guideline are ready for approval following legal input. Several changes were suggested to align this with good practice and the committee agreed.

Moved: (P Mason / N Waran)

NAWAC agrees this is to be a NAWAC guideline (15)

The motion was put: carried.

Action: 3E's Guideline to be published.

s 9(2)(a) noted NAWAC needs to consider an opinion piece on the 3E's, if resources and priorities allow. The opinion paper on Selective Breeding has proven influential to promote positive welfare changes e.g. the increasing focus on brachycephalic dogs by dog breeders.

NAWAC agreed there is value in an opinion piece being published but noted their concerns regarding resourcing.

O 10. Rodeo Code review

G Verkerk provided a verbal update on the legal proceedings. She confirmed the judicial review hearing now includes NZ Rodeo Cowboys as an affected party. A court date is expected to be set on 21st November 2021, as the adjournment previously requested by NAWAC and MPI was rejected. The hearing may go ahead in June / July 2022. § 9(2)(a) is reviewing records back to 2001 to provide background information requested by the parties involved.

For the code review, § 9(2)(a) is currently receiving feedback from the parties contacted for pre-consultation and will arrange for meetings where these have been requested.

O 11. Wildlife

A memo outlining changes to NAWAC 09 guideline recommended by the subcommittee was circulated prior to the meeting and is taken as read.

The changes recommended will require support from MPI and the completion timeline will be discussed as part of the 2022 workplan.

The wider committee supported the changes proposed and will look to include this in the workplan for 2022.

O 12. Zoos

I Visser reported that the review by the working group is continuing and they are talking with affected parties. I Visser has suggested that the code is written from the perspective of how they wish to be seen and noted it is positive that stakeholders are actively involved in the code development.

A Dale reported on a meeting with Zoo and Aquarium Association (ZAA) who presented updates and an accreditation plan which included positive changes, notably to human-animal interaction as part of their animal welfare considerations. There was NAWAC discussion about both the positive and negative impacts of human-animal interactions.

I Visser confirmed the reviewed zoo code document is expected to be presented in mid-2022.

Action: A Dale to circulate Nick de Graff's presentation on the ZAA Animal Welfare Accreditation Program update.

O 13 Sheep and Beef Code Update – L Newton

The update on the review of the Sheep and Beef Code was circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read.

Many topics have been resolved by the working group but additional issues that require further work include horn management (raised by MPI Compliance) and end of life management.

§ 9(2)(a) requested NAWAC members volunteer as additional sub-committee members. S Faulkner, M Sutherland and P Mason are already on this subcommittee.

s 9(2)(a) noted that the over-lap with the dairy code review has already allowed many issues to be resolved, e.g the issues around shade and shelter provision which will be included in all the pastoral codes.

O 13. KPI's update

The NAWAC KPI document was circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read, feedback from the committee was requested.

NAWAC discussed their obligations under the Act for timeframes on code reviews and noted the several codes currently out of date. Further discussion took place on how often NAWAC should review codes. It was agreed a summary of legislative changes would be raised during the discussion with M Peters.

R Palmer noted the importance of the KPI's being within NAWAC's control.

R Palmer to further discuss the KPI's with M Peters and report back to NAWAC.

Action: R Palmer to report finalised KPI's in February 2022

DISCUSSIONS

O 14. Rabbits

The subcommittee is providing feedback and there was discussion as to how to fit this into the 2022 work plan. The document is well presented and should not require a large amount of work to prepare for public consultation.

N Waran expressed interest in being involved with this piece of work.

Action: Final recommendation to be made at February 2022 meeting and the committee will decide if it is to be progressed and incorporated in the 2022 work plan.

O 15. Bee welfare

A letter from Minister O'Connor asking NAWAC to consider a code of welfare for bees was discussed. Bees are not currently defined as animals under the Animal Welfare Act 1999. For bees to be considered, NAWAC would firstly need to provide advice on definitions.

Discussion took place on the process for changing the definition of animals under the Animal Welfare Act. It was noted this has previously been discussed in relation to Zebrafish.

G Verkerk has been assisting Apiculture New Zealand (APINZ) on a best code of practice but for this to be developed further as a statutory code of welfare will require an amendment to the Act. The next step is to determine what needs to happen and to address the barriers to achieving this but opens the debate about other insects being farmed.

s 9(2)(a) suggested several members of NAWAC work with s 9(2)(a) and s 9(2)(a) to develop a response to the Minister on this. C Johnson and A Dale volunteered to assist.

O 16. Dairy cattle code of welfare

The draft Dairy Cattle Code of Welfare document was circulated prior to the meeting and was taken as read. Karin Schutz, recently retired from NAWAC, joined the meeting for discussion on the code review, in light of her extensive involvement in the review.

The substantial work the sub-committee have carried out was acknowledged.

s 9(2)(a) included a summary of recommendations of proposed regulations, and the Evaluation Report accompany the proposed code for public consultation. The science background on substantial changes and outline of NAWACs thinking on MS changes was noted.

The Evaluation Report is still in progress and can be expected to be presented at the next meeting (February 2022).

An update was provided by MPI Verification Services on the recommendations on potential changes to regulations for the slaughter of pregnant cows, this will require further discussion and could be included if it falls under the regulatory scope of the Dairy Code.

s 9(2)(a) noted several statements from the code, which need to be confirmed by NAWAC. The statements were collated under Point 1 and related to bobby calves, winter grazing and antibiotic dry cow therapy. NAWAC expressed agreement with these statements.

The sub-committee have also met with S Faulkner and P Mason, as members of the sheep and beef code and deer code reviews, regarding shelter for pastoral animals. The final approach to shelter provision remains unresolved. The Animal Welfare Act 1999 requires animals to have adequate shelter to meet health and behavioural needs. A discussion was held on what is considered adequate shelter and ways to resolve this. The complexity of defining shelter and the variety of factors which can impact on thermal stress were highlighted, including different geographical areas experiencing different weather extremes and the difference in topography between farms.

The sub-committee will continue to discuss heat mitigating strategies which could be provided when animals reach their heat load index cut off limit. NAWAC confirmed they agree with the approach the sub-committee are taking on this issue.

The development of a regulation for heat stress was discussed further and the committee concluded this would require a cut-off point. Industry is currently doing further research using Met-service data to predict a heat load index for grazing dairy cows which also accounts for solar radiation. It is currently being tested in Waikato and will be validated for other regions in NZ, including Canterbury and Northland. A text alert system which alerts farmers when the heat load index is reaching its limit is currently being tested. Dairy companies supporting the work are also providing farm specific information sheets on likely exposure to heat stress and the potential impact on milk production.

An increase in heat stress in cows over the last 10 years has been confirmed and the difficulty of regulating behavioural signs was discussed. Situational regulation, for example, having no signs of heat stress prior to milking, may be a simpler measure for farmers.

NAWAC debated recommending a transition of 10 years to provide time for farmers to establish how to do this.

It was noted that if heat load index is included as a minimum standard and not applied, a regulation would be required. Support for this will be gauged when the code goes out for consultation. If the current standard is retained, a mitigation strategy will be required in adverse weather conditions.

The use of electric prodders was previously discussed by NAWAC, who suggested a weight limit increase. However, the sub-committee are now recommending that electric prodders are not used in dairy cattle at any stage due to the negative impact this may have on young heifers getting used to being handled. It was noted in discussions with the dairy industry, that electric prodders are not common practice and are typically only used by truck drivers. NAWAC agreed to recommend they aren't used at all for the consultation documents.

Further discussion with transporters may be required, but it was noted that a number of QA programmes eg McDonalds, do not allow their use, and some freezing works have banned them.

End of life cows: Calcium supplementation immediately before transport appears to help cows. This is based on the blood measurement of those that go down in lairage or transit due to low blood calcium. Discussion held on how a benchmark could be created and used by a compliance officer.

NAWAC will recommend this as an area for research and further development in regard to calcium levels, dosage and timing prior to travel.

The committee discussed developing a regulation on milking prior to slaughter and what could be useful indicators e.g., dripping udders. This should probably also apply at saleyards.

The committee also discussed the proposed standard about pre-transport selection and agreed to what is drafted for the consultation document.

It was noted that earthquakes are not mentioned under contingency planning and recommended best practice in emergencies does not refer to water. A potential indicator could be awareness of others' contingency plans.

Motion: The use of electro-immobilisation and electro back and top gates is to be prohibited. Two new regulations are to be recommended for update on electric prodders and castration.

Moved; (G Verkerk/R Palmer)

The motion was put: carried.

The committee noted regulations are a successful method of achieving behavioural change and agree these should be included.

Regulations on the feeding of bobby calves were discussed.

The list of recommendations was discussed and a fifth was added in relation to heat load index, the change to use of electric prodders and pain relief for castration under the beef code.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

O 18. Codes program manager update

A planning document was circulated prior to meeting and taken as read.

NAWAC discussed the points outlined under "Next Steps and MPI confirmed they would be able to provide additional resourcing.

A redraft of the project initiation document will be circulated in December.

G Verkerk noted resources need to be considered for the guidelines, in addition to the code work.

There was discussion about potential additional codes and their prioritisation. Any changes to priorities will need to be communicated to MPI. The committee agreed to review the prioritisation framework and confirm the total workplan in February 2022.

O 17. Strategic plan review – Postponed until February 2022.

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

The chair requested the committee review this plan and remind themselves of the function and purpose of NAWAC. Any issues can be discussed in February 2022 and will go alongside the KPI's and work prioritisation.

Closing Karakia.4.05pm