

DRAFT MINUTES NCCAW 36

Thursday 8th and Friday 9th September 2005

**The Chifley on Northbourne
102 Northbourne Ave
Canberra ACT 2601**

PARTICIPANTS:

Ivan Caple (CHAIR)

Peter Thornber - DAFF
David Adams - DAFF
Linda Walker, DAFF
Lyn Traill - DAFF
Robin Vandegraaff - AWWG
Deborah Kelly - SA
Ross Burton - NSW
Mick Middleton - TAS
Jeni Hood - WA
Kevin de Witte - NT
Stephen Tate - VIC
Ian Rodger - QLD

Elizabeth Grant - NHMRC
Cindy Steensby - DEH
Kevin Doyle - AVA
Hugh Wirth - RSPCA
Glenys Oogjes - AA
Ralph Hood - AHA
Robert Lee - NFF
Warren Starick - NFF

OBSERVERS

Jane Malcolm, Bureau Animal Welfare, Vic

APOLOGIES:

Dean Merrilees - DAFF
Rick Symons - QLD
Pheroze Jungalwalla - TSGA
Lee-Ann Wahren, ACT

PRESENTERS:

Subbu Putcha, APVMA
Jonathon Taylor, APVMA
Patricia Ellis, Racing Australia
John McCaffrey, Racing Victoria
Sonia Federow, Emergency Management
Response Unit, DAFF
Joe-Anne Riddiford, ACCC
Kylie Lance, AQIS
Garry Cullen, AQIS
Kristy McPhillips, Animal Welfare, DAFF

**Note: Minister McGauran to visit approximately 10.15-10.45am
Joanna Hewitt, Secretary DAFF to visit 11am -12 noon**

**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS
THURSDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER 2005**

1. WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

CHAIR

Confirmation of Draft Agenda

Endorsement of Summary of Proceedings of NCCAW 35

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- The agenda was confirmed and NCCAW35 minutes endorsed subject to some amendments.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Draft NCCAW35 minutes to be amended as discussed and re-circulated for member's endorsement before uploading to the DAFF website.

2. BUSINESS ARISING

CHAIR

Minister's response to NCCAW 35 recommendations

- The Minister's response to the NCCAW Chair was questioned re live animal exports from WA. The WA members saw the words as inaccurate. However, the words had been cleared with AQIS and the AVA member considered the words were correct.

ACTION ITEM

- Jeni Hood to provide suggested amendment.

Action List

- Sitting fees for non-government members have been approved (covered in agenda item 3).
- Items for referral to NCCAW from working groups to be included in the minutes put on the DAFF public website but not actual working group minutes.
- PAWG Action List – Chair endorsed. Poultry issue referred to AHC. A report is being prepared.
- NPAWG Action List – endorsed. NPAWG Chair commented that considerable progress had been made on many items.

Other Business – none.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- NCCAW35, PAWG and NPAWG minutes were endorsed.
- Secretariat to put endorsed NCCAW minutes on the DAFF public website but not the working group minutes.

3. NCCAW ADMINISTRATION

PETER THORNER

- Secure website for NCCAW members – first review
- Sitting fees – current situation
- NCCAW review update
- New DAFF Advisory Committee Guidelines (for non-government members)
 - Terms of engagement

- Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Agreements (if necessary)
- Sitting fees

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Member's experiences with the Fusetalk Forum secure website were discussed. Some thought it was too slow, some mentioned that the 'Subscribe' feature, which notified members when something new was uploaded, didn't work. Secretariat to follow up with Internet Team.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Lyn Traill to follow up problems with the 'Subscribe' feature with the DAFF Internet Team.

4. CURRENT ISSUES

ALL

Some highlights from reports from member organisations were:

ACT

ACT member was an apology but the ACT Report noted.

Animals Australia

- Intensive pig farming – Animals Australia is running a public awareness campaign titled "SaveBabe.com". AA would like to see production-method labelling of pig products progressed by PIMC in a similar way to egg labelling in 2001. AA has assisted in re-homing pigs from a US-based Paramount Pictures version of 'Charlottes Web' which involved around 40 trained pigs.
- AA lodged a formal complaint to the Victorian Department of Primary Industries alleging cruelty to animals in a commercial piggery. As VDPI have not acted appropriately to fully investigate the complaint, AA have lodged a formal complaint with the Victorian Ombudsman and are awaiting the Ombudsman's report.
- The Animals Australia complaint under the WA Animal Welfare Act in regard to a voyage of the Al Kuwait live sheep shipment in 2003 is now under investigation.
- AA has provided comment on the Neumann Report (review of Codes of Practice) and have launched a community campaign on the deficiencies of Codes and the current legal treatment of the Codes.
- AA is concerned about an increase in rabbit fur imports from China and cruelty in the treatment and slaughter of the rabbits. They have written to some retail outlets to advise them of the cruelty behind rabbit fur products, and would like to see imports banned in the same way as dog and cat fur has been.

Animal Health Australia (AHA)

- AHA's report concentrated on stakeholder looking at the Neumann Report which is covered in agenda item 6.

Australian Veterinary Association (AVA)

- AVA joined the Australasian Invasive Species Cooperative Research Centre as part of its contribution to the control of feral pigs. There are a number of welfare issues in the control methods and programs.

- AVA Conference at Broadbeach in May covered many animal welfare presentations, including one on the road transportation of brumbies (horses used, brumbies were unsuitable). The study was funded by the AVA Animal Welfare Trust
- AVA Conference also covered the Australian Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCART) – so that laboratory research animals would not be overlooked.
- AVA have made submissions to a number of enquiries relevant to animal welfare, including the Senate and House of Representatives enquiries “turning back the tide” and “Impact on Agriculture of Feral Animals”.
- AVA developed or revised many animal welfare related policies through its Policy Advisory Council.

Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

- The Livestock Export Standards Advisory Committee (LESAC) will be reinstated with a similar membership to the original group. A sub-technical working group will meet 26-27 September. Professor Ivan Caple will represent NCCAW on the Committee.
- The Model Codes of Practice are being considered at various senior government meetings this month.
- Regular meetings with Customs are seeing some matter progressed, including progress towards placing the Presa Canario dog breed on the Customs Prohibited Imports Regulation list.
- Ongoing dialogue is taking place with AMRRIC (Animal Management in Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities), Environment and Heritage and Aboriginal Land Councils, and animal welfare R&D collaborative meetings.
- The Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) initial consultations have been well received as a world leading system when taken overseas. AAWS has a sound framework.

Australian Government Department of Environment and Heritage (DEH)

DEH spoke to revisions to the

- Code of Practices for the Humane Treatment of Feral Animals,
- Code of Practice for the Humane Shooting of Kangaroos and
- Code of Practice for the Humane Treatment of Wild and Farmed Crocodiles,

as detailed in the written report.

National Farmers Federation

- The Animal Health Australia workshop on the Neumann Report gave opportunities for all the livestock industries to better understand the report and its recommendations. All livestock industries intend to respond to the report.
- Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) are developing voluntary animal welfare modules for Cattle care and Flock care QA programs.
- The wool industry continues to address the mulesing issue and the threat posed by PETA. Phasing out of mulesing by 2010 continues to be the challenge but recent developments are showing some promising signs.
- A new Pig Industry Code is nearing finalisation.
- Exercise Eleusis being undertaken in November is designed to test the preparedness of government, community and industry preparedness to deal with an Avian Influenza outbreak and will include egg industry involvement.

- Western Australian Farmers Federation have met with Animals' Angels to discuss the video shown at NCCAW 35, and are having ongoing meetings with RSPCA re animal welfare issues re loading of animals for live export and at saleyards.

New South Wales

- Amendments to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (POCTA) legislation were endorsed by the NSW Parliament in the autumn session.
- NSW DPI is refining a document "Policy and Procedures for Animal Research and Teaching in the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Rural Lands Protection Boards. The document will refresh the newly combined DPI and refresh staff of RLPBs.

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)

- Requests for information have been sought from Japan, Hong Kong and previously Singapore on the Australian Code of Practice for the Care and use of Animals for Scientific Purposes (7th edition). The EU may also be interested so discussions will take place with some of these countries. The Australian Code is benchmarked against best international practice.
- Submissions to be sought for further draft document on genetically modified animals. NHMRC will be working with the national Office of Gene Technology.

Northern Territory

- NT has a new Minister for Local Government who is responsible for animal welfare. He has adopted the position statement on rodeos.
- The department is now called the Department of Primary Industries, Fisheries and Mines which more accurately reflects their core activities.
- Significant areas of the Northern Territory are still under drought.

Queensland

- Ian Rodger noted that the welfare situation with horses on Palm Island would be addressed later in the meeting.
- AWAC issues –
 - Recommendation that glue boards and traps be banned is current in the process. The Act is to be revised next year.
 - The Premier recently announced a ban on recreational duck and quail shooting on welfare grounds – recommended by AWAC.

RSPCA

- Asian elephants. – the AAT agreed to hear an appeal on the Minister for Environment's decision. Hearing originally set for 26 September will not be till mid-October. Hugh Wirth has RSPCA paperwork if anyone would like to better understand their position.
- RSPCA has difficulty commenting on some issues because of short time-frames given. They can give a national office position, but 10 days turnarounds don't allow consultation with state offices.
- The next RSPCA scientific seminar will be on improving welfare in production animals.
- The results of a Pet Obesity Report have been published showing that, often obese pet owners have obese pets.

- 2005 Annual General Meeting to occur in late September. Minister McGauran will attend.
- A Chief Executive Officer is to be appointed to the RSPCA following an independent review undertaken earlier this year.

South Australia

- SA has produced land transport codes and given them out to all sectors.
- 120,000 dog and cat care leaflets have been distributed and a website for dog and cat care is being produced and should go live within 6 months.
- Camel care – Deb Kelly observed the camel cull and commended the extremely accurate, professional shooting. She and the Chief Inspector, RSPCA (SA) considered the cull to be humane.
- The first external audit of an animal ethics committee will be undertaken in early October. An external review will be undertaken every three years.
 - The Chair asked jurisdictions how and whether they conducted animal ethics committees review and whether the reviews were internal or external. The answers varied within the jurisdictions but many reviewed externally every three years with yearly internal reviews in between.

Tasmania

- Dairy industry – DPIWE with RSPCA support have successfully prosecuted several dairy farmers under the Animal Welfare Act. 27 herd units and about 23,000 cows managed by share farmers or company employees were involved.
- Inaccurate information appeared recently in some PISC documents stating that POCTA applies only to companion animals but doesn't work well with production animals. Needs to be recorded that this is not true.

Victoria

- A Bill has been presented in Victoria regarding people who have been banned from keeping animals in other State or Territories from keeping them in Victoria. It is a test to see how it works.

Western Australia

- Live sheep on Al Kuwait is being investigated. WA Police are investigating with the Department of Local Government assistance. The Statute of Limitations is two years so any charges must be laid by 11 November.
- The WA Minister has sought WA representation on LESAC.
- The second version of "Is it Fit to Load" booklet published by MLA is in use.

Animal Welfare Working Group

- The AWWG report was noted.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- The printed organisational reports were tabled for the meeting and the main points brought forward at the meeting are noted above.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Scott Turner, DAFF, outlined the next steps in the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) implementation. An AAWS Advisory Committee met in July and a national workshop will be held in September and include about 90 stakeholders.
- Committee members will be selected from the six categories listed in AAWS and the workshop will endorse the plan and facilitate further action plans.
- A communication strategy will be developed. The AAWS publication as shown to members on CD. The booklet will be launched by the Minister.
- Peter Thornber outlined the plan for the workshop and requested that members let DAFF know if there were aware of stakeholders that should be invited but may not have been.

6. REVIEW OF THE AUSTRALIAN MODEL CODES OF PRACTICE FOR THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS (NEUMANN REPORT) – ROBIN VANDEGRAAFF, RALPH HOOD**OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:**

- PISC is revising the process with which the Model Codes or Practice are developed. The process needed reviewing for consultation and scientific input, lack of rigour in consideration of regulatory and economic impact and because the process had become expensive and time-consuming beyond the capacity of voluntary writing groups appointed ad-hoc by AWWG.
- Animal welfare codes of practice need a whole new approach, particularly since Australia is under pressure to maintain a good reputation in relation to export products.
- The process through PIMC resulted in Geoff Neumann being appointed as a consultant to undertake the review during 2004-05. The report was released for broad public consultation in April 2005.
- AWWG made recommendations which it took to AHC in May but decided not to progress until adequate consultation process via AHA workshop with industry members had occurred. No further progress made till industry and other group's views have been obtained.
- An AHA workshop was held 28 July, to consider the Neumann report. The workshop comprised government and industry members. Formal presentations were made by several government and industry groups outlining different positions. A presentation was also made by Standards Australia.
- The workshop discussed only production animals, as AHA only covers production animal industries.
- The Neumann report had 29 recommendations – the workshop considered in detail 3 or 4 major recommendations on a new approach. A high level of agreement was achieved and it was resolved to allow three months for further consultation within industry organisations. There was agreement that new “codes” should contain both minimum standards to be picked up in legislation, and best practice guidelines.
- Funding arrangements were not covered at the workshop.
- It is important that legislation is not just cruelty based. POCTA legislation might not be adequate and new management and biosecurity legislation for best practice guidelines may be required.
- [The following principles arose from the Future Regulation and Management of Welfare Workshop. They provide the parameters through which consideration of current and](#)

future options for the development and review of minimum standards or codes of animal welfare practice should be considered.

- Any approach to the future regulation and management of welfare should provide:
 1. A strong national framework for the development of ‘minimum standards’ with species specific definitions of animal welfare that are underpinned by legislation: Minimum standards to be outcome-based and measurable; • Preference for a format that provides for both minimum standards and ‘best practice’ guidelines to be clearly separated but contained in the same document.
 2. An efficient, agreed process for developing and maintaining minimum standards and best practice guidelines;
 3. Consistency across state jurisdictions in the application (enforcement) of legislation;
 4. An industry - government partnership to make decisions;
 5. Broad consultation with all stakeholders, especially end users;
 6. A process for evaluating Standards through a RIS;
 7. Standards must be auditable for credibility and international acceptance;
 8. An outcome focus responsive to verified drivers/needs;
 9. Science based inputs to be a critical element in the development of standards;
 10. Effective communication to all stakeholders;
 11. Process of standard development and review to be adequately resourced;
 12. Consideration be given to examining the inclusion of animal welfare standards and codes in legislation that addresses animal management and biosecurity of production animals rather than ‘cruelty’ based legislation.
- Industries were keen to consult with their constituents, before another workshop, to decide which option will go forward to jurisdictions and PISC/ PIMC.
- There are no concrete proposals for funding eg cost sharing agreements at this stage. Still needs work to engage other players who would be directly or indirectly involved in enforcement programs and compliance eg state animal welfare units.
- Concern was raised by a NCCAW member that the AHA workshop decision-making should not only be an industry-government partnership, but should also include community and animal welfare representatives.
- This workshop only covered production animals as AHA only covers production animal industries.

ACTION ITEMS:

- The 12 principles agreed at the workshop to be put on the animal welfare page of the DAFF website. Secretariat to do.

7. PREVALENCE OF PARTICULAR ENDEMIC DISEASES IN FARMED ANIMALS IN AUSTRALIA THAT ARE DETRIMENTAL TO WELFARE – IVAN CAPLE

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

Discussed more fully at PAWG –

- Agreed the issue needs development in NCCAW
- Issues paper (Caple, Middleton, Lee, Tate, Hood) to be referred through NCCAW to AWWG and State PI/AW Ministers – address key issues, drivers for change, options and future process to take the proposals further
- Refer to AAWS Advisory Committee for consideration in the Implementation Plan

ACTION ITEMS:

- Issues paper (Caple, Middleton, Lee, Tate, Hood) to be referred through NCCAW to AWWG and State PI/AW Ministers – address key issues, drivers for change, options and future process to take the proposals further.
- Refer to AAWS Advisory Committee for consideration in the Implementation Plan.

8. UPDATE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF KENIRY RECOMMENDATIONS

Under this item NCCAW considered:

- 1) Update on WA live transport issues
 - a) Animals Angels/NFF discussions
- 2) Proposed national workshop on long haul transport
- 3) WSPA campaign on long haul transport
- 4) Update of Version 1 Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock
- 5) Performance of the livestock export industry
- 6) Livestock Export Standards Advisory Committee
- 7) Live Animal Export Incident Response Plan
- 8) Middle East Programs – MOUs.
- 9) Halal slaughter meat to Malaysia

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

Halal slaughter meat to Malaysia

Garry Cullen, General Manager, Exports and Corporate Branch of AQIS spoke to the meeting on this issue.

- In April-May this year, a Malaysian audit took place of meat processing establishments listed for Malaysia with the Malaysian Department of Veterinary Services and Joachim, which looks after the religious side. Although sheep and goat meat plants were approved, the Malaysians delisted a number of beef processing plants. The problem concerned the slaughter process involving stunning and bleeding.
- The issue was the bleed out time between stunning and when further action could be taken. They require 10-15 minutes after no movement although scientific literature says an animal is brain dead after 10-15 seconds. AQIS argued that in 90 seconds to 2 minutes the animal is brain dead and further procedures could occur.
- Malaysia believes the thoracic stick is an artificial aid in bleeding and prefer it is used when it is deemed the animal is dead – which is where the problem arises.
- The earlier the thoracic stick is applied the better the bleed out so there is no blood oozing out of the meat when it is packed. An efficient bleed out improves meat quality. The contention is a religious one rather than about meat quality but involves an animal welfare issue in that the animal dies quickly and bleeds out quickly.
- Some press coverage gave the impression that Australia would stop stunning which is completely wrong. Malaysia prefers no stunning but this is not acceptable in Australia.

Update on WA live transport issue (1)

- Animals Angels have taken more photos of loading of injured and ‘unfit to travel’ animals on trucks delivering sheep to Fremantle wharf for live export...
- AQIS accredited veterinarians are checking animals on a group basis at the feedlots, but no individual inspections are happening prior to ‘permission to leave’ is granted. 150-350 sheep are rejected from each consignment at shipside.
- The WA Minister concerned has written to the Federal Minister for clarification of the issues.

- 45% cattle and 85% sheep exported go from WA.
- Covered by Commonwealth regulations but it's a matter for WA legislation to act on it. WA's problem is that AQIS inspections of individual animals at feedlots is not happening in WA.
- As it's an inter-governmental problem, it needs to be solved by an inter-governmental process. The lack of enforcement is a major issue.
- Bob Lee moved, Hugh Wirth seconded – that NCCAW write to Minister McGauran and request that he instruct AQIS veterinary officers to conduct individual inspections of livestock at feedlots prior to loading onto trucks to be transported to the ships in WA [N.B. this is required in the Australian Livestock Export Standards]..
- Glenys Oogjes moved, seconded Kevin Dewitt - That the Minister be advised that following complaints about inappropriate animal handling wharf side by stevedores, which all animal handlers involved in loading need to be properly trained.
- It was noted that Livecorp are undertaking this, but that NCCAW should add weight to ensure the process occurs.

Proposed national workshop on long haul transport (2)

- Linda Walker, Animal Welfare Unit, DAFF spoke about an upcoming national workshop on Australia's current standards and practices in long distance livestock transport to be held early December. All stakeholders are invited and it is hoped to get some international speakers and an industry Chair. Proposed dates 5-6 or 6-7 December. TBC.

WSPA campaign on long haul transport (3)

- WSPA Board agreed that next international campaign would be on long distance transportation of animals for slaughter. Issues will be the familiar ones in addressing long distance transport by sea, but will also deal with road. They will attempt to look at the four major zones of Europe into Asia, Americas, Africa, and Australasia.
- \$10,000 American dollars contributed - contributors met in London.
- The science of transportation will be studied.
- WSPA issues will be similar to the RSPCA issues.

Performance of the livestock export industry (5)

Kylie Lance from AQIS updated NCCAW on the new arrangements –

- Livestock mortalities in the export trade are required to be reported to Parliament every 6 months. There has been 0.13% mortalities in cattle, 0.67% in sheep and 1.1% goats. The figures are slightly improved than for the previous 12 months and will be available on the DAFF website.
- Mortality rates of voyages and vessels are reviewed by AQIS and if they present a problem, steps are taken to resolve them.
- The new Australian Standards for the export of livestock will involve data collection to set benchmarks.

Version 1 Standards for the Export of Livestock

- As outlined in the DAFF report (item 4) LESAC is being re-commissioned and will meet 26-27 October. Robin Vandegraaff will represent the Animal Welfare Working Group and AHC.
- Peter Thornber will chair a small technical group to consider all comments received to date on the Version 1 standards. It will be an ongoing process. Different technical experts will address different issues.

Live Animal Export Incident Response Plan

Presented by Sonia Fedorow of the DAFF Emergency Response Management Unit (ERMU)

- As a result of the Keniry Review, ERMU tasked with how to address incidents in the live animal export trade. Document is on how to engage industry groups to work towards a solution of issues. The document hasn't specified incidents but asks NCCAW for comments on the draft plan as part of the consultation process.

Member's comments:

- NT welcomes the plan but the Scope doesn't address where jurisdictional responsibility is transferred. Assumes once the animal is on board ship, responsibility changes.
- Sonia – we've tasked our lawyers to address this. Plan can be amended if needed but because this jurisdictional issue has come up a number of times, we're planning to get together with jurisdictions to work this through.
- WA asked when jurisdictions can make submissions. Regarding consultation, the agencies that have carriage for animal welfare in the jurisdiction are not all DPIs. As welfare is dealt with by the Dept of Local Government in WA, they are concerned that they weren't consulted.
- Sonia thought WA had been covered. Jeni Hood to send a response to Sonia – email address given in document.
- Animals Australia is concerned that it appears there is no opportunity for consultation with community groups to be formally involved.
- Sonia – we've formally included NCCAW – we haven't excluded anyone so we can include other interest groups.

Middle East MOUs –

- Five MOUs signed. Further work has continued with Middle Eastern countries to encourage them to sign MOUs so they can be part of the technical cooperative programs. Middle Eastern countries have signed on to the OIE Guidelines so Australia can use those as cooperative guidelines under Keniry.
- Gardner Murray will be at the upcoming OIE Middle Eastern conference. He will offer Australian assistance for Middle Eastern countries to put those guidelines in place. A Gulf conference will follow in November.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Item 8(1)NCCAW to write to the minister and request that he instruct AQIS to conduct pre-embarkation inspections of individual animals prior to leaving feedlots in WA [Note – it happens in the other States]. He has the power to instruct AQIS how to enforce his legislation.
- Item 8(1) – The minister to be advised of the concern about inappropriate handling of livestock by stevedores in WA, and thus the need for training.

- Item 8(5) Secretariat to continue to keep new mortality figures updated on DAFF animal welfare website.
- Item 7 - Jeni Hood to send a response to Sonia Federow – sonia.fedorow@daff.gov.au.

9. FOLLOW UP OF 1080 REVIEW - APVMA AND ANIMAL WELFARE - APVMA

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

Presented by Subbu Putcha and Jonathan Taylor of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).

The 1080 Review

- The 1080 Review has moved forward since Subbu last spoke to NCCAW about 2 years ago. Preliminary review findings have been released.
- A summary of findings and animal welfare issues was presented. The report covered environmental issues only, not human health or toxicity.
- Most baits are consumed by pests but untaken baits are recovered and destroyed. Animal carcasses are recovered and removed.
- The effects on non-target animals are limited as baits are localised to individual animals. There are no reported effects at population level.
- Label instructions are much clearer about non-target species, bait levels, bait placement and removals of baits and carcasses.
- Incident reports concern mostly dogs which are sensitive to 1080 but also foxes and scavenging birds. Reports go to state governments but APVMA review them.

Effectiveness as tool in environmental management.

- There is a process restricting the ability to buy and use 1080 – it is not freely available to anyone. Comprehensive instructions are now available as inadequate labelling which differed between jurisdictions had created problems in the past.
- The draft report is out for submissions – the final report will be available hopefully in about 6 months time but may take longer.
- Humaneness is not a specific criterion in Agvet codes but section 34 states”Would not be likely to have an unintended effect that is harmful to animals, plants...”
- The Environment Protection, Biodiversity and Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC) covers principles of environmental science.
- Non-target poisoning can occur from:
 - Bait shyness which can be addressed by free feeding before laying baits.
 - Specific bait materials, placement and timing.
 - Remove unconsumed baits.
 - Unmetabolised poison in carcasses can be eaten by scavengers so carcasses are removed and destroyed.
- The Report is open to submissions which will be analysed. APVMA work with a particular legislation but don't make the legislation which is handled by another area of the department. However, they can make recommendations.

APVMA and Animal Welfare

- APVMA control supply of agricultural and veterinary chemicals as part of the registration scheme for control use.
- APVMA work with four different Acts, the main one being the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Admin) Act 1992.

- Although welfare is not specifically mentioned in the AgVet Code there is a strong implication that APVMA should consider animal welfare in evaluations.
- APVMA are aware that it needs to better communicate its current processes.
- All animal experimentation has to be approved by an Animal Ethics Committee.
- APVMA are reviewing processes to take into account principles of reduction, refinement, and replacement.
- A recently established animal welfare team is working with the DAFF Animal Welfare Unit on an APVMA position statement on animal welfare.

Summary

- APVMA would welcome comments from NCCAW on animal welfare concerns and would like to work with NCCAW and seek their advice on relevant issues. Any issues or concerns to be addressed through Peter Thornber and the NCCAW Secretariat. Peter will pass these on to the APVMA Welfare Committee to have these issues put on their agenda.

ACTION ITEMS:

- APVMA welcome comments on animal welfare issues from NCCAW members via NCCAW Secretariat.

10. PRESENTATION – HORSE RACING INDUSTRY – RACING AUSTRALIA, RACING VICTORIA

- International Symposium on Prevention of Thoroughbred Racehorse Fatalities and Injuries – key outcomes
- Jumps Racing – progress report.

John McCaffrey, Racing Victoria and Patricia Ellis, Australian Racing Board gave a report on the International Symposium held in Melbourne in July.

- The Symposium covered the epidemiology and prevention of racehorse fatalities and risk reduction strategies. The challenges faced are in case definitions and analysis. The answers are in identification of risks and testing of results.
- Dr Nigel Perkins' study on risk factors for wastage in NZ thoroughbreds was discussed at the Symposium.
- Dr Lisa Boden's study looked at risk factors in thoroughbred racing fatalities between 1989 and 2004. Hard, dry tracks present a greater risk for leg injuries than tracks with more "give".
- All horse deaths in metropolitan Melbourne now undergo a post mortem at Melbourne University to assess an accurate measure of risk of fatality, fatality, and causes.
- Premature retirement of racehorses in Hong Kong was looked at. Tendon injury is the most common. 0.44 fatalities per 1,000 starts makes Australian statistics the lowest rate in the world.
- Musculo-skeletal injury is multi-faceted. One factor is that exercise in a young horse builds musculo-skeletal strength whilst those that have their first start later in their life appear to be at greater risk of injury.
- UK has initiated a risk factor study, Hong Kong is beginning to. Not much is taking place world wide though.

- Dr P O'Callaghan also presented to the Symposium on injury monitoring and prevention in Victorian thoroughbred racing.
- A formal training program is now in place for people seeking a thoroughbred horse racing trainer's licence.
- Ongoing monitoring of health and fitness of horses and track preparation for record keeping and analysis of starts and injuries (ARID).
- The new monitoring program needs to run for 10 years in order to get meaningful results.

Symposium outcomes

- Variable outcomes – there has been fragmented research and much more is needed along with a need to look more closely at training as well as racing injuries.
- The industry to look at a more holistic epidemiological approach.
- ARID relies on official vets on race day to report. It's being developed to record a national approach to recording injuries. There is sophisticated data available but it needs to be linked and shared. Shared data would be a powerful tool for tracking risk factors. A data-base is being developed with Ausvet Animal Health Services.
- There is increasing collaboration with places like the Monash Accident Research Centre which can track horse biomechanics for issues like how to camber the track, which hasn't been looked at before.
- Racecourse vets are approved by the appropriate Racing Board. There is a team of experienced vets who train others on the job.
- Stewards have considerable powers for monitoring conditions to inspect premises on track.
- Horses are fitness tested. Pregnant horses don't race beyond 120 days which is based on considerable research.
- Riders are stringently alcohol and drug tested and there are strict guidelines on the use of the whip and strict provisions on the use of what gear can and can't be used.
- All drugs are banned for horses. They have just started testing for EPO but there is evidence that horses have a reaction to it that kills them, so that dissuades use. There has been no evidence of abuse thus far.
- Dr Patricia Ellis commented it was a good symposium for bringing people together although you can't necessarily compare the different racing venues because they can have very different conditions. The aim is to understand the risk factors.
- Welfare guidelines for Australian thoroughbred horse racing appears on their website.

Jumps Racing Report

- The Jumps Racing Incident Report shows improvement over a 5 year period, mostly linked to the changes in fence and hurdle design and construction. The final report will not be available till December.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Secretariat to link to DAFF Animal Welfare links web site. John McCaffrey/Patricia Ellis to send links.

11. PRESENTATION –ARAZPA – ZOOS ACCREDITATION PROGRAM – JONATHAN WILCKEN, ARAZPA – (CANCELLED)

- Zoos Accreditation Program
- Action Plan for the Welfare of Asian Elephants in Australian Zoos.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

This item on ARAZPA accreditation program was deferred until the next NCCAW meeting. However, the document from Lynette Shanley titled “Report on Bredyl’s Wonder World of Wildlife at Renmarke, South Australia” was discussed.

- Deb Kelly has seen Bredyl Zoo and considers the conditions are adequate. Bredyl has been inspected by National Parks and Wildlife officers and RSPCA inspectors and no breach of legislation has been detected.
- A-class zoo standards vary between jurisdictions. AAWS should bring more uniformity.
- SA have a system where B-class zoos can request an animal for a display from Adelaide eg Monarto – but it is not a dumping ground.
- The RSPCA would like ARAZPA to address the B-class zoos who can’t meet ARAZPA standards and animals are reported to be suffering.
- NCCAW to refer the issue to the Department of Environment and Heritage SA (via Deb Kelly) as it is a State issue. It is important that Lynette Shanley is responded to after bringing her concerns to NCCAW.
- Frank Keenan of Vertebrate Pests Committee (VPC) sits on AWWG and can provide a link.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Refer the issue of B-class zoos that can’t meet ARAZPA standards to next NPAWG meeting. A document needs to be prepared re smaller zoos that won’t join ARAZPA – not consistent with AAWS (Goal 1 – review national structures of the recreational and other sectors).
- Deb Kelly as SA Department of Environment representative to respond to Lynette Shanley thanking her for bringing her concerns to NCCAW.
- Frank Keenan of Vertebrate Pests Committee (VPC) on AWWG and can provide a link.

12. NATIONAL GUIDELINES ON CIRCUSES – FOR ENDORSEMENT

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Draft Circus Guidelines discussed at the Non-Production Animal Working Group meeting recommended that Guidelines be endorsed.
- Hugh Wirth moved, Ross Burton seconded.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Nil.

13. OUTCOMES FROM PAWG-NPAWG COMBINED MEETING – WORKING GROUP CHAIRS

- Draft NCCAW Position Statement on Animal Welfare Animal Liberation and Animal Rights (from NCCAW35) – Conclusions
- Collation of national statistics for animal shelter euthanasia rates.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

Draft NCCAW Position Statement on Animal Welfare Animal Liberation and Animal Rights (from NCCAW35) – Conclusions

- “Australian animal welfare encompasses all aspects of animal health and well-being. Animal welfare, animal rights and animal liberation are not synonymous. Animal liberation and animal rights are philosophical views and personal views characterised by statements by various individuals and groups. NCCAW has considered the philosophical views and personal values of all stakeholders, including advocates of animal liberation and animal rights in developing the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) and has omitted value statements that are incompatible with the responsible use of animals for human purposes, such as companionship, food, fibre, research and teaching conducted for the benefit of both humans and animals in Australian society.”
- Discussion included comments that people such as dog fighters who we wouldn't condone still come under the definition of stakeholders. Word 'responsible use' needs to cover this.
- RSPCA dissents. Accepts the change in title put forward and accepts the first para as written. RSPCA doesn't agree with the removal of the second sentence which is needed to define.
- NFF commented there are different stages of interest in animal welfare in the different industries and animal welfare needs to be accepted around the farming community and that it's based on good sound science. This statement, as an advocate of AAWS, would give a good tool to promote the AAWS. Both amendments (bolded) supported.
- AWWG - delete “both” from last line – ‘to benefit humans and animals’. Suggests word change to “animal liberation and animal rights represent a **wide diversity** of philosophical views and personal values.”

Hugh Wirth moves the draft Position Statement (as shown on the screen) be accepted in principle.

Seconded Warren Starick

To be considered again at the next meeting.

Collation of national statistics for animal shelter euthanasia rates

- Referred back to NCCAW from the working group. Figures need collating for other animal welfare shelters.
- Peter Thornber saw it as part of what is being attempted under AAWS and this is one of the sectors. AWWG has been looking at some of the same things such as animals in experimentation, “The Age” newspaper report stated that one animal is used in experimentation in Australia every 69 minutes and we need some accurate figures. So it is an exercise we could start under AAWS to start looking at those sorts of figures. From an epidemiological perspective, it might assist in getting a national view of why animals are being put into shelters – behavioural problem, old age etc.
- Hugh Wirth moved that the Secretariat liaise with Animal Welfare Units to obtain figures for 2005 on dogs and cats. Glenys Oogjes can provide shelter stats from the US.

ACTION ITEMS:

- **Draft NCCAW Position Statement on Animal Welfare Animal Liberation and Animal Rights** to be put on the table for further consideration at next NCCAW meeting.
- **Collation of national statistics for animal shelter euthanasia rates.** Secretariat to liaise with Animal Welfare Units to obtain figures for 2005 on dogs and cats.

- Glenys Oogjes to provide shelter stats from the US.

14. PRESENTATION – LABELLING OF PRODUCT FOR ANIMAL PRODUCTION SYSTEMS - ACCC

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

Production Systems, Labelling and the Trade Practices Act (TPA) – Presented by Joe-Anne Riddiford of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission

- ACCC operate under the Trade Practices Act 1974.
- The bulk of ACCC work is education, advice and guidance. Only the Courts can change people's action. The ACCC can seek remedies from the Courts but it must be a rigorous process to justify spending public funds.
- Compliance objectives: – to stop unlawful conduct, obtain compensation/restitution for victims and undo effects of contravention. To deter/prevent unlawful acts.
- Benefits are to honest businesses by discouraging less honest ones gaining from unfair competition.
- Public liability provisions to protect consumers are covered by preventing untruthful information or unsafe goods.
- Consumer and competitor detriment are both considered.
- Section 52 of the Act regarding misleading or deceptive claims or conduct is the most commonly provision used. It requires demonstration of intent which isn't required under civil law.
- "ACCC guidelines to voluntary codes – ACCC has issued guidelines on effective voluntary industry standards in the industry codes to identify benchmarks which quality as meeting high standards in the promotion of best practice in the industry for compliance with the TPA and is proven to be effective."
- Voluntary industry codes of practice can be set up to help address complaints and problems. ACCC website has guidelines on best practice of voluntary codes.
- Trade Practices principles are mirrored in State and Territory legislation so state authorities deal with local issues via State Fair Trading or local councils.
- Food and beverage industry guidance for compliance with the Trade Practices Act covers proposed descriptors eg for 'pure', 'fresh', 'natural', and 'real'. Egg labelling is another example displaying labelling variously as 'organic', 'free range', 'barn laid', 'corn fed', 'antibiotic free', 'not genetically modified', 'hormone free', 'caged' etc. What does it actually mean?
- Country or origin labelling. ACCC are working with NZ on guideline for GM claims used in advertising and selling food.
- ACCC received about 64,000 complaints in 2004, not including those referred elsewhere.
- Graeme Samuel has been the ACCC Chairman since May 2005. His advice is not to oversell and under-deliver.
- ACCC contact centre phone no is 1300 302 502 or web address – www.accc.gov.au. Free information publications can be downloaded.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Nil.

15. PRESENTATION – ANIMAL WELFARE ISSUES IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES – IAN RODGER, QDPIF – moved to Item 11

Presented by Ian Rodger, QDPIF.

- Media reports of the horses seized led to hate mail and phone calls to island residents, which led to increased suspicion of outsiders, making it harder to work with them.
- The island 65 kms off the coast. 3 hour barge trip or daily flights leave from Townsville. Populated since 1918 there are currently about 3000 residents, mostly of Aboriginal or Torres Islander descent, but from around 42 different traditional groups, so factional issues make it difficult to reach consensus.
- The current population of horses derived from original 15 horses left there which have expanded with the good grazing conditions. Horses have been left to breed indiscriminately so about 200+ horses. They live in high country difficult to access. Some dry season nutritional stress occurs but doesn't seem to affect the animals too much as they are free roaming and not fenced and they just move to better areas.
- Horses integral part of island life. They roam free in town and dominant stallions fighting for mares can be a safety issue. The horses will eat from people's gardens, and scavenge from garbage bins etc so there are welfare and public health issues.
- Welfare issues can be fetlock and penetrating wound injuries from rubbish left around. People often don't treat injuries. Progress has been made in general care. Overriding, or riding horses too young causing calcification of joints, not cleaning wounds etc are common problems.
- Media highlighted back injuries from saddle sores started from stallion bites and aggravated by riding before the wounds properly healed. 50% of horse population is stallions.
- Volunteers are working with the community trying to promote responsible care of horses – of food, water, shelter and basic health and handling issues. Volunteers talk to schools or wherever a group is assembled.
- QDPI are a partner in a shared responsibility program for horse management.
- Queensland Health has secured funding for animal health in all Queensland communities, linked to their environment and health program and monitored by their officers. DPI is working closely with Qld health on that.
- Monty Roberts (known as the US horse whisperer) has visited there with the RSPCA. Many groups working to get the messages across.
- DPI are working with Aboriginal Councils to geld stallions but don't have the authority to do it. The horses are not feral animals, they are all owned by someone, but often won't tell outsiders who owns them because of suspicion and fear of interference.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Nil.

16. GENETIC MODIFICATION, CLONING AND ANIMAL WELFARE – DAVID ADAMS, DAFF

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Animal welfare aspects of gene technology and biotechnology have not been considered. Should Australia and NCCAW consider these issues?
- Six main points were that:
 - There are several pre-existing and formally accredited reviews of the animal health and welfare aspects of biotechnology-derived (B-D) animals. These come from the

USA, the UK and Canada. Accordingly, Australia need not undertake a similar public review. It may be necessary, however, to extract the key points from these other reviews and test whether (1) they are appropriate for Australia, (2) there are gaps in their coverage and (3) they have been referred to in policy processes already in train.

- B-D animals have demonstrated their value in biomedical research; for example, in investigating prion diseases. In contrast, most current reviews are sceptical about the prospects for B-D animals in agriculture but realistic prospects for the use of B-D animals in agriculture can be gauged if a reasoned is made.
- An exercise in fore sighting following the example set by the USDA Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture could be useful for exploring the possible role of B-D animals within the context of Australia.
- It is unfortunate that the prospect of application to agriculture appears to have driven research. A multidisciplinary approach will be valuable and an innovation could be emphasise integrated or organismal physiology, which will clarify interactions among body systems; for example, among the nervous, endocrine and immune systems.
- A list of genetic hazards may be useful for establishing pathogenesis as a reference point for the surveillance and monitoring of health and welfare in B-D animals. Guidance is available from methods used to assess the health and wellbeing of laboratory mice. Another issue for evaluation is the fit between B-D animals and their environment (the genotype-environment interaction). Since genetic diversity within populations of animals is a significant, an epidemiological or population focus is required when the biotechnology-derived (B-D) animals are being assessed
- A review of the Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and its covering legislation is in train. Information about this review (terms of reference etc) can be found at <http://www.tga.gov.au/gene/gtreview.htm>. Risk analyses are routinely performed by this office. NCCAW could provide advice and assistance on the nature of the risk analysis required for animal health and welfare.
- It is suggested that NCCAW could approach Office of Gene Technology offering advice on risk assessment processes for animal health and welfare.
- Definition of animal welfare and health is needed. An old definition states that health is a state of complete mental and physical well being and not merely the absence of illness.
- Welfare problems can occur where an animal's needs can't be met.

The Chair thanked Dr Adams and commented that it was an outstanding document.

ACTION ITEMS:

- David Adams to edit the doc, Lyn Traill to load onto DAFF public website with a link to the AAWS strategy.
- Letter to be sent from NCCAW Chair to Minister suggesting that NCCAW provide advice to the Office of Gene Technology on the animal welfare aspects of biotechnology-derived animals. The letter to request that the OGTR seek advice from NCCAW when developing their modus operandi.
 - Secretariat and David Adams to prepare the letters from Chair to Minister and Minister to OGTR.
- Any feedback to David Adams – david.adams@daff.gov.au.
- Item to go on next NCCAW agenda to keep it moving forward.

17. REPORTS FROM PRODUCTION ANIMAL WORKING GROUP (PAWG)

1A. NATIONAL REVIEW OF ANIMAL WELFARE CODES OF PRACTICE

- Information paper.

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Consultation process should proceed slowly to enable full discussion with stakeholders in jurisdictions – eg AWAC, legislators (WA, SA, and NT).
- Legal advice should be sought early in the development process to establish feasibility of and appropriate mechanism for legislating minimum standards.

ACTION ITEMS:

- For further discussion at NCCAW
- Chair to take feedback from PAWG / NCCAW to Animal Health Committee

1B. PETA CAMPAIGN AND MULESING

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Not considered

ACTION ITEMS:

- To be referred to NCCAW.

2A.DISEASE PREVALENCE AND ANIMAL WELFARE CONSIDERATIONS

See item 4.

2B. SLAUGHTER OF INTENSIVELY FARMED RABBITS

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Information Item – paper from Dr Middleton.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Agreed that Dr Middleton would continue to collect new and updated information and circulate to members

2C. MANDATORY REPORTING OF ANIMAL WELFARE OFFENCES

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Intent is to establish a routine of reporting of incidents, not “offences”.
- Mandating of reporting outside normal disease reporting requirements would require access to a different regulatory mechanism.
- Some existing industry QA programs contain commercially driven provisions for “mandatory” reporting of unusual incidents ,

ACTION ITEMS:

- Aim to establish the reporting system within all industry QA frameworks.

- Dr Hood to prepare a paper for NCCAW to seek advice from jurisdictions on feasibility of mandating reporting of incidents with welfare implications under animal welfare legislation.

3. ACTION PLAN TO DEAL WITH WELFARE AND RYEGRASS STAGGERS

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Information paper.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Incorporated into Item 4

4. PREVALENCE OF ENDEMIC DISEASES DETRIMENTAL TO WELFARE

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Agreed the issue needs development in NCCAW.
- Issues paper (Caple, Middleton, Lee, Tate, Hood) to be referred through NCCAW to AWWG and State PI/AW Ministers – address key issues, drivers for change, options and future process to take the proposals further
- Refer to AAWS Advisory Committee for consideration in the Implementation Plan.

ACTION ITEMS:

- For referral to NCCAW.

5. BUSINESS WITHOUT NOTICE

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Halal slaughter – deferred to NCCAW.

New edition of “loading standard” (WA) circulated for information.

6. ITEMS FOR REFERRAL TO NCCAW

- **National review of aw codes of practice**
- **PETA campaign and mulesing**
- **Endemic disease – implications for welfare**
- **Halal products for export to Malaysia**

COMBINED MEETING PAWG/NPAWG

1. NCCAW POSITION STATEMENT ON ANIMAL WELFARE, ANIMAL LIBERATION AND ANIMAL RIGHTS

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Amend title to add “in the development of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy”
- Para 1 - replace “as defined in” with “in the context of”
- Para 1 - take out “all” before “animals...”
- Para 1 - take out “humane” before “euthanasia”
- Omit the second sentence of Para 2

- Para 2 - amend the third sentence to read “ NCCAW has considered the philosophical views and personal values of advocates of *animal welfare/ all stakeholders including**. Animal liberation and animal rights in developing the AAWS and has omitted value statements that are incompatible with the responsible use of animals for human purposes, such asand teaching.....”

ACTION ITEMS:

- Suggested amendments to be referred to NCCAW
- *with alternative wording options as above

2. COLLATION OF NATIONAL STATISTICS FOR ANIMAL SHELTER EUTHANASIA RATES

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Paper is unclear in several areas:
 - Relevance / integrity of PETA “statistics” provided
 - Relationship between national performance standards and AW “benchmarks”
 - Scope of data and benchmarking required
 - Feasibility of, implications of and options available for collation and reporting

ACTION ITEMS:

- to be referred to NCCAW Secretariat for clarification

ACTION ITEMS:

- Intensively farmed rabbits – Mick Middleton will continue to collect information from jurisdictions.

18. REPORT FROM NON-PRODUCTION WORKING GROUP (NPAWG)

OUTCOMES / DECISIONS:

- Two recommendations:
 1. Dog and Cat Code – a sub-committee appointed to progress national guidelines.
 2. Export of Illegally Tail Docked Dogs – working group members discussed breaches in their jurisdictions but overall, it comes back to the Minister writing to AQIS about their reporting incidents of illegally tail docked puppies for export.
- Moved Hugh Wirth, RSPCA to write to Minister McGauran to instruct AQIS to report incidents to State authorities. Seconded Glenys Oogies.

Companion animals in emergencies.

- Ross Burton, NSW tabled a collated record of how injured stray companion animals are handled in the States and Territories.

John Osborne from the Association of Professional Rodeo Association (APRA) addressed the working group about rodeo standards. Deb Kelly to raise some recommended amendments to the Rodeo Guidelines for NCCAW consideration.

National Guidelines for the Welfare of Birds –public consultation period over and working group recommend that NCCAW adopt the draft Guidelines.

Hugh Wirth moved guidelines be accepted in principle to lie on the table for 6 months.

Seconded Kevin Doyle.

ACTION ITEMS:

- NCCAW to write to Minister McGauran requesting that where illegally tail docked puppies are presented for inspection that AQIS report exporter names to the appropriate State authorities.

19. CORRESPONDENCE/ OTHER BUSINESS

CHAIR

No correspondence presented.

- Other Business

Rodeo Guidelines changes

- Some amendments recommended for NCCAW endorsement. Secretariat to amend.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Secretariat to update the version on the website.

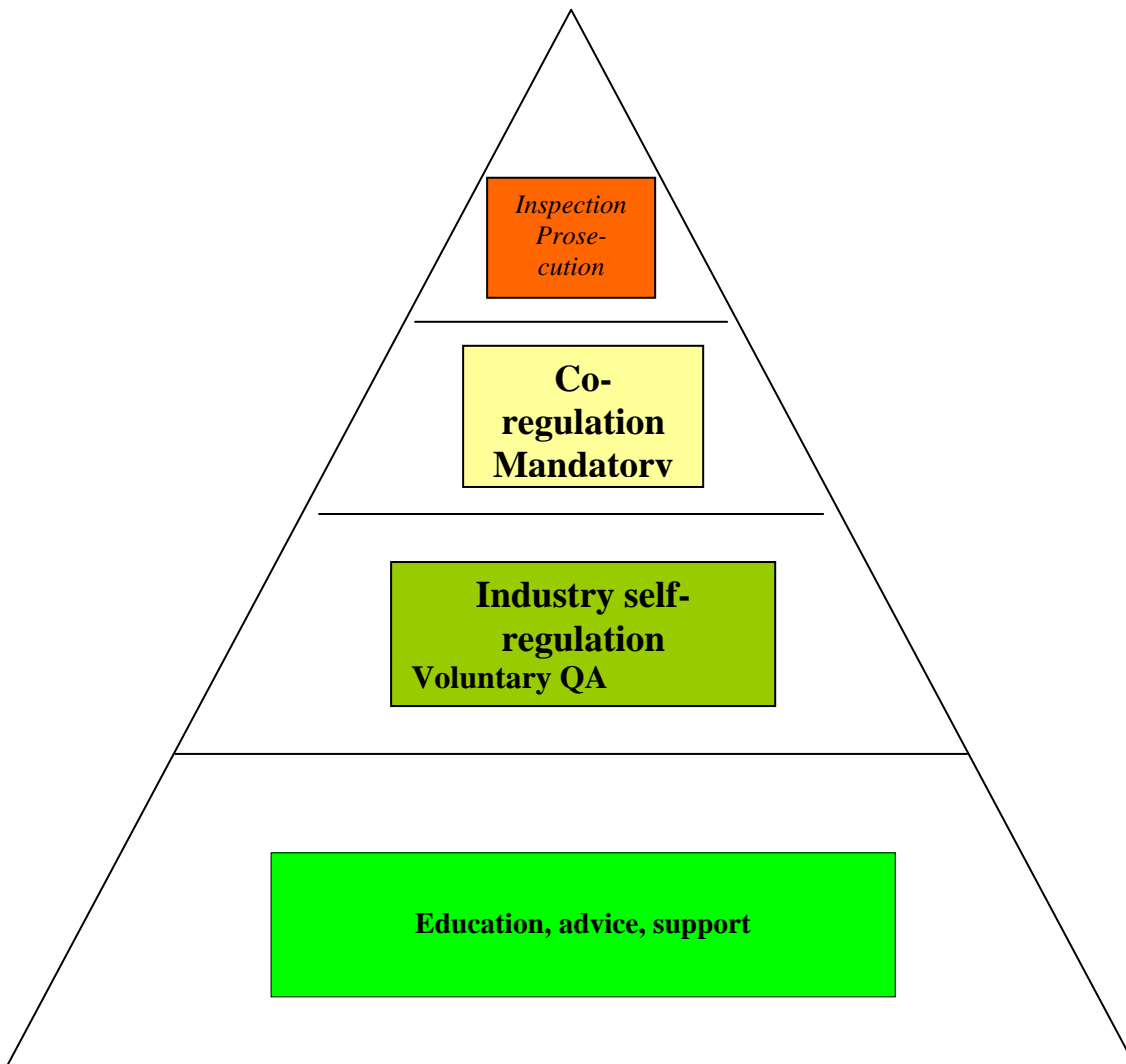
20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING -

CHAIR

The meeting initially agreed to 26-28 April for the next meeting. However, due to the unavailability of the venue and the proximity to Anzac Day which would require some members to travel on the holiday, the date for NCCAW36 was agreed out of session to be changed to 3-5 May 2006.

Compliance – the enforcement pyramid

Presented by Robin Vandegraaff



Some questions in relation to animal welfare:

1. Where do Australian regulators (State governments and the RSPCA) sit in this triangle?
2. Does it vary depending on where we are in Australia?
3. Is this where we want to focus our animal welfare enforcement activity?
4. What is being done to monitor compliance with standards and effect long-term change in understanding, practices and behaviour?
5. Is the food safety QA model applicable to animal welfare regulation?

MINISTER'S OFFICE REQUEST THESE COMMENTS NOT BE PUT ON DAFF WEBSITE – FOR NCCAW MEMBERS ONLY

MINISTER McGauran's MEETING WITH NCCAW – 8 SEPTEMBER

DRAFT SUMMARY OF COMMENTS–

Minister McGauran, as the new Australian Government Minister for Primary Industries, visited NCCAW on 8 September. The Minister said he was excited about the forthcoming Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) launch and acknowledging that its development had been a labour of love for NCCAW over several years. He considered AAWS would make Australia a world leader in animal welfare and although the Strategy is not set in concrete, it will be a tool for learning as we go along. The Minister thanked NCCAW for its contribution to the AAWS and advised he would like to launch it at one of the major agricultural shows or other significant event in the near future, at a date yet to be announced.

The Minister places great importance on the role of NCCAW and was impressed that members could find as much common ground as possible to give advice to government. The government, of course, had its own agenda, so advice was not a rubber stamp but the views and policies filtered from NCCAW means that the Government receives the best possible advice. The Minister acknowledged that members don't shy away from the hard subjects and was impressed with their ability to meeting the current demands, but also acknowledged that, of course, nothing less is expected.

The Minister commented that agricultural industries are becoming more attuned to animal welfare and the government will rely more fully on NCCAW advice.

When asked how comfortable the Minister was with going outside the agricultural sector on welfare issues eg dogs, imported elephants, he explained that a few years ago there could have been a potential conflict of interest but agricultural industries are aware of a change in community attitudes. They are very aware that the standards of 5, 10 or 20 years ago are not acceptable to the community now. On dangerous dogs issues he will enthusiastically tackle those.

NCCAW members expressed that they were keen for the advancement of the AAWS and Codes of Practice to take welfare to another level, but suggested a need to look at development an Animal Welfare Act rather than depending on the jurisdictional Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Acts which may not adequately cover AAWS issues. There had been an attempt since NCCAW's establishment in 1989 to build more harmony between states and territories legislation, and there is some coordination through this committee, but there were always problems in coordinating the various jurisdictions.

The Minister suggested a meeting of State and Territory Ministers and promised to consider finding a way - he suggested perhaps with an invitation from NCCAW to State and Territory Ministers to discuss the matters

Amendments included from ARB/RV, ACCC, SA, NFF, AVA, AA