

# Purpose

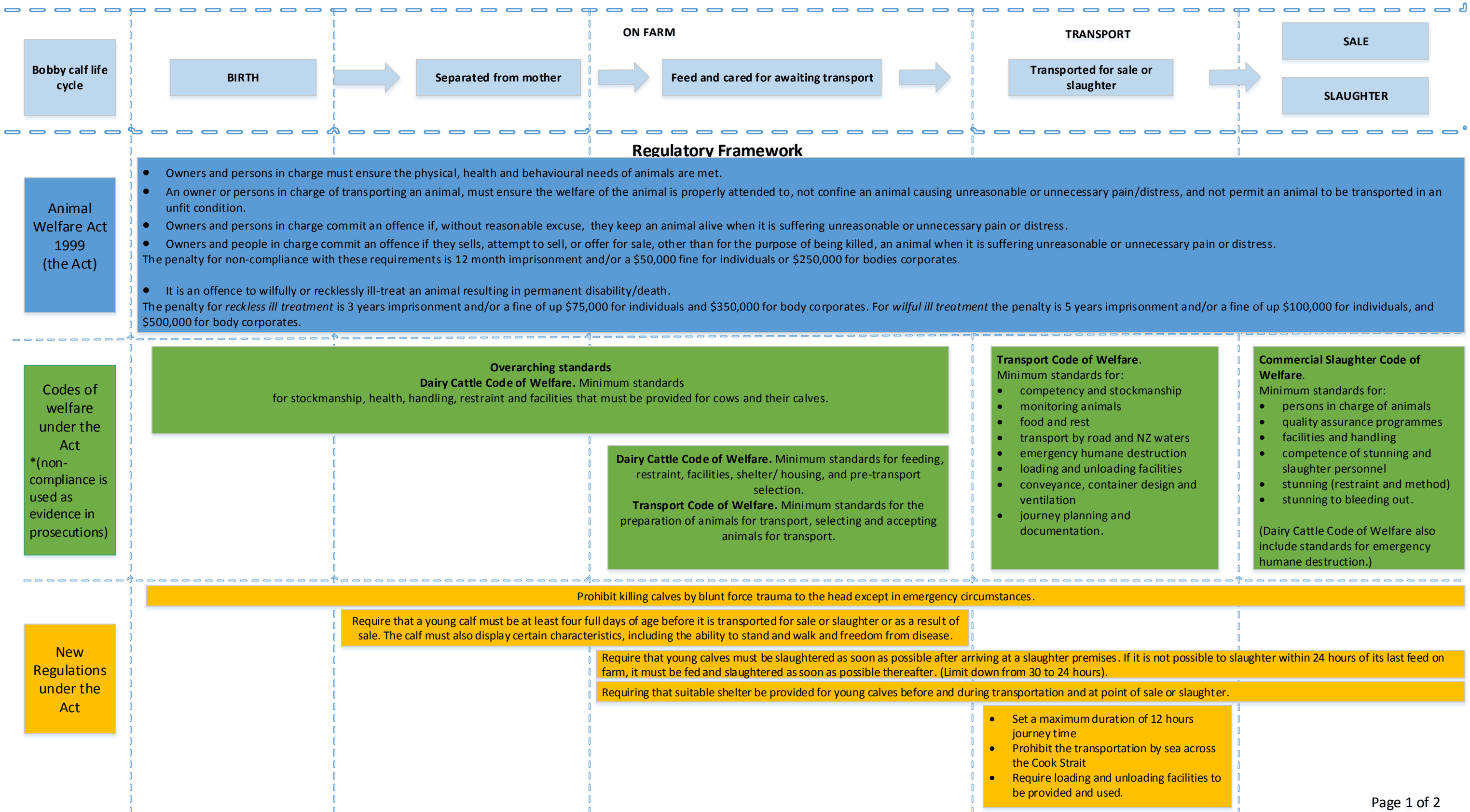
This paper illustrates the full suite of activities undertaken to protect bobby calf welfare including the development of new regulations.

# Appendix B: Protecting Bobby Calves



# Background

MPI plans to introduce a series of new regulations to further protect bobby calf welfare. We want these regulations in place by 1 August, prior to the bulk of the 2016 calving season. The regulations make up a part of a system-wide response to protect the welfare of bobby calves.



## Activities

The regulatory framework is part of the wider system that protects bobbies. There are a number of other activities taking place across that system that will also enable us to deliver effective welfare for young calves.

# Protecting Bobby Calves

## Operating Environment – Activities

### 1. Working with industry – leading the change:

- Joint Industry/ MPI led Animal Welfare CEO Forum established the Bobby Calf Project in 2008 to reduce premature mortality in bobby calves. *The mortality rate for calves arriving at slaughter plants has more than halved from 0.68% in 2008 to 0.25% in 2015*

- In November 2015, the CEO Forum established the Bobby Calf Action Group to facilitate better communication and proactive management of bobby calf welfare across the supply chain. Members include MIA, DairyNZ, DCANZ, Road Transport Forum (RTF), New Zealand Pet food Manufacturers Association, NZ Veterinary Association (Dairy Cattle Vet branch - DCV) and Fonterra.

#### To date the Bobby Calf Action Group has:

- Completed a process map of the fate of dairy calves to provide context for the whole system.
- Updated communications and guidance material relating to bobby calves, covering:
  - delivery of 90 training programmes focussed on skills, empathy and culture
  - guidance on management of slinks (bobby calves killed on farm)
  - facilities on farm for managing bobby calves.

#### The Petfood Manufacturers Association has also:

- Secured agreement of all members to voluntary CCTV monitoring of unloading and slaughter of bobby calves at all petfood premises
- Undertaken preseason training of staff
- Established an internal verification regime and revised the Code of Practice under the Animal Products Act – (this revision is in final draft stage)
- Committed to a maximum 12 hour limit from calf pickup to slaughter.

### 2. Working with communities – supporting the change:

MPI undertakes a number of educational initiatives working directly with farmers, transporters, processors and rural communities. Over the next 6 months these will include:

- promotion of loading platforms: engagement with meat companies and Road Transport Forum, specifics for how high, space requirements, shelter
- bobby calf guidance document: consolidating the minimum standards and information in the Dairy Cattle, Transport, and Commercial Slaughter Codes into one document
- direct engagement with farmers: messaging will relate to fitness for transport, bobby calf preparation, and awareness of codes of welfare
- communication with transport companies: sending all transporters a copy of DairyNZ calf welfare package, relevant codes of welfare, and fitness for transport educational material for staff training.

### 3. Enforcement Action – demanding the change:

#### MPI monitoring the system overall:

- 220 MPI veterinarians at slaughter plants who inspect the animals arriving.
- 100% autopsies of calves that are dead or condemned prior to slaughter.
- Every dead calf will generate an escalating response to the supplier, transporter, or processor. Where necessary an investigation will be launched and the farm of origin will be visited by an animal welfare inspector.
- A decision will then be made on the facts whether further enforcement action should be taken. This could range from the issuance of compliance notices or infringements through to laying criminal charges.

*During the coming year MPI will conduct proactive on farm verification audits on around 300 dairy farms to determine their level of compliance with animal welfare requirements.*

#### MPI responding to complaints received:

- Animal Welfare Inspectors investigate all complaints they receive.

*MPI has laid charges against a company and an individual in relation to alleged animal welfare offences involving bobby calves in late 2015.*

### 4. Evidence-based practice and regulation – keeping the momentum going:

The MPI/Massey University research on dairy calf welfare across the supply chain commenced on 27 June. Researchers will survey 37 bobby calf slaughter premises (meat export and pet food). Approximately 300 dairy farm and associated transport operators will also be visited throughout the season. The purpose of this research is to understand the practices that impact the wellbeing and health of young dairy calves. The research will run through the 2016 and 2017 seasons. Findings from the research will inform operational and regulatory improvements where required.



### DairyNZ programmes:

#### Tactics For Tight Times

Support to farmers to help them cope with tough economic conditions.

Farm visits that cover:

- feed and pasture management
- financial readiness (how to prepare for and get the most out of conversations with accountants and financial advisors)
- people wellness.

#### Calving Smart Events

Nationwide workshops for farmers covering:

- care for calving cows
- care for calves
- managing the farm through the spring period.

#### Bobby Calf Focus Events

Nationwide farmer workshops delivered by vets focusing on calf health. Aim to help farmers to:

- fine-tune calf care processes and staff training
- confirm 'fit for transport' requirements
- identify good calf loading facilities and adjust their farms if necessary
- communicate well with their staff and their transporter.

(DairyNZ has also developed a series of resources for farmers and the wider industry including guidance material for loading facilities, a fit for transport poster and website resources.