



ANIMAL WELFARE

National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

Annual Report 1 January to 31 December 2017

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

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NAWAC

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Chair's comment

This was a busy year for the committee with work progressed on the Code of Welfare: Temporary Housing of Companion Animals, and an amendment to the Code of Welfare: Dairy Cattle to cover housing of dairy cattle.

The committee also contributed to the work of regulations development, a process which is foreseen to continue for several more years as relevant existing standards from the codes of welfare are brought under a regulatory framework.

In February 2017, NAWAC published their Opinion Paper on the welfare effects of selective breeding of animals. NAWAC developed this paper because, while codes of welfare can set minimum standards relating to breeding practices, they are generally silent on the implications of genetic selection practices which the committee considered a major gap. Genetic improvement programmes underpin many productivity advances in New Zealand's agricultural sectors, but NAWAC wished to emphasize that the selection of animals with more extreme characteristics, for example for growth rate, can result in welfare problems. The paper also reflects on aligned risks for companion animals where breeding for extreme traits of a pet's appearance can result in poor welfare from compromised physiology and anatomy. NAWAC further pointed out that genetic selection practices can improve animal welfare, such as breeding polled cattle to avoid any need for horn removal. NAWAC encourages all animal owners and carers to consider the potential impact of genetic selection practices, and to use them for positive benefits.



A key event in November 2017 was a stakeholder workshop held in conjunction with the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC), to explore the implications of sentience for the work of the two advisory committees. Representatives were invited from a wide range of perspectives including industry, government policy, and animal advocacy groups. They debated how the legislative changes might move animal welfare discussions from their focus on achieving minimum standards, to one in which efforts are made to minimise negative and promote positive emotional states, and how this might influence the welfare assessment frameworks used by the committees in their work. There was also discussion on the barriers that might hinder industry stakeholders, in particular the animal production industries, from implementing changes to give wider community cognisance of animal sentience. The cross-sector workshop proved to be an excellent forum for exchange of ideas, and offers a future format for gathering views and debating within the full spectrum of the animal welfare community.

Thanks are due to Dr Penny Fisher and Ingrid Collins who completed five and six-year terms on NAWAC, respectively. They have made an invaluable contribution to animal welfare improvements during their terms on NAWAC. During 2017 Nick Poutu was appointed to replace Dr Fisher because of his expert knowledge of wildlife and conservation. NAWAC has continued to work effectively through these changes, with all members participating actively in the work programme, and I thank all for their great support.

The members of NAWAC's secretariat have provided outstanding assistance to the committee in many ways including technical and secretarial support without which we could not carry out our responsibilities. Thank you to this hard-working and dedicated group of people.

I also acknowledge the support of Hon Nathan Guy during the first part of the year, and following the 2017 general election, NAWAC looks forward to working with the Minister responsible for animal welfare to improve and protect the welfare of our animals.

Dr Gwyneth Verkerk
Chair

Membership

Members	Expiry of Appointment
Dr Gwyneth A Verkerk (independent chairperson) BVSc, PhD	31.10.19
Mr Iain E Torrance (deputy chair) MInstD, BAM Chief Executive Officer Chatham Islands Enterprise Trust	31.10.17
Mrs Ingrid Collins MNZM, Chief Executive/Part Owner Three Rivers Medical Ltd	Retired 13.11.17
Professor Graeme Doole BAppSc, MAppEc, PhD, Professor of Environmental Economics, University of Waikato	31.10.18
Dr Penelope (Penny) M Fisher BSc, MAppSc, PhD, Wildlife Toxicologist & Research Leader, Landcare Research NZ Ltd	31.10.17
Ms Katrina (Katie) S Milne Farmer, National Board Member Federated Farmers	31.10.19
Mr Nicholas (Nick) Poutu MSc, Technical Adviser (Animal Threats) DoC	31.10.19
Ms Frances H Russell QSM JP	Retired 17.05.17
Dr Karin E Schütz MSc, PhD, Scientist	31.10.18
Mr Grant H Shackell Dip Ag, Dip Field Technology, MSc, Retired scientist (NAEAC Chairperson)	31.10.18
Mr Alan J Sharr CA (PP), DTM, MInstD, Consultant, Nexia Christchurch Limited	31.10.18
Dr Julie Wagner BVSc, Product Manager Ravensdown Fertiliser Co-operative Ltd	31.10.17

Fees

Government policy requires disclosure of fees paid to members of statutory boards and committees. The daily fee paid to committee members during 2017 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.

Member	Fees paid during 2016 (gross)
G Verkerk ¹	\$14,086.50
I Collins ²	-
G Doole ²	-
P Fisher	-
K Milne	\$3,000.00
N Poutu ⁴	-
F Russell	\$1,600.00
K Schütz ³	-
G Shackell	\$4,600.00
A Sharr	\$5,520.00
I Torrance ¹	\$5,752.00
J Wagner	\$3,800.00

¹ The Chair and Deputy 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.

² I Collins and G Doole chose not to claim NAWAC fees.

³ Dr Fisher's and Dr Schütz's fees were paid directly to their employer as recompense for time lost from their primary employment.

⁴ N Poutu was appointed late in the year and so was not able to attend any quarterly meetings in 2017.

Main issues for 2017

- **Regulations** – Submitting to MPI, and advising the Minister, on regulations for care and conduct of animals, and surgical and painful procedures.
- **Temporary housing of companion animals** – Recommendation to issue a code of welfare for animals in temporary housing (e.g. pet shops, day boarding for dogs, SPCA shelters, local authority shelters/pounds, catteries, kennels).
- **Housing of dairy cattle** – Completion of a Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis; decision on minimum standards for off-paddock housing.
- **Selective breeding** – Publication of an opinion on the animal welfare impacts and positive effects of selective breeding for a range of animals including farmed livestock, racing animals and pets/companions (NAWAC opinion on animal welfare issues associated with selective breeding).
- **Animals in exhibition, entertainment and encounter** – Regular updates from the greyhound racing industry. Correspondence from concerned members of the public and with the New Zealand Rodeo Cowboys Association (NZRCA). Recommendations made to NZRCA.
- **Poultry** – Poultry subcommittee's remit expanded to include the consideration of regulations for poultry, and the creation of minimum standards for broiler breeders.
- **Rabbit haemorrhagic disease virus** – Advised on the welfare impacts of releasing the virus in New Zealand.
- **Animals in the wild** – Working with stakeholders on the definition of “generally accepted practice” for hunting and killing in New Zealand, monitoring glueboard trap ministerial approvals, and a recommendation for regulations to restrict (prohibit) snares.
- **Codes review** – completion of a public survey on the codes of welfare. Amendments to the structure of codes of welfare and some of NAWAC's processes were discussed and agreed.
- **Animal sentience** – Workshop held jointly with the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee on the impact of including the concept of animal sentience in the Animal Welfare Act.
- **Visit to Wellington SPCA** – tutorials on animal transport, the National Cat Management Strategy, and the New Zealand Thoroughbred racing strategy.

NAWAC's work programme, reports, meeting summaries and guidelines are available here:

<http://www.mpi.govt.nz/protection-and-response/animal-welfare/overview/national-animal-welfare-advisory-committee/>

