



National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

**Te Komiti Tohutohu Matatika Kararehe ā-Motu
Tikanga hui: General Meeting**

**Rā: 16 February 2022
Tāima: 9.00 am – 4.00 pm
Via Microsoft Teams**

Meneti | Minutes

Komiti / Committee: Natalie Waran (Chairperson), Arnja Dale, Laura Bennet, Janine Duckworth, Rob Hazelwood, Jacquie Harper, Mike King, Nita Harding, and Dianne Wepa.

Nuinga / Attendees: 9(2)(a)

Nau mai / Welcome

N Waran opened the meeting at 9.07 am and performed the opening Karakia. 9(2)(a) was introduced to the committee as a new Adviser on the MPI Animal Welfare Science Team

Matangaro / Apologies

Rachel Heeney

Any Other Business Part One (Open to the Public)

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

Any Other Business Part Two (Public Excluded Agenda)

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

PART ONE (OPEN TO THE PUBLIC)

O 1. Deputy Chair election

Each year the deputy chair role is appointed to a committee member. J Harper was appointed NAEAC Deputy Chair for 2022. The committee thanked R Hazelwood who has held this role for the previous 12 months.

Moved (A Dale / M King):

That J Harper will fill the role of deputy chair of the National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee for 2022.

The motion was put: carried.

O 2. Confirmation of previous minutes

The draft minutes of the general meeting held on 16 November 2021 were reviewed. There were no amendments.

Moved: (R Hazelwood / M King):

That the draft minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2021 be adopted as a true and accurate record

The motion was put: carried

O 3. Action list review

The committee reviewed the status of actions agreed at previous meetings and R Hazelwood was thanked for the work he has completed on the Good Practice Guide.

O 4. Review of NAEAC work plan

There are four workstreams currently under the NAEAC workplan, the committee were asked to review this and determine if there are additional things which could be included.

- 1) **Informed Public Discussion – Section 1.1.2:** NAEAC will also be holding a joint meeting with NAWAC in August, working title: Are Insects Sentient?

Action: N Waran and C Johnson to assist in organisation of the joint meeting.

- 2) **Informed Public Discussion – Section 1.1.3 Consolidate Relationship with ANZCCART:** M King will organise a date with ANZCCART

Action: M King to organise a date with ANZCCART

- 3) **Informed Public Discussion – Section 1.1.4 Promote public presence at NAEAC meetings:** The public attendance guidelines for NAEAC to be published on the website.

- 4) **Informed Public Discussion – Section 1.2.1 Provide infographic and information on working of RTT system:** The NAEAC digital presence subcommittee was discussed and who needs to be guiding this.

Action: 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(a) to pick this piece of work up and discuss with 9(2)(a).

Informed Public Discussion – Section 1.3.1 Provide tool for public to contact NAEAC (explore use of social media) – As NAEAC’s website is now live, J Harper raised the appropriateness of social media as a means of making the committee more accessible. M King suggested NAEAC should establish what engagement with the public would look like and how it could impact the workstream. It was agreed that the NAEAC website would be promoted for all queries, as well as directing people to the email address.

NAEAC noted the potential of utilising MPI communications team. L Ward confirmed MPI have social media accounts, but it can be difficult to get information published on this site, especially when there is increased sensitivity on animal welfare issues.

It was agreed that the committee may struggle to manage traffic through social media which could lead to an increase in public frustration, as a result NAEAC agreed that at this time use of social media by NAEAC was not feasible – but that MPI could use their channels to promote items of interest/importance for sharing to a wider audience.

The committee requested that statistics on traffic to the NAEAC website are brought to the committee annually.

Action: Send NAEAC email address to AEC members using AEC chairs to forward on.

Informed Public Discussion – Section 1.3.2 Create rehoming guidelines: The subcommittee for this task will re-assess the draft and circulate to NAEAC by the third quarter of the year.

Good Advice to Minister and DG – Section 2.2.1 Track response to advice regarding amendment of definition of animal (fish).

Good Advice to Minister and DG – Section 2.3.1 Agree CEC review process (CEC Subcommittee to recommend changes): NAEAC were informed there are 6 CEC’s to review before the end of this year and N Waran noted Te Pūkenga were drafting their new organisational pukenga CEC which should be ready for review so that it is operational by the end of the year. The committee briefly discussed the database AgResearch use to manage the organisations they are the parent AEC for.

Good Advice to Minister and DG – Section 3.1.1 Circulate AEC Newsletter: Former NAEAC chair Grant Shackell previously wrote a newsletter which was circulated to AECs. The committee discussed how often they would like to produce this, and it was agreed it would be less frequent than it has been previously, because there was a desire to encourage good use of the new website by AECs. At each quarterly meeting the committee will endeavour to identify different topics to include in the newsletter and website, these can also be provided out of session to 9(2)(a).

Action: 9(2)(a) to include Newsletter/Website content as a standing agenda item.

AECs Supported to Ensure Animals used Ethically – Section 3.1.3 Plan NAEAC Regional Visit: It was agreed the committee would travel to visit a selection of AECs in the Hamilton area in June 2022.

Action: 9(2)(a) to contact 9(2)(a) to organise a meeting room and schedule a holding date.

Action: 9(2)(a) to liaise with 9(2)(a) to identify three CEC's and to contact the chairs to ask them to be available for a visit by NAEAC members (in person or virtually)

AECs Supported to Ensure Animals used Ethically – Section 3.1.4 Plan and hold AEC workshop: A Dale suggested an additional day is added to the Hamilton AEC visit and that a training workshop for AEC Chairs (and where possible members) could be held there.

Section 3.1.5. Plan and hold the AEC Chairs Meeting: A Dale noted the AEC chairs meeting has previously been small and could be moved to the third or fourth quarter of the year. A programme for past meetings should be available in NAEAC files – and this could be used as the basis for planning the 2022 training programme.

Robust ethical RTT system - Section 4.3.2 Meet with Independent Reviewers: Independent reviews were invited to the committee meetings previously and in the last AEC chairs meeting, all the reviewers met with MPI. 9(2)(a) noted MPI have previously organised this meeting as a teleconference. The feasibility of hosting 6 reviewers virtually was discussed and the committee agreed this could be added to the end of the AEC Chairs training meeting which will take place in June and will provide an opportunity for chairs and reviewers to engage.

Action: 9(2)(a) to start to plan the training programme with N Waran and A Dale

Action: 9(2)(a) and N Waran to add meeting with independent reviewers to the end of the June meeting.

9(2)(a) to be responsible for sending out information to AEC Chairs to alert them to the training day in Hamilton and to start to organise the logistics

Action: 9(2)(a) to find out if NAEAC can have feedback on AECs from the MPI auditors.

Robust ethical RTT system – Section 4.4.1 Promote and present John Schofield Three Rs award: This will be discussed under agenda item O20.

O 5. Update from NAEAC subcommittees

N Waran requested updates from the subcommittees and M King informed her that the 3R's award subcommittee is no longer operating and this should be addressed at the general NAEAC meetings.

Action: M King to liaise with ANZCCART on 3R's Award, membership, and timing. A Dale and 9(2)(a) will be included in this.

Action: N Waran and D Wepa to discuss Mātauranga Māori

O 6. NAEAC annual report 2020 / 2021

The drafted annual report was circulated prior to the meeting and taken as read. N Waran has emailed 9(2)(a) with an update to be included and the committee were invited to comment on the current contents of the report.

NAEAC discussed the use of the word "sacrifice" in regard to animals used in RTT and agreed to amend to "contribution".

The following amendments were agreed to:

- A Dale (in addition to N Waran) were both invited speakers to Companion Animal New Zealand's "Good Life" conference.
- NAEAC membership requires updating

- An additional dash on page 5 to be removed
- 9(2)(a) to format and update committee member fees.

Moved: (J Harper / A Dale)

That the NAEAC annual report 2020 is agreed to subject to changes discussed.

Action: 9(2)(a) to make amendments as agreed prior to publication

The motion was put: carried

The general meeting was adjourned at 11.15am for a short break.

O 7. Collecting 3Rs information

NAEAC discussed the animal manipulation statistic return letter which was sent out to all AEC Code Holders at the end of 2021, the letter included a request for additional details on how AECs have upheld the 3Rs. 9(2)(a) informed the committee that there have been very few returns which have provided this information.

The committee discussed how the statistics collected could be used to better align with their purpose of improving animal welfare, A Dale highlighted the importance of NAEAC continuing to promote this. It was noted that the majority of the “replace” cases would not reach AEC due to no animals being used and the committee discussed if it would be possible to access these cases as clear examples of where the 3Rs have been adopted, especially as replace is the most effective R for improving animal welfare.

A Dale noted that the other 2 Rs – refine and reduce, should be addressed in their ethics application but that application forms can be inconsistent.

N Harding suggested that in line with AgResearch reporting on their 3Rs award, NAEAC could highlight the winners and other applicants’ good news stories, along with capturing work which doesn’t need to use live animals for research.

The placement/promotion of the request for additional information in the stats letter was discussed and J Duckworth suggested that it should be moved up the letter to make it more prominent, as opposed to its current placement at the end, or alternatively it could be included in the actual stats form.

The committee noted to effectively promote the 3Rs, we need to be able to have data showing where advances have been achieved in relation to the 3Rs. N Waran suggested to encourage AECs to provide this additional detail, NAEAC could visibly showcase the approaches that have been successful in positively advancing the 3Rs – and especially where there are examples of replacement and reduction.

R Hazelwood suggested several amendments which could be made to the form and potentially the statistics collection regulations.

In (h) of the form, the organisations are required to disclose the number of animals deceased at the end of the research, however this results in combined statistics which can be complex for the public audience to differentiate. Not all animals who have died during or at the end of a study, suffered or died because of the study. Some may have been healthy at the end of the study and then euthanised. It would be beneficial if these statistics can be separated out.

In (i) of the form, organisations are required to disclose the number of animals manipulated, which are still alive at the end of the year, R Hazelwood raised this may provide an inaccurate figure as farm animals may go to sale yards in February of the following year.

NAEAC asked how they could recommend changes to this wording, if they wanted to and 9(2)(a) noted the simplest way to do this is to take note of suggested changes at the general meetings and that MPI can help NAEAC work through thought processes for recommendations and advisory papers can be written by Policy for discussion.

N Waran asked if it was possible to make the 3Rs information request a regulation, K Littin suggested NAEAC devote more attention to how they are requesting this information.

The committee adjourned the meeting for lunch at 1.02pm.

Action: 9(2)(a) to check with MPI Legal whether the form can be amended to include a request for information AECs are not obligated to provide under legislation.

Action: 9(2)(a) and 9(2)(a) to discuss privacy issues and wording on the form when requesting additional information on the 3R's.

O 8. Training support for AECs

The paper was circulated prior to the meeting and is taken as read.

A Dale noted there has been valuable information from past workshops which could be recirculated.

J Duckworth raised the current difficulties the committee may experience trying to hold a face-to-face workshop and identified a need for refresher training, this could be held virtually for an hour. A Dale informed the rest of the committee of the online training available through Compass. NAEAC agreed this is a good introductory course for AECs, is free to complete and more modules are currently being developed. This will be highlighted again in the newsletter sent to AECs. M King noted that Otago University is using Compass and it is a training requirement that all researchers and new students complete.

Whilst there is a lot of work to be done within the training space, NAEAC is not the training body but can emphasise that the onus is on organisations and AECs. NAEAC would be able to address a gap within policy, if it was making it hard to ensure people have proper training. NAEAC could stipulate the topics in which people need to be trained and provide the AECs with training to ensure that they take a consistent approach when making decisions.

J Duckworth noted that NAEAC have not been able to provide any training for 2 years due to COVID-19 and the committee agreed this can now be worked around.

Action: The subcommittee will lead the development of training for AECs to take place in 2022.

O 9. Parented AEC Arrangements – Presentation

N Waran introduced 9(2)(a) from AgResearch who will be leading a presentation on how they run their AECs and parent other organisations, as they are the largest organisation in New Zealand to parent others. AgResearch have always provided parenting and have used a digital system to manage this since 2014. 9(2)(a) noted the challenges they experienced with three AECs and the reasoning

behind the consolidation to one AEC (AAEC) at the start of 2021, along with the forming of Animal Ethics Offices, which are based at all four of AgResearch's research centres.

AgResearch make initial and annual visits to each of the organisations they are parenting, which is currently 60 organisations.

9(2)(a) talked the committee through the workflow from an application being submitted through to the application being approved. Key stages include the application being previewed by an Animal Welfare Officer and Senior Scientist before reaching the fortnightly meeting held by the AAEC. On the day of the AAEC meeting, the applicant will receive an email informing them of the outcome, all AAEC members are involved in the messaging being given back to the applicant.

AAEC were informed of that AgResearch received 199 modification submissions in 2021, a modification can be either a minor change to an CEC agreement including a change of date, location or small change to the number of animals required and can be approved of outside of the fortnightly AAEC meeting, or a major change such as a large change in the number of animals required, which must be discussed at the AAEC fortnightly meeting.

Other items which are discussed at the AAEC meetings include: Interim reports, adverse events, monitoring visits and parenting visits.

Monitoring visits are undertaken by an Animal Welfare Officer for 10% grade A, 50% C, 100% D and E impacts on manipulated animals.

9(2)(a) discussed potential non-compliance / breaches of a CEC can include: failure to follow protocol, a manipulation outside of approval period, non-listed staff taking part, using different species, taking place at a different location, adverse events not being reported and post-approval reports not being provided. As per the CEC, a formal letter of non-compliance would be recorded on the application.

9(2)(a) concluded that as a parent organisation, AgResearch are continually looking for ways to improve their interactions with the parented organisations and see this is an important service which has improved compliance and created a network of information on animal welfare laws, whilst providing the committee with a wide range of research to review. 9(2)(a) identified organisations who sign up to be parented but do not actively submit applications as the biggest risk and could be a result of people not knowing when animal ethics approval is required for studies to take place, especially in the veterinary industry. He also noted that the animal use statistics submitted to MPI by parented companies are invariably wrong.

N Waran thanked 9(2)(a) on behalf of the committee for the presentation and noted they were particularly interested in hearing the direction they see the AEC going and the issues they have experienced with the organisations they parent.

M King queried if the veterinarians not understanding the ethics application requirement was seen more in innovative practice or in large scale research; for example, a veterinarian suturing differently as they think it may heal faster. 9(2)(a) suggested that it was more innovative work and that clarity on what requires approval and what doesn't will be beneficial.

N Harding noted this has been incorporated into RTT work and will be discussed at the AEC workshop in June 2022.

J Harper raised the issue of retrospective applications being submitted and asked if this is something that 9(2)(a) has experienced, which he confirmed, to date, he has not.

9(2)(a) clarified that one month's notice is the standard process for normal applications, allowing an application to be submitted just one month before their research starts. An example of an urgent application can be when an organisation has experienced a delay in funding or due to someone being absent, they haven't been able to acquire a signature.

J Duckworth asked how they manage the workload for lay people on the AEC and 9(2)(a) highlighted how valuable the preview team have been, noting they remove a lot of the required reading and request clarity on the application before it goes to the AEC. N Harding added that the information being provided in advance, allows them plenty of time to read and consider the application. 9(2)(a) also confirmed that AgResearch book in the next auditor for the next cycle a year in advance.

J Harper question how AgResearch actively follow and promote the 3Rs and 9(2)(a) noted it is a compulsory part of the submission form completed by applicants, as well as being included in the first report after the research is complete, as the question "were the 3Rs impacted?".

N Waran highlighted the importance of AECs being progressive and 9(2)(a) commended the Animal Welfare Officers at AgResearch and noted they continually challenge for improvements to be made. It was noted that the Animal Welfare Officers across New Zealand do network and communicate with each other.

O 10. Plan AEC Visits

N Waran noted this topic had been addressed in O4.

O 11. Joint meeting with NAWAC on insect sentience

As this topic was addressed in O4, the subcommittee will begin organising this. The committee noted this meeting will be insightful and NAEAC will benefit from being involved.

The subcommittee was confirmed as N Waran, A Dale, M King and C Johnson.

O 12. Joint meeting with ANZCCART – Indigenous inclusion

As this topic was addressed in O4, this workstream will be picked up by A Dale, K Littin, M King and brought back to the general meeting scheduled for May 2022.

O 13. NAEAC website update

The NAEAC website is now up and running and the committee were encouraged to think about content they may wish to be uploaded on there.

N Waran suggested that a website folder is created in the NAEAC Piritahi space.

Action: 9(2)(a) *to create a Piritahi folder for website content that can be access by the committee.*

O 14. Communications Plan

The committee raised that they wish to develop a communication plan and to do this would like a presentation from the MPI communications team on what makes effective communication. This would

also assist the development of the infographics and inform the committee of who we are trying to reach as their target audience.

O 15. “Should, Must, Do” definitions

9(2)(a) informed the committee that Part of the Animal Welfare Act defines this, but if we do not define a word, the common definition can be used. In general, “should” and “must, there is usually a definition within the regulations.

“Must” would refer to a legal requirement, whilst “should” is an aspirational standard and that do is in correlation with must or should.

N Waran suggested that when the newly revised good practice guide is sent to AECs, that we remind them of the definitions and ensure the language used throughout the guide aligns with these definitions.

M King suggested that in the next revision of the good practice guide, NAEAC could say that it is a recommendation of best practice instead and the committee agreed.

Action: 9(2)(a) *to include the definitions in the email to AECs.*

O 16. Opinion pieces

NAEAC discussed the idea of publishing opinion pieces on their website, an example being their statement on the Porsolt test. The committee agree that these would be evidence-based statements to convey NAEACs’ stance and stimulate discussion.

It was noted that one could be a 3Rs profile and cover the 3Rs award and M King reminded the committee of the work written by A Dale on the 4th R – (Respect) and that this has never been a public statement. NAEAC agreed that these statements should have their own section on the new website, with an introductory paragraph on what the purpose of the opinion pieces and statements is and what may be incorporated in the future.

9(2)(a) noted there are other ways the committee could demonstrate their position on issues and asked the committee to consider if this is a channel for communication.

J Duckworth noted the newsletter could be a concise version of these topics and redirect to the committee website.

Action: *MPI Communications Team to present to the committee on this at the next meeting to assist with thinking.* 9(2)(a) *to set up*

O 17. MPI summary of CEC approvals, notifications, and revocations

The paper was circulated prior to the meeting and is taken as read.

Approvals: Nil

Notifications: Nil

Revocations: Nil

O 18. MPI update

MPI Animal Welfare Policy are now fully staffed as 9(2)(a) has joined the team as a policy adviser.

Exports of livestock by sea is now with the select committee and the third hearing is tomorrow and will be attended by the Minister. This will be publicly available on the primary production website.

Regarding the pig code of welfare, cabinet have requested a second economic analysis which has led to a delay in the code going out for public consultation.

NAEAC were informed that the redefining zebra fish as sentient past the larval stage is included in MPI Animal Welfare Policy's workstream, as this is a change to a primary piece of legislation, it will occur when several other amendments are required, however it is in line to be progressed and will occur with the next amendment to the Animal Welfare Act. Following this, NAEAC briefly discussed insect sentience and when this could potentially be addressed. 9(2)(a) talked the committee through the process for this occur; policy and legal analysis involving consultation would be required, prior to it being progressed up to the Minister and then cabinet. The committee were informed that this is a lengthy process.

9(2)(a) reminded NAEAC that tasks can be reprioritised as required.

O 19. Committee members' reports on recent presentations and attendance at conferences

N Waran suggested that this information is communicated to 9(2)(a) prior to each general NAEAC meeting to be collated. It can then be included in the meeting papers.

O 20. John Schofield Three Rs Award 2022

M King has contacted M Rands from ANZCCART to organise the award and request that 2 members of ANZCCART are on the panel to make the decision.

NAEAC discussed the nomination process and 9(2)(a) highlighted the service award that she was previously nominated for and provided her with the opportunity to present NAEAC. It was suggested this is a way for NAEAC to continue recognising those nominated amongst those who receive awards. J Harper suggested NAEAC ask for permission to upload these presentations to the website in future, to spotlight these achievements.

The meeting was closed at 2.14pm by J Duckworth with the closing Karakia.