



ANIMAL WELFARE

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

Annual Report 1 January to 31 December 2020

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

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June 2021

NAEAC

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

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Chairperson's Comment



At the beginning of 2020 no one would have foreseen that from 25 March until 27 April New Zealand would be in national lockdown due to a pandemic.

During this unusual year, new ways of working and of holding meetings evolved. The need to develop contingency plans around how the animals in our care can be managed when the people responsible for those animals are under severe movement restrictions was also highlighted. Currently, no existing code of ethical conduct identifies that requirement.

NAEAC has received requests from some code holders relating to moving all AEC meetings towards an electronic format, utilising a variety of remote meeting platforms.

The committee believes that robust assessment of the animal welfare implications of any proposed animal manipulations requires in-person discussion (participants physically in the same room). While review of the use of digital meeting technology is ongoing, currently NAEAC recommends that:

- In-person is the preferred meeting format;
- Use of remote technology is acceptable in exceptional circumstances where (some) members are unable to attend in person; remote attendance is required to ensure that a meeting is quorate; or where urgency is warranted; and
- All requests for approval of manipulations graded D or E should be discussed using an in-person meeting format.

NAEAC continues to support moves towards transparency about the use of animals in research, testing and teaching (RTT). To improve its own transparency, the committee has made its meeting dates and minutes public. There will always be debate about using animals in RTT. My sincere wish is that all will engage from a position of fairness. The RTT community is sometimes claimed to be operating in an environment of secrecy. Continued progress toward greater openness, and reasonable discussion of the issues it raises, is in the interests of all parties.

NAEAC requires significant secretarial backing. This is provided by the staff of the Animal Welfare team of the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), diligently led by Dr Kate Littin and supervised by Dr Nicki Cross. During 2020, NAEAC continued to receive consistently excellent secretarial support from Paula Lemow, advice from Linda Carsons and Jamieson Milnes and support from a long list of other MPI staff.

I also acknowledge the support of the individual committee members who serve alongside me. Each member of NAEAC brings with them an invaluable skillset, and all approach their work on the committee with integrity and dedication.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Grant Shackell". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Grant Shackell
Chair

Membership

Members	Expiry of Appointment
Mr Grant H Shackell Dip Ag, Dip Field Technology, Dip Grad, MSc, Retired scientist (Independent Chairperson)	31.10.21
Professor Bronwen J Connor BSc, PhD Professor, Department of Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacology, the University of Auckland (nominated by the Ministry for Women)	31.10.21
Dr Arnja R Dale BSc PhD, Chief Scientific Officer, Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (nominated by the Royal New Zealand Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals)	31.10.22
Dr Craig A Gillies BSc PhD, Scientific Officer (nominated by the Department of Conservation)	31.10.21
Mr Robert P Hazelwood* BSc, Animal Services Manager, MSD Animal Health (nominated by Agcarm Inc)	31.10.22
Dr Angenita B Harding BVSc, MBA (Dist) Technical Policy Adviser (Veterinary), DairyNZ	31.10.22 (Eligible for reappointment)
Dr Jacquie L Harper BSc (Hons), PhD Chief Scientist, Overseer Ltd	31.10.22 (Eligible for reappointment)
Ms Rachel A Heeney BSc, Dip Tchg Head of Biology, Epsom Girls Grammar School (nominated by the Ministry of Education)	31.10.21 (Eligible for reappointment)
Dr Michael R King B Appl Sc (Hons), PhD Senior Lecturer, Bioethics Centre, University of Otago (nominated by the Health Research Council of New Zealand)	31.10.22 (Eligible for reappointment)
Dr Dianne Wepa RSW, PhD Senior Lecturer, Adjunct, Auckland University of Technology	31.10.21 (Eligible for reappointment)

* Mr Rob Hazelwood was elected Deputy Chair for 2020.

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.

The table below lists the fees paid during 2020.

Member	Fees paid during 2020 (gross)
B Connor	\$2,300
A Dale	\$3,200
C Gillies*	\$0
R Hazelwood	\$2,000
N Harding	\$0
J Harper	\$2,000
R Heeney	\$1,000
M King	\$2,400
G Shackell	\$6,875
D Wepa	\$1,800

*As a public servant, Dr Craig Gillies does not receive meeting fees.

Strategic Plan

NAEAC's strategic plan is attached to this report as Appendix 1. Progress on the associated workplan is discussed and reviewed at each meeting.

Statutory Activities

Section 63 of the Animal Welfare Act details the statutory functions of NAEAC. This annual report is structured so that it addresses each of the functions listed in the Act.

Advice to the Minister on ethical and animal welfare issues arising from research, testing and teaching

NAEAC did not make any recommendations to the Minister in relation to animal welfare issues arising from research, testing, and teaching during 2020.

The Chair met with both Hon Damien O'Connor, Minister of Agriculture and Hon Meka Whaitiri, Associate Minister of Agriculture during 2020.

Recommendations to the Minister under section 3(3) (relating to manipulation)

Significant Surgical Procedures (SSP) Regulations

In December 2019, the Government approved the SSP regulatory policies to be drafted into regulations under the Animal Welfare Act 1999. These regulations came into force from 9 May 2021. The approved regulatory policies are published on the MPI website <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/39068-significant-surgical-procedures-regulatory-policies>.

Four of those regulatory policies relate to RTT activities (No. 1-4/Pgs 8-15).

Recommendations to the Director-General under section 85 (relating to use of non-human hominids)

During 2020 NAEAC considered one application to undertake research using non-human hominids. The project was a behavioural study of animals already kept in captivity, which centred around observations of behaviours associated with changes in the environment that the animals were being kept in.

NAEAC recommended that some parts of the project did not constitute manipulating the animals in any way and did not require approval. Most of the proposed manipulations, all of which were low impact grade, were considered suitable for approval. While NAEAC recommended that the applicant be requested to supply further, specified, information in relation to one part of the application, the committee recommended that this was also suitable for approval following the supply of that information.

Early in 2020, NAEAC received a report on a study completed at the end of 2019, which will lead to improvements in clinical management of non-human hominids routine surgical procedures.

Provision of advice and information on the development and review of codes of ethical conduct

NAEAC reviewed one code of ethical conduct during 2020; from Invetus NZ Ltd.

NAEAC also received the two-year review of the NZeno Ltd code of ethical conduct undertaken by an accredited independent reviewer.

Recommendations to the Director-General concerning the approval, amendment, suspension, or revocation of any code of ethical conduct

In relation to the code of ethical conduct reviewed in 2020:

- NAEAC recommended that the code of ethical conduct be resubmitted with minor revisions and editorial changes.
- Assuming such revisions were acceptable to the NAEAC Chair, the committee resolved that the code be recommended as suitable for approval.

A subcommittee, established in 2019, to evaluate the process for independent review of code of ethical conduct holders, continued its work during 2020. In consultation with MPI and all accredited reviewers the subcommittee considered:

- performance of reviewers (including but not limited to consistency across reviews and reviewers);
- systems and processes for appointment and performance of reviewers (e.g., processes for MPI audits; Performance Standards); and
- requirements and guidance for reviews and reports (e.g., templates; Good Practice Guide; codes of ethical conduct and the Animal Welfare Act 1999).

As Chair, G Shackell met with the Director-General once during 2020.

Recommendations to the Minister concerning the setting of standards and policies for codes of ethical conduct

No recommendations were made to the Minister relating to setting standards or policies for the development of codes of ethical conduct.

Provision of information and advice to animal ethics committees

NAEAC provides information to AECs in a variety of ways.

Online

Routine advice was provided on an ad hoc basis to individual enquiries to the secretariat, the Chair, and members of the committee.

NAEAC has several documents lodged on its webpage. Some of these were updated in 2020:

- A revision of the Good Practice Guide for the use of animals in research, testing and teaching (GPG), which now includes several documents consolidated into one.
- NAEAC's Operational Plan and Workplan.
- A new paper on welfare of fish used in research testing and teaching, prepared by Dr Mark Burdass of Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology. NAEAC is indebted to Dr Burdass for his willingness to write this publication.

In addition, a review of several other publications, which will be updated in 2021, was initiated.

These include:

- A Culture of Care;
- Need for ethical approval flowcharts;
- Euthanasia of animals for scientific purposes (to be incorporated into the Good Practice Guide).

AEC newsletters

Three Newsletters to AECs were published in 2020. The newsletters contain a Chair's update, a profile of a member of NAEAC, excerpts from meeting minutes along with articles and information of interest to AECs.

AEC Chairs Workshop

NAEAC regularly hosts a biennial workshop for AEC members in November each year. Early in the year, all AECs were invited to attend a workshop in Wellington in November 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ability to run this workshop became increasingly uncertain due to the threat of ongoing lockdown and/or travel restrictions. Mid-year, NAEAC resolved to consider holding the workshop electronically using teleconferencing facilities and a draft programme was proposed. At the September meeting, each member of NAEAC was invited to give their views on the logistics of running the workshop before a vote was sought. After some discussion it was reluctantly agreed not to proceed with the AECs Workshop in 2020.

Code holder and AEC visits

Once a year, NAEAC visits code holders (and other organisations with an arrangement to use their code), meets their AECs and views research facilities in a regional location.

In 2020 travel restrictions precluded regional meetings and no visits were made.

AEC attendance

Where and when possible, NAEAC members attend AEC meetings in their area in an observer's role. During 2020 many AEC meeting schedules were disrupted. NAEAC members visited:

- PharmVet Solutions;
- Lincoln University (via Zoom).

Recommendations for approval by the Director-General of persons suitable for appointment as accredited reviewers

One recommendation was made in 2020.

NAEAC recommended that Dr David Morgan be reappointed as an accredited reviewer.

Consideration of the reports of independent reviews of code holders and animal ethics committees

The independent reviewer report on performance against the expiring code was provided for the draft code of ethical conduct that was reviewed by NAEAC. Reports are referred to when NAEAC makes its recommendation to the Director-General on whether a draft code is suitable for approval.

Recommendations to the Minister under section 118(3) (relating to the power of the Minister to approve research or testing)

Under section 118 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999, the Minister may authorise any person or organisation to carry out research or testing without the approval of an animal ethics committee where the Minister is satisfied that such research or testing is necessary in the national interest.

Under subsection 3 the Minister is required to consult with NAEAC before exercising these powers.

No requests for such advice were made to NAEAC in 2020.

Other Activities

Mātauranga Māori

NAEAC has continued to work towards its objective of developing an understanding of mātauranga Māori and to make space for this knowledge in the everyday work of the committee.

This includes:

- the use of more Te Reo Māori in official correspondence;
- a Te Reo Māori statement on the NAEAC webpage;
- drafting an introductory paragraph for the opening section of the template for codes of ethical conduct;
- honouring tikanga for business meetings, including karakia to open and close meetings.

Openness

NAEAC continues to post meeting dates, summary minutes of meetings, AEC newsletters on its webpage. NAEAC's web presence continues to be hosted by MPI: <https://www.mpi.govt.nz/animals/animal-welfare/national-animal-ethics-advisory-committee/>. Progress has been made towards the committee (and its sister committee the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee) having a stand-alone web address.

NAEAC awards

Service

From time to time, NAEAC makes awards to AEC members on the nomination of their organisation or AEC, to recognise an outstanding contribution.

During 2020, AgResearch consolidated its animal ethics committees and disestablished committees at two of its campuses. Nominations for service awards were made on behalf of several members of those two committees. While the individual contribution of the retiring members was noted, NAEAC considered that overall, both committees had provided exceptional service to animal ethics for more than 30 years. Therefore, it was agreed that the AgResearch Grasslands and AgResearch Invermay animal ethics committees, rather than individual members, receive a NAEAC AEC Service Award.

The Three Rs

In 2018 NAEAC rebranded its Three Rs Award that had been offered since 2003. Two new awards were established.

NAEAC was delighted that AgResearch, ANZCCART, Landcare Research, and Lincoln, Massey, Otago and Victoria Universities generously committed funds to underwrite the awards.

- **Aotearoa New Zealand John Schofield Three Rs implementation award**

The biennial Aotearoa New Zealand John Schofield Three Rs implementation award, for which funding was generously underwritten by the New Zealand branch of the Australia and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART).

- **Aotearoa New Zealand Three Rs Research Grant**

A second biennial award to be made, alternating with the Aotearoa New Zealand John Schofield Three Rs implementation award.

In 2020 applications were called for the Aotearoa New Zealand John Schofield Three Rs implementation award. A total of four applications were received.

The quality of the applications was particularly high, and each had elements that would have made them worthy recipients of the award. NAEAC endorsed the award review subcommittee's recommendation that Dr Benjamin Albert and his co-workers from the Liggins Institute, Auckland University receive the 2020 Aotearoa New Zealand John Schofield Three Rs implementation award.

Dr Albert's application addressed two of the Three Rs (Reduction and Refinement) and met all the criteria being assessed.

The Auckland-based team developed a methodology for incorporating oils into edible gels as an alternative to the oral administration of nutritional supplements or drugs to small laboratory rodents, which has traditionally been the most physiologically appropriate method. The novel aspect of this work was the development of a method to incorporate lipid-based materials.

As a means of administering an oral nutritional or drug intervention the delivery method has shown it has all the advantages of daily gavage, without the risk of harm, stress, and potentially painful mishap. The team demonstrated a profound concern for animal welfare by delaying planned studies until an improved protocol was developed. It was that initiative and willingness to adapt that make Dr Albert and his colleagues worthy recipients of the award.

Several approaches were used to promote awareness of this work. A paper reporting the methodology will help support awareness of this approach's superiority and underpin future work by advocating the methodology internationally. The protocol is also being turned into an ANZCCART 3Rs resource, which will publicise how the refinement can reduce the number of animals used in supplementation studies. Raised awareness of the improvement has encouraged other groups at Auckland University to move to using gels in a drug administration animal study.

NAEAC acknowledges the generous support of ANZCCART for providing funding to support the award.

Following discussions with the Hon Damien O'Connor, Minister of Agriculture in relation to funding the Aotearoa New Zealand Three Rs Research Grant, NAEAC was informed that MPI's Sustainable Food & Fibre Futures (SFF) fund was available to support research relating specifically to the Three Rs.

NAEAC was unsure whether both awards/funds could stand together and considered that many of the applications it had received for the award would be suitable for SFF funding. After some discussion NAEAC agreed it would no longer offer the \$50,000 Three Rs research grant but would endorse and promote the SFF Fund to the animal research community. NAEAC members indicated a willingness to have a presence on a project evaluation panel.

NAEAC continues to offer the \$5,000 John Schofield Three Rs Implementation prize every second year. NAEAC wishes to acknowledge the sponsors of the Aotearoa New Zealand Three Rs Research Grant (AgResearch, Landcare Research, and Lincoln, Massey, Otago, and Victoria Universities) whose support underpinned the identification of the SFF Fund as a source of research funding for Three Rs related research.

Mini-tutorials

NAEAC keeps up committee members' professional development by using both formal and informal 'mini-tutorials'.

During 2020 NAEAC hosted one mini-tutorial.

The Chair of the Schools' AEC described the committee's work to the members of NAEAC. The Schools' AEC is unique in that it deals with projects submitted by teachers and school children.

The AEC usually receives around 60 applications per year. Of those, 90% came from year 7 and 8 students. These students often prepared CREST projects or entered school science fairs and require AEC approval if they intend using animals as part of their projects.

The highest graded manipulations that the AEC deals with relate to mud crab research where year 13 students may subject the animals to mild physiological changes. The work is monitored by the AEC.

The AEC works hard to help teachers understand their obligations in relation to animal ethics. The committee's initiatives included: sending mail outs to all schools; emphasising the importance of monitoring; and poster development for science fairs/conferences. It was also noted that the Schools' AEC frequently used local veterinarians from other AECs to assist with monitoring. The AEC has introduced a prize for the best student animal ethics application, which consists of a certificate and \$100 gift voucher.

Many schools have embraced New Zealand's Predator Free 2050 goal and, especially in rural areas, there is interest from school children wanting to trap possums and/or kill pest animals. For all trapping protocols, the Schools' AEC recommends that only traps that meet the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) guidelines be used. C Gillies (DOC nominee) commended the AEC for promoting predator traps that aligned with NAWAC's guidelines.

NAEAC also has a role to play to ensure the RTT system is robust and will develop an opinion piece to help decision-making.

Requests for advice

During 2020, NAEAC was asked for advice on several occasions. The requests covered a wide range of subjects, including:

- a journalist preparing a feature article he was writing on animal testing and research;
- an email from an international consulting firm wanting information regarding the operation of New Zealand's animal welfare system;
- questions from several AECs wanting to clarify operational matters;
- queries relating to the need for ethical approval;
- queries relating to procedural requirements for dealing with minor code of ethical conduct breaches.

Committee members' activity at conferences/meetings

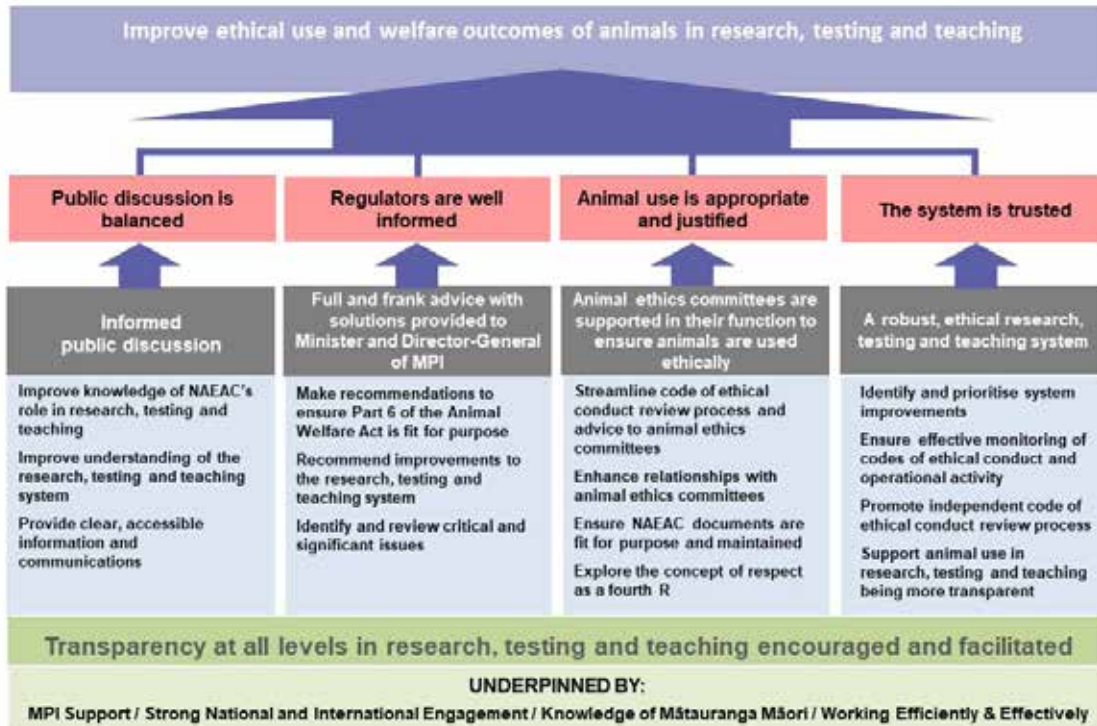
During their day to day working lives, NAEAC members frequently attend conferences and meetings outside of their direct committee responsibilities.

During 2020 many conferences (domestic and international) were cancelled or postponed for a year.

G Shackell prepared a presentation titled: Using animals for teaching or research: animal ethics considerations for the New Zealand Association of Science Educators on-line conference in November.

Appendix 1: NAEAC Strategic Plan 2019-2023

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) STRATEGY 2019-2023



Appendix 2: Organisations permitted to undertake research, testing or teaching using animals under an approved code of ethical conduct

On 31 December 2020, the following organisations either held either their own approved code of ethical conduct or had an arrangement to use another organisation's code.

Note: Organisations with an asterisk are code holders

Abacus Biotech Ltd	Elanco Animal Health
Advanced Genetics 2015 Ltd	Engender Technologies Ltd
Ag Challenge Ltd	EquiBreed NZ Ltd
Agilis Vets Ltd	Estendart Holdings Ltd
AgResearch Ltd *	Eurofins Animal Health NZ
AgriHealth NZ Ltd	FIL (New Zealand) Ltd
Agvet NZ Ltd	Flint, Pania
Alleva Animal Health Ltd*	Franklin Vets
Alltech (NZ) Ltd	Gallagher Group Ltd
Animal Breeding Services (2007) Ltd	Halter Ltd
Ara Institute of Canterbury Ltd	Haywood, Ursula
Argenta Manufacturing Ltd	Intuit Regulatory & Marketing Ltd
Aroa Biosurgery Ltd	Invetus NZ Ltd *
Arotec Diagnostics Ltd	Jurox Pty Ltd
AsureQuality Ltd	K9 Medical Detection New Zealand Charitable Trust
Auckland University of Technology	Karori Sanctuary Trust
Auckland Zoological Park*	Landcare Research New Zealand Ltd - Manaaki Whenua *
Barenbrug Agriseeds	Landcorp Farming Ltd
Bayer New Zealand Ltd	Lawrence, Dr David W
BCF Ultrasound	Levin and Horowhenua Veterinary Centre
Beef+Lamb New Zealand	Life Technologies New Zealand Ltd
BioCell Corporation Ltd	Lincoln University *
Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health New Zealand Ltd	Livestock Improvement Corporation Limited
Boffa Miskell Ltd	Living Cell Technologies New Zealand Limited *
BW & MB McLeod Partnership	Malaghan Institute of Medical Research
Caledonian Holdings Ltd	ManukaMed Limited Partnership
Carne Technologies Ltd	Massey University *
Cave and Harvey Research	Matamata Veterinary Services Ltd
Cawthron Institute	Matthews, Lindsay
Cognosco, Anexa Animal Health	McLeod, Graeme & Janelle
Cropmark Seeds Ltd	Medical Plus New Zealand
CRV Limited	MPI Diagnostic and Surveillance Services
CuroNZ Ltd	MPI Mycoplasma bovis Programme
Dairy Goat Co-operative (NZ) Ltd	National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research Ltd*
Dairy Trust Taranaki	National Trade Academy
Dairy Production Systems Ltd	National Veterinary Care
DairyNZ Ltd	Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology Ltd*
Damar Industries Ltd	New Zealand Association of Science Educators *
Department of Conservation *	New Zealand Institute for Plant and Food Research Ltd
Dermcare Vet	
Donaghys Ltd	
Duopharm Animal Health Ltd	
Eastern Institute of Technology Ltd*	

New Zealand Leather and Shoe Research Association
 neXtgen Agri Ltd
 North Canterbury Veterinary Clinics
 Northern New Zealand Seabird Charitable Trust
 Nutrinza
 NZ AutoTraps Ltd
 Nzeno Ltd *
 On-Farm Research Ltd
 Optimum Bio Innovations Ltd
 Otago Polytechnic Ltd
 Otakaro Pathways Ltd
 PGG Wrightson Seeds Ltd
 Pharmfirst Ltd
 PharmVet Solutions*
 Practical CPD Ltd
 Quantec Ltd
 Ruakura Technologies Ltd
 Schering-Plough Animal Health Limited *
 SciLactis Ltd
 Seacrest Farms Ltd
 Sirona Animal Health Ltd
 Skretting Australia
 Smart Farm Data Ltd
 SNPshot Technologies Ltd
 South Pacific Sera Limited *
 Southern Institute of Technology Ltd
 StemVet New Zealand Ltd
 Synlait Milk Ltd
 Synthase Biotech Ltd
 Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi
 Techion Group Ltd
 The New Zealand King Salmon Co Ltd
 The New Zealand Merino Company Ltd
 Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology *
 Trinity Bioactives Ltd
 Unitec Institute of Technology Ltd
 Universal College of Learning Ltd
 University of Auckland *
 University of Canterbury *
 University of Otago *
 University of Waikato *
 Vence NZ Ltd
 Vet Nurse Plus
 Vet Resource Ltd
 Veterinary Centre Oamaru
 Veterinary Enterprises Group
 Veterinary Health Solutions
 VetLearn
 Vetlife Ltd
 VetSouth Ltd
 Victoria University of Wellington *
 Waikato Institute of Technology Ltd *
 Waikato Regional Council
 Wellington Institute of Technology Ltd
 Wellington Zoo Trust
 Zoetis New Zealand Ltd

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