

National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

# **Annual Report**

## **1 January to 31 December 2020**

**National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee**  
**C/- Ministry for Primary Industries**  
**P O Box 2526**  
**Wellington 6140**  
**New Zealand**

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May 2021

## Chair's comment

He korero ma una NAWAC,

Committee work for NAWAC continued during 2020 as we all adapted to new ways of working remotely and meeting on Zoom. Some components of the workplan were set aside as Secretariat resources within MPI were seconded for pandemic management.

Early in the year we were pleased to welcome three new members, Peter Mason, Sandra Faulkner and Dr Craig Johnson. These appointments filled several vacancies which had reduced the committee's strength for some time, and we look forward to the experience and expertise that these new members bring to support the committee's work. At the end of 2020 we also welcomed Dr Grant McCullough who replaced Dr Julie Wagner on the committee. Dr Wagner completed a six-year term of service, and we thank her for her efforts during this time to improve animal welfare in Aotearoa New Zealand.

2020 saw the culmination of the "Good Life" workstream. The content of the Sentience workshop held with stakeholders in November 2017 had been published on the NAWAC webpage, and this was complemented by a statement that lays out NAWAC's opinion that the implications of recognising sentience require us to place greater emphasis on animals' affective state when assessing their welfare. The consequences of this workstream will become more explicit in coming years as codes are reviewed with an increased focus on provision of 'positive welfare' and greater use of the Five Domains model for assessment of welfare state when considering animal welfare issues.

An early focus for NAWAC in 2020 was consideration of the use of animals in Exhibition, Entertainment and Encounter (3Es). The work recognises that different groups in society have different values and views on the use of animals activities and arguably some of these activities are generally deemed 'acceptable'. The work began in 2019 with a workshop from which the committee developed a draft framework to help gain a broad understanding of why people engage in 3Es activities in order to inform NAWAC's consideration of any welfare impacts. The framework was proposed to interested parties for feedback, and NAWAC was encouraged by the positive and constructive responses from those approached. The current task is to build a set of principles to guide decision-making in this context and will continue working to develop an opinion paper on the often controversial use of animals in the 3Es domain.

During 2020 NAWAC has maintained its commitment to demonstrate greater transparency in its decision-making processes. While videoconferencing and movement restrictions limited our ability to have open meetings, the committee's agendas were made available online, alongside an opportunity to request attendance. Planning is now well ahead for NAWAC to have an independent website launched in 2021 which we hope will be seen as a conduit to information about the committee's work that sits independent of MPI. NAWAC has also adjusted its processes to give greater cognisance to meeting tikanga and consideration of mātauranga Māori principles as well as western science.

As mentioned above, several delays came into play during 2020. Although NAWAC completed the final stages of its consultation with MPI relating to the issue of new regulations governing a range of surgical procedures, their release has been delayed to 2021. The poultry workstream, also delayed, did make some progress. In particular it was decided to expand the code being developed for breeder birds to include layer hens as well as meat chickens. The other delayed work item was the committee's preliminary investigations into developing a code of welfare for finfish aquaculture, although towards the end of 2020 the committee met with representatives of the industry in preparation for progressing this workstream in 2021.

The major task for 2020 has been initiation of the code of welfare review programme. Working groups were established for the dairy and pig codes, as well as preliminary planning for the sheep and beef code. The working groups have with broad representation across industry, farmers, veterinarians, and regulators. The NAWAC review process includes pre-consultation with animal welfare NGO's, and these views are

channelled back to the working groups for discussion. Following the ruling of the High Court in November 2020 that the standards for the use of some farrowing and mating systems on pig farms were illegal, the review of the pig code was expedited so as to provide advice to the Minister in the first half of 2021.

I would like to thank the committee for their work and dedication during 2020 despite the difficult working conditions. I also acknowledge the excellent work of our Secretariat to support the committee's endeavours. Their adequate resourcing becomes even more critical as our work programme expands into the gargantuan task of reviewing 18 Codes of Welfare in the coming years and I need to acknowledge the support we receive from MPI as they provide us the Secretariat resources, without which NAWAC could not operate.

NAWAC would also like to thank Minister O'Connor for his support in 2020, but were pleased following the election, to note the return of a specific animal welfare portfolio. We welcomed the return of Associate Minister Whaitiri and thank her for her support during the latter part of the year.



Dr Gwyneth Verkerk  
Chair

## Membership

	Expiry
<b>Dr Gwyneth A Verkerk</b> (independent chairperson) BVSc, PhD	31.10.22
<b>Dr Arnja R Dale</b> PhD, Chief Scientist RNZSPCA	31.10.21
<b>Ms Ruth H Palmer</b> MA (Hons), MPP (Distinction), layperson	31.10.21
<b>Mr Nicholas (Nick) J Poutu</b> MSc, Technical Adviser (Animal Threats) DOC	31.10.22
<b>Dr Karin E Schütz</b> MSc, PhD, Scientist	31.10.21
<b>Mr Grant H Shackell</b> Dip Ag, Dip Field Technology, MSc, Retired scientist (NAEAC Chairperson)	31.10.21
<b>Dr Ingrid N Visser</b> MSc, PhD, Founder of the Orca Research Trust	31.10.21
<b>Dr Grant R McCullough</b> BVSc, Veterinarian	31.10.23
<b>Professor Craig B Johnson</b> BVSc, CertVA, DVA, PhD, RCVS Registered Specialist, Professor of Neurophysiology, Massey University	31.10.22
<b>Mr Peter W Mason</b> BComm, Special Projects Manager, World Animal Protection	31.10.22
<b>Mrs Sandra B Faulkner</b> Partner Wairakaia Partnership	31.10.22

## Fees

Government policy requires disclosure of fees paid to members of statutory boards and committees. The daily fee paid to committee members during 2020 was \$400 for members and \$550 for the chairperson.

Members are paid the fee for attending meetings, with an allowance for preparation time. Members are also reimbursed for travelling expenses. In addition, the chairperson and, on occasion, other members may be paid additional fees for representing the committee at other meetings or for carrying out significant extra work on the committee's behalf.

<b>Member</b>	<b>Fees paid during 2020 (gross)</b>
G Verkerk <sup>1</sup>	\$11,547.97
A Dale <sup>4</sup>	-
R Palmer	\$1,400.00
N Poutu <sup>2</sup>	-
K Schütz <sup>3</sup>	-
G Shackell	\$5,638.34
I Visser <sup>4</sup>	-
J Wagner	\$1,768.61
P Mason	\$9,777.88
C Johnson	\$3,687.10
S Faulkner <sup>4</sup>	\$2,000.00
G McCullough	\$800.00

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<sup>1</sup> The Chair undertook extensive liaison with animal welfare, industry and other groups, and with MPI, regarding the writing and content of draft codes of welfare, regulations, and regarding other NAWAC business, in addition to preparing for and conducting formal NAWAC meetings and special meetings.

<sup>2</sup> N Poutu's as a public servant, does not receive meeting fees.

<sup>3</sup> K Schütz's fees are paid directly to her employer as recompense for time lost from her primary employment.

<sup>4</sup> I Visser and A Dale did not claim any fees in 2020.

## Work plan

### Top Priorities

Topic	Summary	Timeline
<b>Regulations</b>	To work with MPI to develop and implement animal welfare regulations	MPI's regulatory programme continuing through 2020
<b>Poultry</b>	To recommend new standards & regulations for meat chickens and layer hens, particularly breeder birds	To be considered in 2019 – 2021  Broiler breeder code consultation during 2020
<b>Exhibition, entertainment and encounter</b>	Publish the NAWAC position on the use of animals in exhibition, entertainment and encounter	Consultation early 2020 Advice to Minister by end 2020
<b>Wildlife</b>	To consider issues relating to animals in a wild state, including trapping, hunting and killing. Publish humane vertebrate pest control guideline	Advice on snares to Minister 2020
<b>Fish</b>	NAWAC to learn about aquaculture in New Zealand in order to inform next steps	Site visit 2020

### Current Animal Welfare issues under Management

Topic	Summary
<b>Farrowing Crates</b>	Potential actions to be taken by Committee dependent on Primary Production Select Committee response
<b>Fractures in Dairy Cattle</b>	DairyNZ to provide further information
<b>Animal sentience and the 'good life' concept</b>	Integrate new research into positive mental states in animals into standards & processes Workshop with NAEAC August 2019 To be included as part of codes review process
<b>Mātauranga Māori</b>	Subcommittee formed to continue to discuss and integrate findings from workshop in 2019
<b>Greyhounds</b>	Ongoing presence on welfare committee and contribution to welfare policies
<b>Rodeos</b>	Advice on rodeos provided to Minister in May 2018. New Zealand Rodeo Cowboys Association to form rodeo animal welfare committee
<b>Veterinary Paraprofessionals</b>	Liaise with veterinary profession and MPI regarding possible animal welfare impact of current regulatory structure when it comes to veterinary paraprofessionals
<b>Cetaceans in captivity</b>	Examine New Zealand's legislation regarding cetaceans in captivity and ensure it is fit for purpose in terms of animal welfare

## Meeting summaries

NAWAC holds general meetings quarterly, and other meetings (e.g. subcommittee meetings, joint NAWAC/NAEAC meetings, strategic meetings) as necessary.

Key items discussed at the 18 February 2020 meeting were:

- Livestock export review – In June 2019, the Minister of Agriculture raised concerns regarding livestock export and New Zealand’s brand. MPI received instructions from Cabinet to undertake a review. NAWAC heard an update regarding the process of developing the livestock export review, and discussed their submission with MPI.
- Chicken breeder code of welfare – A draft code is anticipated for the committee’s consideration in 2020.
- Animals in exhibition, entertainment and encounter – A framework for considering animal welfare considerations alongside societal value of animal activities has been drafted, and feedback needs to be gathered. The committee discussed the potential methods of consultation for this work.
- Deputy chairperson – Julie Wagner was appointed as deputy chairperson of NAWAC.
- Prioritisation – NAWAC agreed on priority work for 2020 and this will be published online.
- Snares – NAWAC agreed to make a recommendation to the Minister of Agriculture on restrictions around the use of snares.
- Tutorials – NAWAC received presentations on a cattle tail-breaking prevention project, and the Safeguarding our Animals, Safeguarding our Reputation programme.

The 19 May 2020 meeting was held by videoconference. Key items discussed at the meeting were:

- Regulations and codes of welfare – NAWAC heard an update on the progress of the surgical and painful procedures regulations. The implementation of these regulations has been delayed due to the coronavirus update. NAWAC has been consulted on the draft regulations. The next step is consultation on the consequent amendments to codes of welfare.
- Animals in exhibition, entertainment and encounter – A new timeline was presented and agreed. A document for consultation is almost ready.
- Mātauranga Māori and animals – In 2019, the Ministerial animal welfare advisory committees were tasked by the previous animal welfare Minister, Meka Whaitiri, to take mātauranga Māori into account when considering the welfare of all animals in New Zealand. A workshop has since been held and a subcommittee formed. The subcommittee presented some ways forward, and it was agreed this work will continue, with support from MPI.
- Bees – NAWAC discussed a request from the Minister of Agriculture to consider bee welfare.

The 20 August 2020 meeting was held by videoconference. Key items discussed at the meeting were:

- Codes of welfare review – NAWAC were advised that the plan for reviewing all codes of welfare is being implemented, and that three codes (Dairy Cattle, Sheep and Beef, and Pigs) have been assigned to members of the secretariat to begin work on, including establishing working groups to contribute to this process.
- Animals in exhibition, entertainment and encounter – The societal cost/benefit assessment tool has been shared for targeted consultation. The chair of the subcommittee reported back on several meetings held with interested stakeholders.

- Animals in the wild – NAWAC agreed to approach the Broadcasting Standards Association and the Game Animal Council for further information on their approach to taking animal welfare considerations into account.
- Greyhound welfare – NAWAC agreed to send a letter to the Minister responsible for animal welfare regarding progress against the Hansen Report recommendations. NAWAC would also support an independent review of this progress.
- Regulations Review Select Committee complaint – NAWAC agreed a process for responding to the complaint recently received by this Select Committee. The complaint is about crustacean slaughter standards in the code of welfare for commercial slaughter.
- Cetaceans – Agreed to set up a meeting with Department of Conservation regarding their policy on cetaceans in captivity under the Marine Mammals Protection Act.

The 18th November 2020 meeting was held in Wellington. Key items discussed at the meeting were:

- Surgical and painful procedures regulations – NAWAC has agreed to minor amendments to codes of welfare as a result of the incorporation of the new surgical and painful procedures regulations, which will come into effect in May 2021.
- Reviewing codes of welfare – Work has started on reviewing three codes (Dairy Cattle, Sheep and Beef Cattle, and Pigs).
- Animals in exhibition, entertainment and encounter – The 3Es subcommittee provided an update on and next steps were discussed. Feedback from the stakeholder consideration of the discussion paper about the assessment tool will be available on NAWAC's webpage soon.
- Animals in the wild – Work continues on good practice guidelines.
- Fish and aquaculture welfare – FisheriesNZ shared a presentation with the committee, as part of the initial exploratory and scoping phases for development of a code of welfare for aquaculture.
- Live animal exports - NAWAC discussed changes with the implementation of the Heron Report recommendations.
- 2021 Meetings – Quarterly meeting dates for 2021 are proposed as follows: Monday 22 February, Tuesday and Wednesday 18/19 May, Tuesday 17 August, Tuesday and Wednesday 16/17 November.



## Subcommittee reports

### Wildlife

#### Chair: Nick Poutu

The subcommittee presented the proposal for prohibiting the use of snares to NAWAC for approval. Snares can cause significant pain and suffering to caught animals, are not generally required for controlling or harvesting wild animals in New Zealand as more effective and humane alternatives are available. The recommendations included an exception for attended (hand-held) neck and leg-snares to allow for animal control and indigenous hunting practices as well as for power-activated neck-snares to be used as a component of a voluntarily activated kill trap. NAWAC was pleased to make its recommendation on prohibiting snares to the Minister in May 2020.

The development of the good practice guidance for vertebrate pest control has continued, with a first draft being progressed. The guidance will be applicable to all pest management from large-scale work undertaken by agencies to community groups and individuals. The guidance will include reference to relevant legislation, accepted methods of euthanasia, information around testing traps according to the NAWAC guidelines and best practice advice on common control methods.

A member of the subcommittee reviewed applications for the sale and use of glueboard traps for rodents, which are restricted under the Animal Welfare (Glueboards Trap) Order 2009. NAWAC is pleased that the number of these applications has decreased substantially since 2015.

### Exhibition, Entertainment and Encounter

#### Chair: Peter Mason

The animals in Exhibition, Entertainment, and Encounter (3Es) subcommittee is working on two priorities, the first being the development of a 3Es Societal Cost/Benefit Analysis tool (the Tool).

For any advice it makes, animal welfare is paramount and NAWAC has several tools that it can apply when assessing animal welfare impacts of an activity, for example, a Five Domains analysis. However, NAWAC also receives feedback about why society engages, or why it should not engage with a 3Es activity, be it through submissions on codes of welfare or public enquiries. NAWAC currently does not have a tool it can apply when considering this against any costs to the animals involved, that is, whether an activity is reasonable and/or necessary. This tool aims to aid these considerations and demonstrate this in a transparent format.

In developing the Tool, the subcommittee invited a select group of stakeholders, ranging across academia, advocacy, and industry, to provide feedback on a discussion document that proposed the development of the Tool. The subcommittee is currently refining the Tool addressing this feedback, and further subcommittee development, and aims to provide a final version for agreement in May 2021.

The second and overarching priority for the subcommittee is the development of a forward thinking (e.g. 25 years plus) strategic opinion piece exploring the future of 3Es activities; identifying issues, exploring global trends, considering future technologies such as animal holograms and 'virtual zoos' etc.. A set of underlying principles, that need to be considered should animals be used in the 3Es, is currently being developed and will provide a framework for the opinion piece. How the Tool, the principles and the opinion piece will relate to one another is currently being explored.

## **Regulations**

### **Chair: Dr Gwyneth Verkerk**

Workload for this subcommittee was reduced in 2020, and it will be in recess from 2021. The large groups of regulations that relate to surgical procedures on animals come into force on 9 May 2021. MPI proposes that future regulations be developed in alignment with NAWAC's programme to review the codes of welfare. This approach is preferred as a means to avoid duplication on the public consultation processes.

During the balance of 2020, NAWAC considered draft amendments to be incorporated into existing code of welfare to align them with the new regulations, in preparation for the changes in May 2021.

## **Dairy cattle**

### **Chair: Dr Karin Schütz**

In February 2020, the NAWAC confirmed the need to review the Dairy Cattle Code of Welfare as a priority. Advice from the Farm to Processor Animal Welfare Forum on the dairy code including potential risks for animal welfare and issues that should be addressed in the review was provided to NAWAC in late 2019.

A dairy code working group was established in late 2020, comprising of representatives of industry organisations, NAWAC, and MPI. The group met for the first time in December 2020 to work through a draft developed throughout the year. In addition, NAWAC invited animal welfare organisations to provide their feedback on the current dairy code.

The revised dairy cattle code will be addressing key areas of:

- providing for positive welfare (i.e. not just avoiding suffering)
- contingency planning – for adverse events and for equipment and other failures and emergencies on farm
- updating standards for access to shade and shelter, winter crop management, calf rearing, preparation and selection for transport, and emergency euthanasia.

## **Poultry**

### **Chair: Dr Karin Schütz**

NAWAC is developing a code of welfare for breeder chickens as part of its wider programme on poultry. In 2020, the poultry subcommittee has been busy working on this draft code of welfare and as a part of the work, some members of the subcommittee (who were allowed to travel) went on a visit to the Bromley hatchery in Tuakau in the Waikato. The original draft code of welfare was for meat chicken breeder birds only, however, it was decided also to incorporate layer breeders due to several similarities between the two industries. It is now anticipated that the code will include minimum standards and recommended best practice for both meat and layer breeder birds. It was originally planned to have the draft code out for public consultation mid-year 2020 but due to COVID delays and the incorporation of layer breeders, it is now planned to have the draft code ready to the full NAWAC committee and for public consultation in 2021. The subcommittee has met several times during the year and good progress towards this goal is being made.

## **Pigs**

### **Chair: Dr Gwyneth Verkerk**

In November 2020, the High Court made a ruling in regards to the standards for farrowing crates and mating stalls in the code of welfare for pigs, finding Minimum Standard 10 and Minimum Standard 11

to be unlawful and invalid. The Judicial Review challenge was brought by SAFE and the New Zealand Animal Law Association.

NAWAC made a submission on urgent replacement regulations, which were agreed by Cabinet in December 2020 and will phase out the current use of farrowing crates and mating stalls by December 2025.

NAWAC then formed a subcommittee to provide evidence-based animal welfare advice to the Minister responsible for animal welfare to support a move away from the current use of farrowing crate systems and mating stalls. Alternatives that align with the Animal Welfare Act 1999 needed to be identified as soon as possible. A review of the whole code of welfare for pigs was also prioritised to be completed in 2021.

For the first time, meeting summaries and reports from a subcommittee were proactively published online. Documents related to the pigs subcommittee can be viewed here: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/animals/animal-welfare/national-animal-welfare-advisory-committee/nawac-review-of-pig-crates/>