



National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

The National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) is an independent statutory committee, established under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 to advise the Minister for Primary Industries on animal welfare matters. Its functions include recommending codes of welfare for issue, and making recommendations on legislative proposals including regulations relating to surgical procedures and traps and devices, and identifying research needs. It also promotes the development of guidelines for the use of traps and devices, and hunting and killing animals in a wild state.

Key items discussed at the 16 November 2016 meeting were:

- **Regulations** - The Animal Welfare Act was amended in May and now provides for regulations to set mandatory animal welfare standards and broadens the range of enforcement tools. The first two sets of regulations, live export and young calves, commenced on 1 August. NAWAC received an update on the progress of the remaining 77 regulations.
- **Layer hens** – There have been three questions raised on the interpretation of minimum standards in the code of welfare for layer hens. A subcommittee has been formed to work through these questions as soon as possible. Final positions were reached on the interpretation of the minimum standards in the layer hen code, and they will be discussed with the poultry industry.
- **Rodeos** – There has been regular correspondence from concerned members of the public on rodeo, and the interpretation of some of the minimum standards in the code. NAWAC discussed the concerns raised around presence of a veterinarian at rodeo schools and training; the rules around the rope and tie event; and the use of spurs. NAWAC will discuss these further with the relevant industry groups.
- **Selective breeding** – NAWAC agreed to publish the opinion paper on the animal welfare impacts of selective breeding. It will be sent to the Minister for Primary Industries for his information and subsequently published online for as a potential resource for the relevant industries to use when considering their breeding programmes.
- **Work plan** – Subcommittees were agreed for upcoming work in 2017. The work programme is available online.
- **Transparency and OIAs** – NAWAC has been receiving an increasing number of requests for information under the Official Information Act. Members were asked to consider options for making NAWAC's work more transparent, which is to be discussed at the next meeting.
- **Next meeting** – Meeting dates were agreed for 2017. They are: 22 February, 17 May, 16 August, 17 August (date for a proposed public workshop on animal sentience), 15 November.