



National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

General Meeting

Whaitua o rēhia: Microsoft Teams

Rā: 15th February 2022

Tāima: 09:00 – 16:00

MENUTI | MINUTES

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

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

Manuhiri

(9)(2)(a)

Matangaro / Apologies:

Any Other Business (Open to the Public):

Any Other Business (Public Excluded):

GENERAL

O 1. Confirmation of previous minutes

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

A Dale provided feedback on these draft minutes and requested the following amendments were made:

- "1/4 of all dog related reports"
- "Animal welfare inspectors" terminology in place of "dog wardens"

That the draft minutes of the general meeting held on 17 November 2021 are adopted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, following the requested amendments.

Moved: (G Verkerk / A Dale).

The motion was put: carried.

O 2. Status of actions arising from previous meetings

The committee reviewed the Action List updated those now completed. For action items not already on the agenda, the following updates were provided:

- KPI's will be agreed before next meeting.
- Napier report; (9)(2)(a) will continue to follow up on this matter and a verbal update will be provided by (9)(2)(a) at the next quarterly NAWAC meeting.
- Discussed Animal Welfare Emergency Management, a presentation will be delivered on this at the next meeting to discuss the national plan in place with support agencies.

O 3. Annual report

G Verkerk reminded the committee that work will begin on the NAWAC Annual Report 2021 and noted that those who have chaired subcommittees will be required to provide updates to be included in this.

Action: G Verkerk and (9)(2)(a) to complete the draft report and bring this to the committee meeting in May 2022.

O 4. NAWAC correspondence

1. Dog Breeding and Dog Tethering

G Verkerk and A Dale met with MPI Animal Welfare Policy last week and discussed the two proposed policy amendments which have been drafted by the SPCA on companion animal breeding regulations and the prolonged confinement and tethering of dogs, both of which were shared with NAWAC. The committee will continue to support these discussions and noted these are issues which will be addressed when NAWAC reviews the suite of companion animal codes of welfare.

NAWAC discussed the proposal of regulating the number of litters over a bitch's lifetime, it was agreed this regulation should be consistent with the DogsNZ Accredited Breeders' Scheme, which proposes no more than 4 litters should be bred from a bitch over her lifetime. New Zealand Veterinary Association provided evidence that a reduced number of litters and desexing improves animal welfare and DogsNZ, have developed additional information, with the aim to prevent overbreeding and for breeding to only occur at an appropriate age.

A Dale highlighted the issue that different breeds of dog have different breeding requirements. The example provided was breeds requiring caesareans, such as Bulldogs. She noted this aspect should also be factored into any proposed breeding limitations.

Bees

The second piece of correspondence discussed was the response to Minister O'Connor's letter requesting a code of welfare is developed for bees.

NAWAC discussed the main issue to be addressed in the first instance being that bees are currently being outside of the scope of the Animal Welfare Act 1999. While NAWAC can make suggestions for the definitions of animals under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, it was noted that if NAWAC start to consider the sentience of social insects, it may need to include other insects, such as termites.

G Verkerk reminded the committee of the joint meeting they have agreed to hold with NAEAC on insect sentience in August 2022. This will be an opportunity for more information to be gathered on this topic and allow NAWAC to consider their recommendation to the Minister.

There was discussion whether different legislation, such the Biodiversity Act, would apply, and whether broadening the scope of the work could achieve the desired outcome.

Action: (9)(2)(a) *to redraft the response the Minister O'Connor and send.*

Action: G Verkerk and (9)(2)(a) *to work with NAEAC and begin planning the joint August meeting on insect sentience.*

O 5. Work programme update

(9)(2)(a) explained that the scope of the Strengthening Codes work programme has been planned out to 31st December 2023. (9)(2)(a) outlined the definitions of the terminology used in the programme scope, along with the codes included in this tranche. The committee was informed that both NAWAC and the MPI secretariat support are currently operating at full capacity. (9)(2)(a) requested that sub-committee members are confirmed for each of the codes included in the current plan.

A Dale noted that the work programme does not include a review of the codes of welfare for dogs and cats. (9)(2)(a) confirmed that the work programme has been designed around the codes of welfare which were those agreed by NAWAC as the codes needed to be prioritised for review.

Finding a mechanism to progress the draft rabbit code of welfare was discussed. It was noted that this work is well advanced from the industry group that developed it and would require minimal effort. The subcommittee are considering their final recommendation for it to be brought to NAWAC.

(9)(2)(a) acknowledged the significant "out of programme" progress that has been achieved with the drafting of the rabbit code of welfare. But cautioned the committee that the code release process is not quite as simple as drafting, pre-consult feedback, NAWAC approval, Minister approval. While we (the

NAWAC Secretariat) are completely focussed to achieve the agreed NAWAC work programme, Judicial Reviews, Regulation Progress will always try to accommodate any extra support requested by NAWAC, just need to acknowledge we are restricted by available resource.

NAWAC and members of the secretariat discussed the constraints on resourcing and the planning that MPI is undertaking to accelerate the code review process. There was also discussion on how the rabbit code could be progressed.

(9)(2)(a) suggested the development of a “watch list”, as this is within both the scope and the project initiation statement, this allows for additional scope to be considered based on capacity.

G Verkerk noted that many members of NAWAC are involved in other workstreams and subcommittees outside of the strengthening codes programme, such as best practice guidelines. She queried if there is conserved capacity within the plan for the MPI secretariat to support these as well. (9)(2)(a) confirmed reprioritisation can occur if necessary, both NAWAC and MPI must be open to change and reprioritising.

NAWAC discussed the further development of the rabbit code by the sub-committee to determine the remaining workload and bring a plan back to the whole committee.

(9)(2)(a) provided NAWAC with the following updates on the codes of welfare currently being reviewed under the strengthening codes programme:

- Pigs: Public consultation is currently delayed whilst a second economic analysis is underway. This will be provided to NAWAC once finalised.
- Sheep and Beef: Currently in the drafting and formatting phase. The draft will be shared with NAWAC at the next quarterly meeting in May.
- Rodeo: Currently in the drafting and formatting phase. This code review has experienced delays due to the judicial review.
- Deer: MPI secretariat support has now been assigned and planning is underway.

Action: P Mason to provide A Dale with feedback on the rabbit code of welfare. A Dale to work with the subcommittee and report a plan back to NAWAC in May

O 6. MPI Update

MPI Animal Welfare Policy Team - G Romaine

The report from MPI Policy was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read.

(9)(2)(a) introduced (9)(2)(a) as the newest member of the Animal Welfare Policy Team.

(9)(2)(a) provided a verbal update on the live exports amendment. This amendment is currently going through the select committee stage. The report back to the House is due in April.

The brief relating to the amendment to the crustacean section of the slaughter code is ready and will be gazetted within the next month

A Dale requested an update on welfare improvements for live exports over the last 6 months and G Verkerk requested live export shipment numbers. N Waran requested an update on the Select Committee enquiry into use of whips in horse racing.

(9)(2)(a) agreed to provide these updates post meeting.

(9)(2)(a) clarified that tooth scaling in dogs and cats will be included in the 2023 review of the Care and Procedures Regulations. N Waran highlighted the value in upskilling veterinary nurses due to the current shortage of veterinarians.

MPI AW Science Team

I Visser asked about rodeo compliance and questioned if local clubs have been holding events.

(9)(2)(a) noted that MPI Compliance attend all events run under the banner of the NZRCA.

Website Update: G Verkerk thanked MPI for the work that went into completing the website and

(9)(2)(a) informed the committee that material is still being transferred from the MPI site to the NAWAC site.

NAWAC agreed to add "website content" as a standing agenda item to ensure that the website is reviewed quarterly. G Verkerk asked the committee to consider what material they would like to share and noted the potential for them to develop a schedule for this.

A Dale queried if it is possible to report on website traffic and (9)(2)(a) confirmed this is possible and suggested it is provided to NAWAC annually and noted it may steer what we upload to the website.

NAWAC discussed the importance of consistent messaging and agreed that material will be reviewed by MPI Communications and Engagement team, before being uploaded to the website.

G Verkerk asked NAWAC members to volunteer to assist (9)(2)(a) and (9)(2)(a) with website content.

Action: (9)(2)(a) will provide NAWAC with an update on welfare improvements for live exports and include live export shipment numbers.

Action: (9)(2)(a) will provide NAWAC on an update on the Select Committee enquiry into the use of whips in horse racing.

Action MPI Secretariat to seek quarterly website traffic information and include this data as a standard meeting report.

Action: Website content to be included as a standard agenda item, all committee and secretariat members are responsible for suggesting website content.

Action: MPI Secretariat and NAWAC web subcommittee to meet to discuss website management

O 7. Issues register

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

NAWAC did not have anything to update.

PRESENTATION

O 8. Pain relief responses in sheep

(9)(2)(a), Australian Veterinarian joined the “Microsoft Teams Meeting” at 11.00am, to provide a presentation on her research into pain relief responses in sheep and cattle.

(9)(2) introduced herself to the committee as a veterinarian who had over 12 years’ experience in livestock practice and then as an on-plant veterinarian before completing her PhD. (9)(2) also worked for Meat Research Institute in Australia before returning to live animal work and pain relief research.

The presentation highlighted the increasing societal concern for animal welfare and how pain relief fits into all models of animal welfare. The International Association for The Study of Pain recently updated their definition of pain to “*An unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with, or resembling that associated with, actual or potential tissue damage*”. (9)(2) added that pain is a personal experience which can have adverse effects on function, as well as social and psychological wellbeing.

The presentation conveyed ways in which pain can be mitigated by both local anaesthetic (LA) and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID’s) and the impact these can have.

The metabolic rates of different pain relief were discussed and noted that sheep metabolise lidocaine quickly, with a half-life of 20 minutes. This is the pain relief currently being administered by the sheep castration tool “Numnuts”. It would be a lengthy process to have another LA registered for use in sheep, whilst this is not perfect, it is better than using nothing.

NAWAC informed (9)(2) of their current work reviewing the sheep and beef code of welfare and the discussion whether additional minimum standards for pain relief with castration and docking should be implemented and asked (9)(2) which pain relief method she would recommend based on her research. She recommended a multi-modal approach with both LA and NSAID but acknowledging that this option still has challenges from a commercial feasibility perspective due to cost and availability of resources.

O 9. MPI Policy/MPI VS – Regulations Discussion

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

Several issues were noted relevant to code reviews.

NAWAC discussed possible standards for transporting horned animals. The current wording is not sufficiently explicit for compliance activity because it is often unable to be determined where the injuries have occurred. The current recommended best practice is for animals to be transported, no sooner than 3 weeks after being de-horned. G Verkerk confirmed the sheep and beef subcommittee are currently discussing horn management.

The emerging issue of backrub occurring in calves was discussed. This has been limited to a small number of premises, and not widespread. This issue could be addressed through education by MPI. NAWAC agreed that the existing regulation on acute injury could be used to address these cases.

(9)(2)(a) confirmed that MPI Policy have a project to review all issued regulations in 2023.

O 10. MPI Sector Liaison (Farm to Processor Update)

The latest Farm to Processor meeting took place on 14 February 2022 and there had been some discussion on several transport-related issues - increasing the slaughter age of calves to 7-10 days old, defining maximum transport times, reviewing the feeding times for calves and transportation of animals in late pregnancy. The forum has also highlighted that if live exports are banned this will likely increase the numbers of bobby calves that farmers will present.

(9)(2)(a) confirmed operational research is currently looking into bruising in calves and that VS support an increased age since calves are older and more robust.

G Verkerk suggested that these issues have been discussed already in the dairy code sub-committee but can be reviewed again once the public consultation process is complete, and other points are being noted for consideration with the Sheep and Beef code review.

The committee took a short break for lunch and resumed the meeting at 1:00pm

O 11. NAWAC agreement sought for the Evaluation Report for the Dairy Cattle Code of Welfare

(9)(2)(a) provided NAWAC with an update on the progress of the Dairy Cattle Code of Welfare, noting that the committee had approved the draft for public consultation of the Dairy Cattle Code at the previous NAWAC meeting in November 2021. The Evaluation Report was taken as read, as no out of session feedback had been received prior to this meeting.

I Visser conveyed her appreciation for the work that (9)(2)(a) and the MPI team had completed to provide such a comprehensive document.

(9)(2)(a) advised of progress with development of the consultation document.

She has also been working with MPI AW Policy regarding NAWAC's recommendations for regulations which may result in some wording amendments to the draft code.

G Verkerk acknowledged this next phase and noted that some of the issues in relation to regulations could impact also on the sheep and beef, and deer codes as these are reviewed, so that the package of regulations across all pastoral codes is consistent

The committee agreed to several wording changes in the draft document which had been agreed in November 2021 including that dairy cows are not to be selected for transport within 7 days of giving birth

The minimum standard for transport before calving was also discussed and agreed as 14 days.

(9)(2)(a) noted there is further work required around the biosecurity implications of secondary killing methods. The committee reiterated the importance of a secondary killing method.

The committee suggested some additional example indicators for grooming opportunities, (9)(2)(a) confirmed these changes will be reflected in the report, along with the end-of-life recommendation.

NAWAC agreed the direction of development of the draft consultation document and any editorial issues are to be passed on independently by the end of next week.

Moved: (G Verkerk / A Dale).

That the draft dairy code of welfare and evaluation report is accepted and approved for submission to the Minister, pending the changes discussed above.

The motion was put: carried.

NAWAC agreed the letter for Minister Whaitiri to accompany the code on the status of the dairy code and the deliberations on its development, requesting approval for public consultation.

NAWAC have requested the Minister expedite the Dairy code public consultation for a minimum 6 week to allow the public consultation phase to be completed before dairy farmers' busy season.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

O 12. 2022 Work Programme

There was discussion on the NAWAC subcommittee composition for 2022. The following updates to the subcommittee memberships were agreed:

- Pigs: A Dale, N Poutu, C Johnson and G Verkerk
- Dairy: G McCullough, A Dale and G Verkerk
- Sheep and Beef: M Sutherland, S Faulkner, P Mason and A Dale.
- Deer: M Sutherland, P Mason and S Faulker
- Rodeo: P Mason, C Johnson, R Palmer, A Dale and G McCullough
- 3E's: P Mason, I Visser, R Palmer and N Poutu
- Wildlife: N Poutu, C Johnson, R Palmer and A Dale

The further composition for a poultry subcommittee was discussed since only G Verkerk and A Dale remain of the previous subcommittee. It was discussed whether former NAWAC members with specific interests in an area could be recruited for subcommittees Poultry subcommittee membership will be addressed again once the workstream is recommenced. Points of contact for other work items were identified as:

- Zoos: I Visser and P Mason
- Fish: R Palmer
- NAWAC Website: M Sutherland and N Waran
- Insect meeting with NAEAC: N Waran and C Johnson
- Rabbits: A Dale, R Palmer, P Mason and N Waran

The workstream for the development of a farmed fish code was discussed, as due to COVID-19, it is not currently possible for site visits to take place. NAWAC agreed to push this workstream out to at least Q3.

NAWAC discussed the plan for the wildlife subcommittee for 2022. It was agreed that work to review the trap guidelines should be completed. (9)(2)(a) will remain the point of contact for the Wildlife subcommittee and N Poutu provided positive feedback on the work which has been carried out to date as well as work to review the Humane Pest Control document for which there is now some additional MPI resource available.

The committee were informed that the GRNZ Health and Welfare Committee, facilitated by the Racing Integrity Board (RIB), have requested a member of NAWAC attends the meetings as an observer. G Verkerk agreed to represent NAWAC as an observer on this work.

C Johnson noted the transport and commercial slaughter code review workstreams do not have established NAWAC Subcommittees assigned. (9)(2)(a) confirmed that this is unable to progress at this stage as the MPI team is operating at full capacity.

I Visser requested the zoo code is identified in the 2022 work plan and queried how additional work can be incorporated into the work plan for 2022.

(9)(2)(a) noted the Strengthening Codes work programme was developed and agreed with a focus on a programme of timebound deliverables through to 2023 and that this is the focus for the MPI team. Nevertheless, there will always be unexpected delays and reprioritisation which is outside our control.

G Verkerk thanked (9)(2)(a) for her efforts to increase the MPI AW Science team resources to support the NAWAC work programme. It was proposed that the workplan for the Strengthening Codes Programme as provided by (9)(2)(a) be adopted for 2022 but that there is more work to be done to ensure that all workstreams are included in the workplan, not just the codes being reviewed under the Strengthening Codes Programme.

ACTION: (9)(2)(a), G Verkerk and (9)(2)(a) to discuss how to progress with the rabbit code.

O 11. KPI's

Agenda item O11 relating to the NAWAC strategic plan and KPIs was tabled. Discussion was limited and the KPIs need to be developed further.

ACTION: R Palmer and G Verkerk to work with MPI Secretariat to develop and refine the KPIs table for further discussion at the quarterly meeting in May 2022.

O 12. Meeting attendance guidelines

(9)(2)(a) updated the committee on the progress of this document. It is now finalised and will be published on the website in due course.

OTHER BUSINESS

O 13. Deputy Chair election

The position of Deputy Chair is appointed at the first meeting of the year.

Suggestions were sought Nick Poutu was appointed as NAWAC Deputy Chair for 2022.

That N Poutu will fill the role of deputy chair of the national animal welfare advisory committee for 2022.

Moved: (G Verkerk / A Dale).

The motion was put: carried.