

1st Session of the new NCCAW

8 June 2007

Marque Hotel
Canberra

PARTICIPANTS LIST

ATTACHMENT 1

WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

CHAIR

The Chair, Dr John Drinan, welcomed the reconstituted committee and recognised the excellent work done by NCCAW to date along with the Chairmanship of Prof. Ian Caple. Dr Drinan also noted the significant achievement regarding the development of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) as well as the development of the NCCAW position statements. It was noted that the membership of NCCAW covers a full spectrum of opinion relating to animal welfare.

Senior Adviser to Minister McGauran, Mr Norm Blackman, relayed comments from the Minister. He sees a key role for NCCAW in providing advice on appropriate policy settings and recognises that animal welfare is a key issue in terms of community perspective and may have significant economic aspects. The Minister sees Australia as being at the forefront of animal welfare arrangements, especially in regards to the development of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS). Mr Blackman also highlighted the importance of Australia taking a leading role in changing attitudes towards animal welfare issues overseas.

AGENDA ITEM 1 NCCAW

1.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

DAFF

The terms of reference for the committee were noted as those from the Review of NCCAW undertaken in December 2006. The operation is similar to that of the old committee, however, the size of group has been reduced. It was noted that Minister McGauran requested the addition of a member to represent the horse industry. The review was seen as a high priority within the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) National Implementation Plan. It was noted that the terms of reference should be published as soon as possible on the DAFF website by the Animal Welfare Unit.

The scope of the AAWS Advisory Committee (AAWSAC) and its sectoral working groups should be listed in the preamble for the new NCCAW as well as highlighting the importance of a close connection between NCCAW and the AAWS sectoral groups.

It was also noted that NCCAW was asked to review the adequacy of animal welfare in terms of emergency disease response. The Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer has been carrying out modelling of disease control. These models are being considered by Animal Health Australia.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Publish Terms of Reference as soon as possible
- Draft preamble to cover scope of AAWSAC and working groups

ACTION ITEMS

- Review the adequacy of animal welfare in terms of emergency disease response

1.2 REPORTING PROCESS FROM NCCAW TO MINISTER DAFF/CHAIR

Mr Turner noted that in the past NCCAW has reported on meeting outcomes by writing to the Minister. The Minister would then write back to the NCCAW Secretariat. It was decided that this will continue. The report from the meeting will come from secretariat which will then be reviewed by the chair before being presented to the Minister through Mr Blackman. The Minister will contact the Chair directly on NCCAW activities. Any feedback will come back through the secretariat.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- The method of reporting to the Minister will continue

1.3 COMMUNICATION OF NCCAW DELIBERATIONS DAFF

This item related to the general communication of NCCAW reports. Minutes were previously published 6 months after the meeting on the DAFF website. It was noted that member organisation reports that go to NCCAW are not public documents. The idea of a communiqué was suggested in order to communicate key outcomes from the meeting more quickly. Members are to agree on the communiqué before it is sent to the Minister. Sensitive issues will be flagged and not included in the communiqué. The communiqué will be cleared by the Minister's office before it is published on the DAFF website.

The minutes need to be concise and approved out of session by the committee. Discussions made at the meeting are in-confidence; however, once an agreed point of view is reached the outcomes are public.

It was noted that the Minister is keen to see transparency in NCCAW outcomes. The communiqué can be used to publicise meeting outcomes to a wider audience.

It was noted that the minutes from the last meeting have not been approved. DAFF will go back to the minutes from the last meeting and circulate them to the old committee for approval. Glenys Oogjes will refer these issues back to the NCCAW Secretariat to make sure that action items have not been forgotten.

The idea of a task sheet was also suggested which will include actions required by whom and in what time frame.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Communiqué produced as soon as possible and circulated to all members for comment and clearance by Chair. Minister's office to clear, then DAFF to publish on the web.
- Minutes to follow as soon as possible, approved OOS and circulated before being published on the web

ACTION ITEMS:

- Task sheet – actions required by whom and time frames (NCCAW Secretariat)
- NCCAW deliberations will be published on the DAFF website with a link to the AAWS website

AGENDA ITEM 2 AAWS

2.1 OVERVIEW OF AAWS

DAFF

Mr Turner presented AAWS as a blue print for the future of animal welfare. The development and key work areas of AAWS were discussed. The National Workshop taking place in Melbourne from November 20-21 was highlighted. The committee agreed that a report on AAWS should be on the agenda for every NCCAW meeting. It was also decided that minutes from AAWSAC meetings should come to the committee for information.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Standing agenda item on AAWS at each NCCAW meeting
- AAWS minutes to be distributed to the committee

2.2 HOW NCCAW RELATES TO AAWS

DAFF

Dr Thornber noted the opportunity for a direct link from NCCAW to the various AAWS sectoral groups. Sectoral working groups can provide advice/ comment/ information on various issues under debate. It was decided that through the Chairs of the Working Groups, these groups may be used as 'sounding boards'. The next meeting of the AAWSAC will consider this recommendation.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Item to be added to the AAWSAC Agenda

2.3 AAWS UPDATE ON CURRENT ACTIVITIES

DAFF

The Australian Government will spend \$6 million over 4 years to assist and provide national leadership and coordination. National workshops were held in 2005 and 2006 and there will be another in late 2007. The key work areas of the AAWS groups were noted as being the communication of and improved understanding of animal welfare issues, consistency and adequacy of arrangements, including legislation across jurisdictions and the delivery of education and training.

2.4 HOW NCCAW SHOULD REPORT TO AAWS

DAFF

The AAWS sectoral working groups will be asked to look at relevant NCCAW recommendations and advise on the practicality of regulation. A consolidated report on activities in jurisdictions to be provided as part of the AAWSG members report to NCCAW. Chairs of State AAWSACs should be kept informed and it is important to retain a direct connection with the State AAWSACs through their various Chairs.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Activities of the AAWS will be a standing item on NCCAW agenda

ACTION ITEMS:

- Dr Burton and Dr Andrewartha to talk to Dr Thornber about a possible way forward regarding communication with the State AWACs.

AGENDA ITEM 3 REVIEW OF EXISTING NCCAW POSITION STATEMENTS

The number of position statements produced by NCCAW over the years was noted and it was suggested that DAFF review the status/relevance of all of the statements on behalf of the committee. It was agreed that the committee should continue the process of developing position statements. The Animal Welfare Unit in DAFF will carefully review the statements and seek approval from NCCAW members. It was noted that some of these statements are statements of principle which have the potential to influence the jurisdictions when looking at jurisdictional legislation. There was agreement that these should be 'living' documents and should be reviewed on a regular basis. The DAFF recommendations on the existing statements are to go to the committee at the next session of NCCAW.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- NCCAW agreed that the AWU review the position statements and make one of three recommendations to NCCAW in relation to each one (retain as is, retain but update or delete)

ACTION ITEMS:

- Animal Welfare Unit, DAFF, to review status of NCCAW position statements
- DAFF recommendations on existing statements to go to the committee at the next session of NCCAW

AGENDA ITEM 4 CURRENT ISSUES

4.1 REPORTS FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

ALL

ANIMALS AUSTRALIA

Ms Oogjes took the committee through the organisation report from Animals Australia. Issues of concern to Animals Australia are live exports, the revision of the pig code, and land transport codes. It was noted that a new president was appointed in October 2006.

AUSTRALIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION

Dr Doyle presented the member organisation report from AVAs. The role of the AVA in building community awareness of animal welfare issues with practical education was discussed as was the issue of animal cruelty leading to further problems with human abuse in later life. There was wide agreement that animal welfare should be included in every veterinary course nationally and that veterinarians should be encouraged to play more of a role, especially through the AAWS.

NATIONAL FARMER'S FEDERATION

Ms Parkinson noted the broad range of work that the NFF covers and the diversity of its membership. It was noted that there are four officers working on animal welfare based at NFF house in Canberra. NFF has animal welfare committees that advise their NCCAW representatives.

RSPCA

Dr Wirth presented the RSPCA Australia report. It was noted that the RSPCA only has the capacity to work within Australia, but has a deep concern regarding animal welfare issues on a global basis.

4.2 NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE MICROCHIP IDENTIFICATION OF HORSES NSW DPI

There was a general call for those around the table to provide input on this issue and it was noted that, at this stage, the issue is about uniformity of approach and the linkage to the control of exotic disease. This issue has been raised previously through NCCAW as well as the Australian Horse Industry Council (AHIC). The Council has written to the Minister on this issue. The thoroughbred industry is using compulsory chipping of horses less than 5 years of age. It was noted that this process is likely to take a considerable amount of time and that the issue should be taken up by the AHIC.

It was noted that there are difficulties involved with horses changing ownership, which are different to other livestock industries. A regulatory framework would be needed to make owners notify when there is a change of ownership. Linkages to property identification codes (PICs) were discussed. Racing Victoria is of the view that the best option may be to introduce a voluntary system in the short to medium term with a view to making it mandatory in the long term. It was agreed that Racing Victoria would be asked to provide advice to the next session of NCCAW.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Racing Victoria will be asked to provide advice to the next session of NCCAW

ACTION ITEMS:

- Recommend to Minister that the issue be raised with Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) for advice
- Racing Victoria to draft a NCCAW Position Statement for consideration at the next session

4.3 ELECTRONIC ANTI CRIBBING COLLARS RACING VICTORIA

A verbal report was provided on this issue. Electronic anti-cribbing collars are not acceptable in Racing Victoria's view and they are not permitted in any State.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- NCCAW to note this issue
- Note advice from NSW and VIC regarding current legislation around electronic collars and encourage other jurisdictions to set up legislation that puts the onus of proof on manufacturers

ACTION ITEMS:

- Recommend that the Minister write to States commending NCCAWs point of view that electronic anti cribbing collars are not acceptable

- Dr Burton to send the legislation to Dr Sheridan or Mr Turner so they can pass it onto the people working on this issue

4.4 HUMANE PEST VERTEBRATE CONTROL UPDATE IACRC

Dr Chris Buller of the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IACRC) presented on the research work being undertaken by the IACRC as well as its codes of practice. IACRC look forward to maintaining their input through the Wild Animals Working Group of the AAWSAC. It was noted that without engagement through the AAWS project the IACRC would not have the opportunity to provide input into animal welfare outcomes and that the AAWS gives the IACRC a great insight into community expectations.

4.5 LIVE EXPORTS DAFF

Dr Narelle Clegg of AQIS presented an update on the livestock export trade including mortality statistics. Dr Clegg compared data for live exports from 2005, 2006 and 2007.

Mr Paul Morris of the International Division, DAFF, presented an update on the Animal Welfare Aspects associated with post arrival issues in live export and the responsibility of government regarding the arrival and post arrival care of exported animals.

4.6 AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS FOR THE EXPORT OF LIVESTOCK DAFF

Ms Kristy McPhillips of the Animal Welfare Unit, DAFF presented an update on the Australian Standards for the export of livestock. Ms McPhillips went through the recommendations from the Keniry Review (2003) as well as the initial development of the standards. Ms McPhillips discussed the standards that have been developed to date. There have been 3 revisions of the standards over the past 3 years.

4.7 FUNDING OF VETERINARY SCIENCES IN AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES CHAIR

This paper was provided to the committee for noting. The difficulty for universities in accommodating all of the speciality areas within veterinary studies was noted as well as the importance of proper clinical training. The committee supports the recommendations contained in the Australian Veterinary Deans' committee report on the funding of Veterinary Sciences in Australian Universities.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- NCCAW NOTED the paper
- NCCAW supports the recommendations contained in the Australian Veterinary Deans' Committee Report

ACTION ITEMS

- NCCAW to write to the Australian Veterinary Deans' Committee supporting the recommendations contained in the Report

4.8 IMPORTATION OF ELECTRONIC DOG COLLARS DAFF

The manufacturers and potential importers of electronic dog collars have written to the Minister for Customs requesting that the ban on their importation be removed. The Minister for Customs has written to Minister McGauran for advice. NCCAW is being asked to provide a recommendation to both the Customs and Agriculture Ministers. NFF supports the use of dog collars in some certain circumstances, i.e. when dogs

would otherwise escape and could be killed. NFF were also opposed to the ban from a trade policy perspective, i.e. it could be regarded as a non-tariff trade barrier. RSPCA noted that they oppose the use of these collars, and also noted that the use of a device should not be the sole means of addressing a behavioural problem in animals. The advice to the Ministers needs to be focused on the welfare issues of the use of electronic collars. There was some debate over whether this is an animal welfare issue or an issue of trade restrictions. NFF proposed a review of the position statement. Animals Australia suggested an update on this position statement to note that these collars should not be used at all.

This issue will be debated at the next NCCAW meeting. The Chair asked for further evidence on the welfare aspects relating to the use of electronic dog collars for the next session.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Review this position statement in the AWU Review
- NCCAW can only advise on animal welfare issues, not on trade issues

ACTION ITEMS:

- Answer will be delayed until the review of position statements has been undertaken

4.9 INJURED, STRAY AND UNOWNED ANIMALS

RSPCA

The draft position statement that was put through the last NCCAW meeting, May 2006, was discussed. The now disbanded Non-production Animals Working Group had previously looked at this issue. The draft is now a year old and it was decided to seek NCCAW agreement on the draft position statement at the next NCCAW meeting.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Adopt draft position statement at the next NCCAW meeting

ACTION ITEMS:

- Members to consult with their organisations on the draft before it's formal adoption

**AGENDA ITEM 5
OTHER BUSINESS**

QLD ZOOS REPORT

PRIMATES FOR PRIMATES

Lynette Shanley from Primates for Primates provided a paper to the committee for noting.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- NCCAW to consider recommending the development of a National Code of Practice for Zoos
- Put this issue on the agenda for the Animals used in Work, Sort, Recreation or on Display AAWS Working Group

ACTION ITEMS:

- Refer this paper to the AAWS Working group and seek advice (DAFF)

RITUAL SLAUGHTER

ANIMALS AUSTRALIA

Advice that some abattoirs were not stunning sheep prior to slaughter for the Halal market was provided to the committee. In 2004 the Meat Standards Committee published a guideline on the standard for ritual

slaughter. It allows for un-stunned slaughter without the necessity for stunning after the ritual throat cut. Animals Australia has written to the Minister on this to express their disagreement.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- NCCAW to note this issue and keep watching brief
- NCCAW to advise Minister that the view stated in the position statement 'The Welfare of Animals at Abattoirs (October 2000)' is still supported, viz
That on humane grounds it is unacceptable to slaughter any animal at an abattoir unless it is pre-stunned. If a decision is made for slaughtering without prior stunning, NCCAW recommends ritual slaughter where post-stunning can be performed immediately after the throat is cut. This will apply to cattle, sheep and goats. In the case of cattle or calves humane head restraint must be in place during the slaughter process and the animal must be standing. Animals should not be shackled or hoisted before it is irreversibly unconscious.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Consult AQIS on this issue

TAIL DOCKING IN DOGS

AVA

The issue of prophylactic tail docking of dogs, specifically in Western Australia, was discussed. Views from the relevant AAWS working groups should be sought. The RSPCA will provide a view in terms of prosecution surrounding tail docking. This issue is to be raised on the agenda at the next NCCAW meeting, as well as a broader discussion on guidelines.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Develop guidelines for veterinarians on the prophylactic tail docking of dogs and refer this to the veterinary board
- Tail docking to be discussed at the next NCCAW session
- Discuss the issue of guidelines for tail docking in a broader sense at the next meeting

LAND TRANSPORT STANDARDS

It was noted that the Land Transport Standards are still a work in progress with the aim to produce a draft document for public comment later in the year. AWWG will be involved in the development of those standards.

DATE FOR NEXT MEETING

CHAIR

All members agreed that the intervals between meetings should be maintained at 6 months and that the meeting should take place over a day and half. The next meeting is scheduled to take place late November or early December 2007.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- NCCAW Guidelines are to be on the agenda at the next meeting

Participants List

Chair: Dr John Drinan

Animal Health Committee Nominee

Dr Ross Burton

Animal Welfare Working Group

Dr Rod Andrewartha

Animals Australia

Ms Glenys Oogjes

**Australian Government Department of
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
(DAFF)**

Dr Peter Thornber

Mr Scott Turner

Mr Jim Paradice

Mr Justin Trefry

Ms Rebecca Lathbury

Australian Veterinary Association

Dr Kevin Doyle

National Farmers Federation

Ms Meg Parkinson

Mr Scott Mitchell

**Office of the Australian Government
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and
Forestry**

Mr Norm Blackman

RSPCA Australia

Dr Hugh Wirth

Racing Victoria Limited

Dr John McCaffrey

Presenters:

Ms Kristy McPhillips, DAFF

Mr Paul Morris, DAFF

Dr Narelle Clegg, DAFF

Dr Chris Buller, IACRC

Apologies:

Minister McGauran

Mr Bob Barwell, NFF

Ms Sally Standen, DAFF