



ANIMAL WELFARE

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

Annual Report 1 January to 31 December 2017

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee
C/- Ministry for Primary Industries
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New Zealand

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NAEAC

National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee

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Chairperson's Comment

The National Animal Ethics Advisory Committee (NAEAC) continues to focus on supporting the animal ethics committees (AECs) that operate under Part 6 of the Animal Welfare Act 1999 (the Act). Each AEC plays a significant role in ensuring that the welfare of the animals that are used for the purposes of research, testing or teaching (RTT) is maintained to the highest standards.

I believe it is important that we continually examine how we relate to animals. The revision of the Act in 2015 included the word sentience, which has been a catalyst for reassessing how we determine animal welfare, especially in relation to “affective state”. Historically, we have concentrated on the impact we have on animals we use for RTT – how we “grade” it, and how we might reduce it. Acknowledging sentience means that we need to also consider how we might contribute to animals also having pleasurable experiences.

The inclusion of one word in an Act of Parliament played a large part in how NAEAC focused on its role in 2017.

As Chair of NAEAC I am grateful for a high level of support, both from within the committee and from the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI). The individual committee members are all enthusiastic and dedicated to ensuring the committee's effectiveness. Professor Craig Johnson acts as Deputy Chair when I am unavailable. Paula Lemow, Linda Carsons, Mark Fisher and James Kane from MPI make a significant contribution by ensuring that the committee stays informed and runs smoothly.

Grant Shackell
Chair



Membership

Members	Date of Appointment	Expiry of Appointment
Mr Grant H Shackell Dip Ag, Dip Field Technology, Dip Grad, MSc, Retired scientist (Independent Chairperson)	1.11.15	31.10.18
Ms Leasa C Carlyon JP, Dip Bus, Judicial Justice of the Peace (nominated by the Ministry for Women)	5.11.15	31.10.18
Dr Bronwen J Connor BSc, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacology, The University of Auckland (nominated by the Ministry for Women)	5.11.15	31.10.18
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)	15.12.16	31.10.19
Ms Therese (Terry) M Fenn BSc (Hons), Dip Tchg, Learning Area Leader, Science, Onslow College (nominated by the Ministry of Education)	1.11.12	31.10.18
Dr Craig A Gillies BSc PhD, Scientific Officer (nominated by the Department of Conservation)	5.11.15	31.10.18
Mr Robert P Hazelwood BSc, Animal Services Manager, MSD Animal Health (nominated by Agcarm Inc)	15.12.16	31.10.19
Professor Craig B Johnson BVSc PhD, Cert VA DVA Dip ECVA, Professor of Veterinary Neurophysiology, Institute of Veterinary, Animal and Biomedical Sciences, Massey University (nominated by the New Zealand Veterinary Association)	1.11.13	31.10.19
Dr Malcolm D Tingle BSc (Hons) PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology & Clinical Pharmacology, The University of Auckland (nominated by the Health Research Council of New Zealand)	1.11.13	31.10.19

Professor Craig Johnson was elected Deputy Chair for 2017.

Fees

Government policy requires disclosure of fees paid to members of statutory boards and committees. The daily fee paid to committee members during 2017 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 2017.

Member	Fees paid during 2017 (gross)
G Shackell	\$14,850.00
A Dale	\$5,000.00
L Carlyon	\$5,120.00
B Connor	\$3,600.00
T Fenn	\$4,400.00
C Gillies	\$0.00
C Johnson	\$7,200.00
R Hazelwood	\$1,600.00
M Tingle	\$0.00

As a public servant Dr Craig Gillies does not receive meeting fees. As a university staff member, Dr Malcolm Tingle did not claim fees in 2017.

Meetings with the Minister

On 6 June 2017, the Chair and the Chair of the National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) met with Hon Nathan Guy, the then Minister for Primary Industries, to advise him of their intent to host a sentience workshop to gather views from stakeholders, which would inform future code and regulation development. The workshop was held in November and is referred to elsewhere in this report.

With the change of Government following the 2017 General Election, Hon Meka Whaitiri was appointed Associate Minister of Agriculture with responsibility for animal welfare. On 14 December 2017, the Chairs of NAEAC and NAWAC met with her to introduce themselves and to begin a dialogue between the Minister and the two advisory committees that are appointed under the Animal Welfare Act.

Animal Ethics Committees

One of NAEAC's primary functions is to provide information and advice to AECs that will promote and assist with good decision-making. Apart from responding to specific requests for advice, activities in this area in 2017 included:

- **AEC visits:** Once a year, NAEAC visits AECs in a regional location. In 2017, those visits were made

in the Dunedin area and included:

- AgResearch Ltd's Invermay campus;
- Abacus Biotech Ltd;
- Techion Group Ltd;
- University of Otago;
- Otago Polytechnic.

Where and when possible, NAEAC members also attend AEC meetings in their area in an observational role.

- **AEC newsletters:** One newsletter from the Chair was sent out during 2017. This included advice and comment on several topics that had been identified during the year.
- **AEC Chairs meeting:** NAEAC hosts a biennial meeting of AEC Chairs in the year between the biennial AEC workshops. The 2017 meeting was replaced by an invitation to AEC Chairs to attend a workshop on Sentience co-hosted by NAEAC and NAWAC. This meeting was held in the Pipitea Centre in Wellington on 15 November.

Code of Ethical Conduct (CEC) Reviews

NAEAC reviewed 8 CECs during 2017. With such a large number of codes to review, a special meeting was required outside of the scheduled meetings. The following codes were reviewed:

- PharmVet Solutions
- South Pacific Sera Ltd
- SPCA College (subsequently revoked)
- University of Auckland
- University of Canterbury
- University of Otago
- Victoria University of Wellington
- Waikato Institute of Technology.

CEC Template

NAEAC's template for the preparation of a CEC was uploaded and made publicly available during 2017.

Most new codes are now being submitted using this template. The template is not mandatory, but it has been designed in a way that makes it easier for NAEAC in their deliberations especially when there are several codes to consider at the same meeting. Previously, every code was presented in an ad hoc format. While individual codes mostly contained the information that the committee was searching for it was often not in a logical order and was therefore often difficult to find.

In order to streamline the process, NAEAC strongly urges that the template is followed for all CEC applications. As with all such documents there will always be minor things that require attention. The template will remain as a "living" document, which will be regularly updated.

NAEAC Awards

- An AEC Service Award was presented to Ms Sharon Bennie, secretary of the AgResearch Invermay AEC during NAEAC's site visit in May.
- There was no NAEAC Three Rs Award offered in 2017.

NAEAC considers that it has a significant role in encouraging researchers to continually find new ways to Reduce, Refine and Replace the use of animals for the purposes of RTT.

During 2017, NAEAC undertook a programme of fundraising and secured funding to underpin two awards that will substantially raise the profile of Three Rs Award.

NAEAC expects to announce the new awards in mid-2018.

Mini-tutorials

NAEAC continued to arrange speakers to present a mini-tutorial at scheduled meetings. Mini-tutorials offer the committee members a chance to upskill in topics of interest at a variety of levels. This enables NAEAC to address its operational objective of increasing knowledge, experience, understanding and to inform the viewpoints of committee members.

Mini-tutorials in 2017 included:

- **Never let a crisis go to waste – getting animal welfare to the year 3000**

Dr Mark Fisher (MPI) used recent examples of animal welfare “crises” – bobby calves, live animal exports, and rodeos – to ask if common responses including, protests, exposure via covert activity, prosecution, education, and prohibition through legislation, codes of welfare, guidelines, and assurance programmes were fair and sustainable? Poor animal welfare can be the result of human ignorance, indifference towards animals, health and personal difficulties, and financial hardship. Compromises to animal well-being can also be the result of conditions deemed necessary for the benefits accruing to humans, e.g. confinement of rodents in cages for the purposes of research, testing and teaching. Can acknowledging and addressing these different factors or drivers of poor animal welfare lead to a more equitable system?

Getting to the year 3000 may require recognising that while all humans were once foragers and farmers, “real” animals no longer figure in people’s lives yet most react instinctively and emotionally to instances of poor welfare. In contrast, decisions made by AECs and NAEAC tend to be slow and reasoned. Animal welfare leadership may require bridging that divide and providing transparent oversight, monitoring and assurance in a way which satisfies both ways of determining if the treatment of animals is humane.

- **Otago Museum**

Committee members visited Otago Museum to hear about plans for a new science exhibition due to be opened in 2018. An insight was given into the planning to decide on exhibits including some proposed biological exhibits. While they fell outside the manipulation of animals, RTT members were interested to learn of the due diligence process that went in to determining how exhibits that may include living organisms were selected.

- **Shark Tracking**

A mini-tutorial on shark tracking, presented by Mr Warwick Lyon, was introduced by reference to rig sharks in Pauatahanui Inlet, Wellington. Rig range in size from between 1.1–1.5m in length and are an important commercial fish in New Zealand. These sharks have flattened teeth and feed mainly on animals that burrow in the sea floor, especially crabs. In spring and summer they come into harbours to mate.

Because of their sea-floor activity, rig can easily dislodge tracking systems. However, a small, temporary float, which stays on the surface and is easily towed along, can be tied to a shark using nylon cord. A device inside the float transmits GPS data, allowing a computer to collect build a detailed map of real-time shark locations which can identify what habitat the shark is in and what it is feeding on.

The discussion then moved to great white sharks. New Zealand great whites are born in the far north and migrate to the south of the country. Females can be 4.5m in length and males 3m in length. In 2005 it was believed that New Zealand sharks were shared with Australia and liked the cold. Now it is known that New Zealand has its own populations and that they take “tropical” holidays.

New Zealand great whites are tracked using popup tags which are implanted in the muscle under the dorsal fin with a tagging pole. Sharks are lured to the boat by dropping burley into the water. The tag records depth, temperature and location, storing the data for up to a year. They then release themselves from the shark, float to the surface, and transmit summaries of the data to a satellite. If the tags are physically recovered, the data collected can be downloaded. Popup tags provide only approximate location data, so they are most useful for tracking long-distance migrations.

- **The role of accredited reviewers in the CEC review process**

NAEAC is required to consider all applications for new codes of ethical conduct. Prior to submitting an application, code holders who have an existing approved code must undergo a review of their compliance with that existing code. During the evaluation process, the committee is provided with the review reports associated with any expiring codes.

Dr Virginia Williams, an accredited reviewer who is also the immediate past Chair of NAEAC, spoke to members about the independent review process. She noted that to her, undertaking a code review was a relatively easy process because the performance standards which applied to the review were very prescriptive.

As well as looking into procedural matters reviewers also assessed the quality of care the animals received at the institution. A review could take 3–10 days depending the size of the organisation. Smaller organisations may have a very focused approach to the use of animals for RTT, whereas larger organisations may have multiple AECs and/or multiple organisations with an arrangement to use its CEC.

Early each year the accredited reviewers are invited to participate in a teleconference to share any learnings from the previous year's reviews. MPI staff and representatives from NAEAC have always been in attendance. All but one of the current accredited reviewers are registered veterinarians.

Animal Welfare Amendment Act (No 2) 2015

Organisations that use animals in RTT must now collect more information about the numbers of animals used, thus increasing transparency.

From the first of January 2018, all CEC holders were required to count two new forms of manipulation. Firstly, the number of animals that were killed specifically so that their bodies or tissues could be used for research. Further, a new requirement to count the number animals that produce offspring with a potential for compromised welfare also took effect.

NAEAC continued to assist MPI with drafting regulations that have resulted from the passing of this Act. A regulation relating to the reporting of the number of animals bred for RTT, but not used and killed will take effect when the next reporting year begins on 1 January 2019.

NAEAC Publications

During 2017, NAEAC made the decision to take a more holistic approach to drafting guidance material for use of AECs. Rather than having multiple documents incorporating (and occasionally duplicating information in different places), the committee decided that it was more appropriate to develop a single guiding document that could be updated each year.

Each committee member took responsibility for reviewing two of the existing documents to determine sections requiring change. A subcommittee then undertook to amalgamate the documents for the full committee to consider and finalise during 2018.

Compilation of a list of appropriate papers around current Analgesic Best Practice for the Use of Animals in Research and Teaching continued and is expected to be made available in 2018.

Sentience Workshop

It was pleasing to see a good attendance, and participation, from the RTT community at the sentience workshop held in November.

Part 6 of the Animal Welfare Act allows the use of animals for RTT. As long as animals are used for RTT, there is a need to focus on how to make a better life and protect them from harm by applying the notion of sentience. To achieve this the RTT community must continue to actively encourage the discovery of ways to **Replace** animals with non-living or non-sentient alternatives; **Reduce** the number of animals used; and **Refine** techniques to minimise pain or distress (the Three Rs).

There is a need to continually review the scientific evidence around the onset of sentience, especially during development, and assess how that might influence, or preclude, the use of some specific animal models for RTT. There is also a need to regularly examine Part 6 of the Act to ensure that it reflects current understanding of animal sentience.

Rehoming animals used for RTT

During 2017, the committee was asked to provide evidence to the Primary Production Select Committee in response to a petition presented by Tara Jackson on behalf of the New Zealand Anti-Vivisection Society (NZAVS) and Helping You Help Animals (HUHA). The petition called on the House of Representatives to “pass legislation to introduce a mandatory animal retirement policy for animals used in research, education and teaching”.

Research institutions would be required to make a good faith attempt to offer animals to rescue centres once research is complete. An offer was made by NZAVS and HUHA to be a point of contact for researchers who may have animals that are appropriate for rehoming.

NAEAC has advised AECs and code holders that options are available for rehoming animals where appropriate.

Committee members' presentations and attendance at conferences

During the year individual NAEAC members attended and/or gave presentations at several conferences or workshops. Some members also undertook special interest visits.

These included:

- NAWAC and NAEAC sentience workshop;
- Australian and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching (ANZCCART) annual conference “Maintaining social licence in a changing world” held in Queenstown in September;
- International Compassionate Conservation Conference in Sydney;
- Workshop for animal welfare officers hosted by ANZCCART;
- National Centre for the Replacement, Refinement & Reduction of Animals in Research session in the United Kingdom;
- Presentations to AgResearch campuses around New Zealand to provide an update about upcoming changes to Part 6 of the Animal Welfare Act;
- Wellington Zoo; and
- Primary Production Select Committee hearing relating to the petition for rehoming animals following use for RTT.

NAEAC

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