



National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

Komiti tohutohu motu matatika kararehe

Tikanga hui
General Meeting

Rā: 11 May 2021
Tāima: 9.30 am – 4.30 pm

Whaitua o rēhia:
Alcove Room
Cophthorne Hotel Auckland City
150 Anzac Avenue, Auckland CBD

MINUTES

Komiti/Committee: Grant Shackell, Arnja Dale, Bronwen Connor, Craig Gillies, Rob Hazelwood, Jacquie Harper, Mike King, Nita Harding, Rachel Heeney, Dianne Wepa (via Skype for Business).

Nuinga/Attendees: [redacted]^{9(2)(a)}
[redacted] as an observer, [redacted]^{9(2)(a)}
[redacted] via Skype for Business); [redacted]^{9(2)(a)}
[redacted] via Skype for Business); Dr Ben Albert and [redacted]^{9(2)(a)}
(Liggins Institute, University of Auckland) at 2.00 pm for agenda item O11.

Welcome

C Gillies opened the meeting at 9.35 am with a karakia and introduced himself to committee members and meeting attendees via a pepeha. Committee members were asked to introduce themselves to [redacted]^{9(2)(a)}

Matangaro/Apologies

An apology for lateness was received from A Dale and D Wepa.

Any Other Business Part One (Public Excluded Agenda)

No additional items of business were identified for discussion under Part One of the agenda.

Any Other Business Part Two (Open to the Public)

No additional items of business were identified for discussion under Part Two of the agenda.

**PART ONE
(PUBLIC EXCLUDED AGENDA)**

DRAFT RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC
Section 48, Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987

There being no further introductory items of business to discuss, it was moved (G Shackell/R Heeney):

A: *That the public be excluded from the following parts of the proceedings of this meeting, namely:*

- C 1. 9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(g)(ii)
- C 2. 9(2)(g)(ii)
- C 3. 9(2)(a), 9(2)(f)(iv)

The general subject of each matter to be considered while the public is excluded, the reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter, and the specific grounds under section 48(1) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 for the passing of this resolution are as follows:

General subject of each matter to be considered	Reason for passing this resolution in relation to each matter	Ground(s) under section 48(1) for the passing of this resolution
C 1. 9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(g)(ii)	<i>To protect information where making the information available would be likely unreasonably to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied or who is the subject of the information; and/or</i> <i>To maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of Ministers, members of organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment.</i>	<i>That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under sections 9(2)(b)(ii) and/or 9(2)(g)(ii) of the Official Information Act 1982.</i>
C 2. 9(2)(g)(ii)	<i>To maintain the effective conduct of public affairs through the protection of Ministers, members of organisations, officers and employees from improper pressure or harassment.</i>	<i>That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under section 9(2)(g)(ii) of the Official Information Act 1982.</i>
C 3. 9(2)(a), 9(2)(f)(iv)	<i>To protect the privacy of natural persons; and/or:</i> <i>To maintain the constitutional conventions for the time being which protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials.</i>	<i>That the public conduct of the relevant part of the proceedings of the meeting would be likely to result in the disclosure of information for which good reason for withholding would exist under sections 9(2)(a) and/or 9(2)(f)(iv) of the OIA.</i>

B: I also move that ^{9(2)(a)} [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] remain at this meeting after the public has been excluded, because of their knowledge of meeting procedure and the subject matter under consideration. This knowledge is relevant background information to assist the committee in its deliberations.

The motion was put: carried.

^{9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(g)(ii)} [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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9(2)(b)(ii), 9(2)(g)(ii)

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Proactively Released

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9(2)(g)(ii)

9(2)(a), 9(2)(f)(iv)

PART TWO (OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)

O 1. Confirmation of previous minutes

The draft minutes of the general meeting held on 12 February 2021 were reviewed. There were no amendments.

Moved (J Harper/C Gillies):

That the draft minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2021 be adopted as a true and accurate record of that meeting.

The motion was put: carried.

O 2. Action list review

Given the status of actions on the actions list were either pending or completed it was agreed in the interests to time not to go over them in detail.

O 3. Approval of NAEAC's work plan/priorities for 2021

The updated Gantt chart detailing the committee's work programme had been circulated prior to the meeting. There were no further amendments. 9(2)(a) reported she would update the MPI website with the latest version of the workplan.

Action – 9(2)(a) to update NAEAC page on MPI website.

O 4. Improve communication channel for AECs to reach NAEAC

In NAEAC's workplan, under the heading *AECs are supported to ensure animals are used ethically* there was an action to improve communication channels for AECs to reach NAEAC. R Hazelwood considered there should be some discussion around this topic given it was highlighted as a piece of work that was ongoing for the 2021 calendar year.

Regarding the development of the committee websites, 9(2)(a) reported she and 9(2)(a) were meeting with the developers on 12 May 2021. It was 9(2)(a) understanding that the design and build would not take long and that the website would be up and running by the end of June. G Shackell asked 9(2)(a) to make enquiries about a subscription portal option that would allow AECs to post material on the NAEAC website. 9(2)(a) reminded committee members that such a request was out of scope for the current build.

It was noted that it might be useful to ascertain AECs views on their ability to reach NAEAC before deciding whether any new resources or tools needed to be established. This could be achieved via a letter to AECs, an article in the next AEC newsletter or a survey.

Action – 9(2)(a) to ask web developers about a web portal for AEC members to use.
Action – G Shackell to draft AEC survey.

O 5. Public attendance at meetings

G Shackell referred committee members to the memo and draft guidelines that were circulated prior to the meeting. The following comments/changes to the guidelines were noted:

- Introduction and Point 7: It was agreed that intention to attend a meeting must be notified to the committee secretary no later than 10, not 5 working days prior to a scheduled meeting.
- Point 1: delete 'November meeting' and replace with 'last meeting of the year'.
- Point 3: 'code reviews' should be replaced with 'code of ethical conduct reviews'.
- Point 4: it was agreed that it was acceptable to keep members of the public waiting while closed agenda items were discussed.
- Point 6: there was some discussion about the timeframe required to post agendas online. The suggested 14 working days before the scheduled meeting may not be achievable due to secretariat workload, time taken to consult committee members about agenda items and internal procedures for redacting text and getting information posted online. It was agreed that maybe an indicative agenda be posted online and if members of the public were interested in attending a meeting the final agenda could be sent to them then. It was agreed therefore to delete this section.

- Point 10: A Dale reported that it was against the law to record a meeting electronically without permission and agreed to forward references to the relevant pieces of legislation.
- Points 12 and 13: it was agreed that giving members of the public speaking rights might be a step too far at this early stage of public engagement, so it was agreed to delete these sections.

Actions:

A Dale to send G Shackell legislation references.

G Shackell to amend guidelines.

^{9(2)(a)} to post guidelines on MPI website.

O 11. Mini tutorial: Presentation by 2020 Three Rs award winner

G Shackell welcomed B Albert and his colleague ^{9(2)(a)} to the meeting at 2.00 pm to give their presentation titled *Emulsified gels – An important refinement of oral administration of treatments in animals studies*. It was noted that B Albert and his colleagues from the Liggins Institute were the recipients of the 2020 Aotearoa New Zealand John Schofield Three Rs Implementation Award.

Orogastric gavage is currently the most common way of administering drugs and nutritional substances to animals to ensure accurate dosing. However, gavage requires a highly skilled operator and is very stressful to the animal. In toxicity and metabolic studies, gavage can be an inadvertent confounding factor as it imparts stress. Its use therefore is not recommended for toxicity studies.

Other methods of oral administration such as the incorporation of substances into food or water vary with appetite or thirst, and thus cannot be precisely controlled.

B Albert described some studies that planned to deliver fish oil to rats during pregnancy. The aim of the studies was to investigate: a dose response relationship between lipid peroxides in fish oil and their toxic effects in pregnancy; and the effects of supplementing unoxidised fish oil to rats during pregnancy and lactation that were fed a high fat diet on the metabolism and body composition of the offspring.

Fish oil is very prone to oxidation as it contains polyunsaturated fatty acids. In a study investigating the effects of oxidised oil during pregnancy, 30% mortality in rats was reported. It was suggested that orogastric gavage could be one of the contributing factors to the mortality figure.

B Albert and his team looked for alternate ways of administering fish oil. Incorporating fish oil in food was not considered a good option as it would have resulted in loss of quality with the time taken to eat the food. The plan was to deliver fish oil to rats in the form of emulsified gels. It is exceedingly difficult to incorporate oil in gels as oil and water are immiscible. The team worked through this problem and established a way of incorporating 1ml of fish oil in 5ml volume gel, the largest quantity used in the study.

The 'recipe' for delivering the oil into the gel involved preparing a 4% non-polar starch solution then adding the fish oil to this starch solution drop by drop in a blender making sure that the drop was completely dissolved in the solution. In this oil in water emulsion a solution containing a mixture of gelatin and raspberry jelly powder was added. Gelatin was used as a setting agent providing extra strength for solidification. The raspberry jelly powder was added to make the gels more palatable. The final mixture was set in ice tray moulds overnight by adding 5 ml to each mould. The rats were delivered the gels the next morning.

Once the gel protocol was optimised a pilot study was conducted to ascertain if raspberry jelly was necessary to ensure quick consumption of the gels. Rats were delivered eight different types of gels randomly with oxidised or unoxidized 1 ml or 0.05 ml oil with flavour or without flavour each day. All the gels were eaten completely while gels with raspberry flavour were consumed faster.

A second study looked to determine if rats that were on a highly palatable high fat diet would still eat the gels. Three type of gels were delivered – no oil gel, gel with standard raspberry content as per previous study and gel with double flavour. All the gels were consumed completely and the addition of double concentration of raspberry flavour did not make any difference. Gel consumption did not affect rat food intake or weight gain. Importantly, there were no ill health effects from the gels. Positive behaviour towards the intervention and towards the investigator was observed with the gels. A mandatory 5-day acclimatisation period was also introduced. This method was deployed, and 4,200 doses were delivered across both the studies.

To summarise; oil emulsified gels are highly acceptable to rats and enable a complete dose to be administered quickly. Gels with a standard concentration of raspberry flavouring had minimal impact on nutrition. The volume, size and quantity of raspberry flavour can be modified according to the requirements of the study. Further, studies can be planned to investigate if other animals are receptive to gels as well as the effect of gels on metabolism. This is an important refinement over oral gavage, replacing a stressful and risky experience with an enriching one.

G Shackell thanked B Albert and ^{9(2)(a)} for their presentation after which they were invited to have afternoon tea with the committee.

O 8. Approval of NAEAC annual report for 2020

G Shackell referred committee members to the draft annual report circulated prior to the meeting.

Some editorial changes were suggested. G Shackell agreed to address these and to advise changes for ratification via email before submitting the report.

Moved (G Shackell/R Hazelwood):

That editorial changes by G Shackell be circulated for approval and then the Annual Report be submitted to MPI.

The motion was put: carried.

Action - G Shackell to circulate edits for approval and then to submit the Annual Report to MPI.

O 10. MPI summary of CEC approvals, notifications and revocations

The MPI summary of code of ethical conduct approvals, notifications and revocations was circulated prior to the meeting was noted.

O 16. AEC service award

The draft AEC service award nomination form circulated prior to the meeting was noted. There were no comments or suggestions for change. It was agreed therefore to finalise the document.

Actions:

NAEAC to finalise the AEC service award nomination form.

^{9(2)(a)} to arrange for finalised document to be placed on the NAEAC webpage.

O 17. NAEAC correspondence

The correspondence log that was circulated prior to the meeting was noted. G Shackell reported on two additional items of correspondence including an email relating to the AEC approval flowchart and an operational matter relating to signatures on application forms.

The comments regarding the approval flowchart identified that as it is currently drafted it appears to be a stepwise process where each step is dependent on the answer to the previous one and could potentially be misinterpreted. This can be prevented by making each page stand-alone rather than contingent on the preceding page or a prerequisite for the subsequent page. As a result, the flowchart will be updated.

Action – G Shackell to update flowchart document.

O 18. Committee members' reports on recent presentations and attendance at conferences

G Shackell invited committee members to comment on any recent presentations and attendance at conferences. N Harding reported she had attended an AgResearch webinar on the relationship between humans and animals. G Shackell and M King also attended the same webinar.

O 7. Euthanasia guidelines

N Harding had updated the euthanasia guidelines for production animals while C Gillies had provided the information for wildlife/feral species. The amended document, along with a standard operating procedure (SOP) for fish from the ^{9(2)(ba)(i)} had been circulated prior the meeting. It was noted that if NAEAC wished to use the SOP it would need to seek permission from the ^{9(2)(ba)(i)}

The guidelines had a heading for 'invertebrates' but no recommended euthanasia techniques listed under it. Also missing was information relating to the euthanasia of rabbits. A Dale agreed to provide feedback on invertebrates and R Hazelwood on rabbits by the end of May. There were no further amendments or comments.

Actions:

A Dale to provide feedback on euthanasia techniques for invertebrates.

R Hazelwood to provide feedback on euthanasia techniques for rabbits.

O 9. Animal use for practising surgical techniques

G Shackell asked N Harding to lead the discussion of this agenda item. N Harding reported there was an approved ^{9(2)(ba)(i)} protocol for surgeons to practice surgical techniques on animals (i.e. non-recovery surgery). Some veterinary feedback after training sessions considered that there could have been more emphasis placed on the contribution these animals had made to the surgeons' development.

It was noted that sometime afterwards, surgeons were themselves surveyed and provided good feedback on what the training provided them.

There was some discussion about how many organisations were using animals for non-recovery surgery. In relation to the example noted by N Harding, 6-8 animals were used annually. It was noted that the ^{9(2)(ba)(i)} used animals to train medics.

The committee considered it might be useful to ask AECs what they do regarding non-recovery surgery training, including preliminary work with surgeons. A Dale agreed to send committee members a copy the material the ^{9(2)(ba)(i)} shared with ^{9(2)(ba)(i)} B Connor noted the use of human cadavers in medical training.

It was agreed to add surgical models to the subcommittee programme with the objective of providing some guidelines on the subject. N Harding, B Connor and A Dale agreed to be on the working group.

Actions:

A Dale to provide NAEAC with a copy of the material shared between ^{9(2)(ba)(i)} and ^{9(2)(ba)(i)} NAEAC to add surgical models to subcommittee work programme.

O 12. Animal use statistics

It was noted that when MPI published the 2019 animal use statistics report, the Communications team had sought NAEAC's view on the new reporting requirement related to surplus animals in case of any media inquiries. As that feedback had not been provided out of session, ^{9(2)(a)} agreed to put the topic on the May meeting agenda. G Shackell had circulated a link to the report and related infographic prior to the meeting.

It was noted that NAEAC supported the amendment to the Animal Welfare (Records and Statistics) Regulations 1999 that brought about the new reporting requirement. NAEAC's view was that it was good to now have a baseline figure in place. NAEAC also supported MPI's view that users of animals should report on their own animal use independently of what was reported to MPI.

It was agreed that NAEAC did not have to take any immediate action on this matter.

O 13. Compass Training Initiative

A Dale and M King provided an update on the ANZCCART Compass training initiative. The free online training modules relating to animal use in research and teaching are available for people across Australia and New Zealand. More New Zealand related content would be available in six months' time.

O 14. Three Rs award and ANZCCART sponsorship

As members of the Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART), A Dale and M King had been asked to talk to NAEAC about ANZCCART's sponsorship of the Aotearoa New Zealand John Schofield Three Rs Implementation Award. A Dale reported that the sponsorship money was likely to stop if ANZCCART was not recognised or noted as the co-awarder.

G Shackell reminded A Dale and M King that NAEAC did not have its own budget and had always sought external sponsorship for the Three Rs award. G Shackell located a letter from ^{9(2)(a)} that recorded sponsorship support. ^{9(2)(a)} reminded committee members that when the Three Rs awards were redeveloped in 2018, M King had been invited to join the judging panel to represent ANZCCART. Also, media releases highlighting the work of the winners of the awards had acknowledged ANZCCART's financial support. It was agreed to discuss this further with ANZCCART in July.

O 15. MPI update

The MPI update, circulated prior to the meeting was noted.

O 6. Update from NAEAC subcommittees

This agenda item was not discussed at the meeting.

There being no other items of business to discuss, the Chair thanked committee members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 4 pm with C Gillies performing the closing karakia.