

## SWFSPP STEERING COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING RECORD

Thursday 9 December 2021 | Videoconference

**In attendance:** Emily Sears (AHA - Chair), Mikhaila Nye (AHA – Record), Bill Crowe (Aus. Gov., Operational Science Program), Skye Fruean (Aus. Gov. NAQS), Liz Bolin (NSW Gov., Southern jurisdictions representative), Elizabeth Stedman (NT Gov.), Janine Barrett (Qld Gov.), Graham Mackereth (WA Gov.), Geoff Brown (Qld Gov., Reference Entomologist), Sarika Pandya (Cattle Council of Australia, Industry representative), Cassandra Wittwer (Aus. Gov. NAQS, *Item 4.4 only*)

### Objectives of the meeting:

1. Update committee members on program activities and management and address issues arising.
2. Address program objectives.

### Arrival, outline and zoom housekeeping (Chair)

- The Chair welcomed the committee and outlined the agenda for the meeting. No additional agenda items were requested.
- The Chair outlined recent staff movements within AHA. The committee acknowledged the valuable contributions provided by Ian Langstaff during his time managing the SWFSPP.
- The committee welcomed Geoff Brown as the new reference entomologist for the program, and thanked Bill Crowe for his contribution in the role over the past 5 years.

### 1. Program status

#### 1.1 Update on 2020 action items (M Nye)

- Spoke to the action items from the 2020 annual meeting.
- Action item 1: *Commonwealth to investigate the requirements for establishing capability for NW SWF PCR at Cairns laboratory (unresolved Action Item 8 from 2018)* in ongoing. S Fruean has been in touch with CSIRO and USDA. Further correspondence has not been received from USDA.
- Action item 3: *AHA to develop a discussion paper on use of chemical self-applicators for review and discussion by the Committee* has lapsed. AHA undertook an initial search for available literature, which highlighted a gap. As such a discussion paper was not pursued.

### Conclusion

Update on action items accepted as written.

#### 1.2 Program Status Report (E Sears)

- Updated the committee on the status of the SWFSPP as provided in the paper.
- The minor use permits were discussed under Agenda item 4.2. This achievement will be included in the 2021-22 status report.
- Discussion on the data reported in the status report, noting some underactivity due to reduced site access as a result of COVID-19.

### Conclusion

Program Status Report was accepted as written, noting the need to resolve discrepancies between data in NAHIS and the coordinator reports.

### Actions

- i. Committee to advise AHA of any data inconsistencies in the status report.

## 2. Surveillance and risk awareness reports

### 2.1 Surveillance and risk awareness activity reports 2020-21

#### Northern Territory (E Stedman)

- Spoke to the paper.

#### Queensland (J Barrett)

- Spoke to the paper.
- An update version of the report will be provided to AHA to circulate to the committee.
- Discussion on updates to the business plan which is recorded under item 5.3.
- Advised of a reagent supply issue that occurred due to COVID but has since been resolved.

#### Western Australia (G Mackereth)

- Spoke to the paper.
- Discussion on identifying traps down to the species level, which WA does. This isn't possible for other jurisdictions due to resourcing issues but agreement that it is useful for WA to keep doing.

#### NAQS (S Fruean)

- Spoke to the paper.
- Identified some data discrepancies between the paper and the status report. To be discussed OOS as per action item from item 1.2.

#### Conclusion

All papers were accepted as written, noting some updates to the Qld paper.

#### Actions

- ii. Qld to provide an updated activity report to AHA to circulate to the committee OOS.

### 2.2 Insect trapping on returning livestock export vessels 2020-21 (B Crowe)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Raised that the process of generating the report is very time consuming and questioned the value of the report. Committee agreement that the report move to be by exception and that any significant insect detections of relevance to the program be reported to the committee.
- Discussion on the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) representative going forward.

#### Conclusion

Paper accepted as written. Going forward this update will only include highlights of interest to the committee.

#### Actions

- iii. AHA and S Fruean to discuss OOS the DAWE representative on the committee going forward.

## 3. Entomology expertise

### 3.1 Role of reference entomologist

- The chair welcomed G Brown as the new reference entomologist and spoke to the TOR for the role. G Brown provided an overview of his experience and relevant work with SWF.
- The committee acknowledged B Crowe's contribution to the program over the past five years as the reference entomologist.

#### Conclusion

The Committee noted the change in the reference entomologist.

### 3.2 PCR for SWF identification

- S Fruean has been in contact with Debbie Eagles at CSIRO and a contact at USDA around the development of a NW SWF PCR with no progress. NAQS do not have capacity to progress this further.
- Discussion on Florida Keys NW SWF outbreak, with NAQS advising that they spoke to a contact involved in the NW SWF and confirmed that a PCR has not been developed.
- Qld proposed a potential way to progress the development of a NW PCR could be through hosting and supporting a student to undertake the work as a research project, subject to the availability of suitable samples, a student and funding.
- Noted that any specimens currently held are not likely to be suitable for PCR development as they will be destroyed in the process. Samples could be sourced from the US or South America.
- A focus for the program in 2022 will be identifying what samples of OW and NW SWF are available and addressing relevant gaps in reference specimens.

#### Conclusion

The committee agreed that a focus for the program in 2022 will be identifying what samples of OW and NW SWF we have available and looking into how more can be sourced, as well as developing the NW SWF PCR for use in Australia.

#### Actions

- iv. AHA and Qld to scope the development of a NW SWF PCR through supporting a student at the Qld laboratory.

### 3.3 Reference entomology collection and specimen availability

- Discussion on current specimen collections, with the last stocktake occurring in 2016. Noted that the collection does not contain any NW SWF larvae, which the committee agreed is a gap.
- Agreement that a list of the location of current specimens within Australia should be included as an appendix to the business plan and be reviewed annually.

#### Conclusion

A stocktake is to be conducted into the current location of specimens. This list will be included as an appendix to the business plan.

#### Actions

- v. AHA to assess and update the list of available reference specimens with input from committee members.
- vi. AHA to include an updated list of specimens as an appendix to the business plan.

### 3.4 SWF identification training

- Discussion on the date for the postponed entomology workshop with agreement that holding the workshop in conjunction with the 2022 annual meeting in the second half of the year is preferred. Further discussions around logistics are needed.
- AHA will provide support for the planning and facilitation of the workshop. Materials from the 2016 workshop can be utilised. P Saville has some ideas for the training component.
- Agreement that an aim from the workshop should be to test the revised diagnostic manual (4<sup>th</sup> edition) and ensure that it is fit for purpose.
- Discussion on the need to gauge the level of experience of workshop participants to tailor the program to their needs.

## Conclusion

The committee agreed to the hosting of the entomology workshop in the second half of 2022 in conjunction with the annual meeting. Further planning of logistics to occur in early 2022.

## Actions

- vii. Committee to confirm numbers of attendees for the entomology workshop.
- viii. AHA to refresh the training proposal in consultation with P Saville and G Brown and circulate to the committee an outline of the schedule.
- ix. AHA and G Brown to include a consultation step with attendees in the development of the training.

## 4. SWF risk profile

### 4.1 International activities and developments (S Fruean)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- No major updates to international activities have occurred in the SWF space.
- Australia now has Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) facilities for fruit fly in and sheep blowfly with local expertise in designing and operating a SIT facility.

## Conclusion

The report was taken as read with no further comments.

### 4.2 Domestic preparedness activities (E Sears)

- Advised the committee that APVMA has issued the minor use permit for the extension of several products to extend to Old-World SWF. Permit number is **PER90398**. AHA holds this permit it is in effect until 31 Oct 2026. The efficacy data available only supported the extension to OW SWF, with feedback from APVMA being that further efficacy data and a new application to prove that NW SWF is equally susceptible would be required. Directions for use and withholding periods are in accordance with existing approved labels.

## Conclusion

The verbal update was accepted with no further comments.

### 4.3 Spread simulations model

- No requests for modelling were identified.
- Any modelling requests can be directed to AHA OOS as required.

## Conclusion

No modelling requests raised.

### 4.4 Priorities for R&D (C Wittwer)

- C Wittwer outlined the trial plan, the results from the smaller Broome trial run, and the current planned setup at the feedlot in PNG. Discussion on the aim of the trial, with agreement that it is to determine the efficacy of the insectocutors, with Lucitraps as a control. This will be important to support the current use of insectocutors for incursion mitigation or early detection on returning livestock vessels.
- Discussion on the value of the trial, and the costs of transporting the materials to PNG being significantly higher than anticipated. The committee agreed that the trial is valuable, and supported its continuation despite the increased cost.
- The program is covering the cost of materials and transporting of these from Broome to Ramu Beef feedlot in Markham Valley, PNG via Perth.
- The setup of the traps is detailed in the SWF trap instructions which will be sent to PNG. Noted challenges with the insectocutor and the need for a generator or battery power,

which poses a challenge in the middle of a paddock in monsoon season. Agreement that a temporary roof over the insectocutor should protect it from water damage.

#### **Conclusion**

The committee were supportive of the trial and the current plans for implementation. Committee to review the trap instructions for PNG and provide comment to C Wittwer.

#### **Actions**

- x. C Wittwer to send the trap instructions for PNG to AHA to circulate to the committee for comment.

### **4.5 Industry report (S Pandya)**

- Provided a verbal update outlining priorities of Industry including the SIT, and continued export and port surveillance for SWF.

#### **Conclusion**

Committee noted the verbal update. No actions were raised.

## **5. Program documentation**

### **5.1 Targeted myiasis inspection work instructions**

- The myiasis work instructions were last updated in 2016.
- Discussion on the targeted myiasis surveillance program. WA had proposed targeting the processes that cause wounds and tracking the number of wounds examined for maggots rather than the number of animals. The location and time should also be recorded. Challenges were noted around accessing animals at the right time (after wounding) in the right location (near a port).
- Discussion on updating information that vets routinely report for surveillance investigations to include a field on the number of wounds visible on the animal that were checked.
- Need to critically evaluate the current process and alternatives. The current process will continue until a new process is identified and implemented.
- Discussion on the possibility of providing payments to vets conducting wound inspections and submitting maggots as an incentive to increase passive surveillance samples.

#### **Conclusion**

Further analysis on the value of active myiasis surveillance, and alternative processes, is needed.

#### **Actions**

- xi. AHA and coordinators to investigate alternatives to the current active myiasis inspections and reporting.

### **5.2 Adult fly trapping work instructions**

- The updated MSDS has been included in the instructions.
- Identified that further updates are needed, particularly around the administration and contact details. With Qld, NT and WA government laboratories all having OW-PCR capacity, it was noted that Appendix 9 could also be removed.
- Discussion on the WHS aspects of handling the pest strips and active monitoring of staff. Further discussion on implications of handling requirements is needed, with possible updates to the instructions to specify best practice.
- Discussion on the duration of trapping and the effect hot and humid climates have on the suitable duration. The instructions mention 10 days between setting and emptying. NAQS noted they are clearing traps every 2 days in the NPA to prevent loss of specimen quality.

## Conclusion

The committee raised various updates to the fly trapping work instructions. AHA to update and circulate to the committee.

## Actions

- xii. AHA to update the contact details in the adult fly trapping work instructions and remove Appendix 9.
- xiii. AHA to investigate handling requirements for dangerous chemicals such as pest strips and update the instructions as needed.
- xiv. AHA to update trap duration to include details on more frequent trap clearances for hot and humid climates.
- xv. Committee to provide any additional updates to the fly trapping instructions to AHA.

## 5.3 Business plan (E Sears)

- Spoke to the Business Plan, noting the current plan concludes at 30 Jun 2022. AHA will develop the new 2022-2025 plan in early 2022.
- Risk 3 (pg. 9) to be updated to include the discussion around PCR for NW SWF and diagnostic capabilities.
- Update to wording of risk 2 to be consistent throughout the section (pg. 11, Table 3 is different from pg. 9 and pg. 13, table 4).
- Updates required throughout the Business Plan to reflect the preparedness activities and the maintenance of the APVMA permits.
- AHA will liaise with coordinators around trap sites and plans to be updated for the next plan.
- Discussion on the note included in the plan around NAQS performing PCR of OW SWF. Jurisdictions all now have in house PCR capabilities for OW SWF so the note in the plan can be removed. Jurisdictions can claim PCR costs by negotiation with AHA under the program.
- As discussed in earlier agenda items, AHA to add a list of available specimens and location to the business plan as an appendix.

## Conclusion

Updates to the business plan identified. AHA to develop the new business plan and circulate to the committee in early 2022.

## Actions

- xvi. AHA to update the current version of the business plan to reflect that PCR costs are claimable by negotiation with AHA for 2021-22 and circulate to the committee.
- xvii. AHA to develop the 2022-2025 business plan and circulate to the committee in early 2022.

## 6. Awareness and communications materials

### 6.1 Maggot collection kits, brochure and poster, resource requirements (M Nye)

- The poster was updated in early 2021 to reflect changes to transport requirements of ethanol. Hard copies were sent to coordinators with the identification manual.
- Noted the brochure has not been updated to reflect these changes.
- AHA plans to conduct updates to the brochure, magnets, and video in 2022. The committee were supportive of this, noting the updated video can be utilised by the jurisdictions on their websites and social media.
- NT requested additional posters and magnets.
- Discussion on the use of propylene glycol for use in preserving maggots for transport. Work in this space is underway as part of the National Arbovirus Monitoring Program and may

provide an alternative to ethanol and hand sanitiser. B Crowe noted it's use at regional ports but that it is hard to source.

- No requirements for collection kits were voiced.

### **Conclusion**

The committee were supportive of a refresh to the SWF brochure, magnets and video, which AHA will progress in 2022. NT requested additional posters and magnets be sent.

### **Actions**

- xviii. AHA to refresh SWF communication materials.
- xix. AHA to send posters and magnets to NT.

## **7. Other business**

### **7.1 Date and location of next meeting**

- The 2022 SWFSPP AC meeting will be tentatively held in September or October 2022, with the Berrimah lab at Darwin suggested as a location.

**Meeting close:** 3:05pm

## SWFSPP STEERING COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING ACTION REGISTER

Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2021 | Videoconference

| #   | ACTION                                                                                                                                                      | WHO                  | BY       | STATUS   |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|----------|
| 1.  | Advise AHA of any data inconsistencies in the status report.                                                                                                | Committee            | Jan 2022 |          |
| 2.  | Provide an updated activity report to AHA to circulate to the committee OOS.                                                                                | J Barrett            | Dec 2021 | Complete |
| 3.  | Discuss OOS the DAWE representative on the committee going forward.                                                                                         | AHA and S Fruean     | Jan 2022 |          |
| 4.  | Scope the development of a NW SWF PCR through supporting a student at the Qld laboratory.                                                                   | AHA and Qld          | May 2022 |          |
| 5.  | Assess and update the list of available reference specimens with input from committee members.                                                              | AHA                  | Mar 2022 |          |
| 6.  | Include an updated list of specimens as an appendix to the business plan.                                                                                   | AHA                  | Jun 2022 |          |
| 7.  | Confirm numbers of attendees for the entomology workshop.                                                                                                   | Committee            | Jun 2022 |          |
| 8.  | Refresh the training proposal in consultation with P Saville and G Brown and circulate to the committee an outline of the schedule.                         | AHA                  | May 2022 |          |
| 9.  | Include a consultation step with attendees in the development of the training.                                                                              | AHA and G Brown      | Jun 2022 |          |
| 10. | Send the trap instructions for PNG to AHA to circulate to the committee for comment.                                                                        | C Wittwer            | Dec 2021 | Complete |
| 11. | Investigate alternatives to the current active myasis inspections and reporting.                                                                            | AHA and coordinators | Jun 2022 |          |
| 12. | Update the contact details in the adult fly trapping work instructions and remove Appendix 9.                                                               | AHA                  | Mar 2022 |          |
| 13. | Investigate handling requirements for dangerous chemicals such as pest strips and update the instructions as needed.                                        | AHA                  | Mar 2022 |          |
| 14. | Update trap duration to include details on more frequent trap clearances for hot and humid climates.                                                        | AHA                  | Mar 2022 |          |
| 15. | Provide any additional updates to the fly trapping instructions to AHA.                                                                                     | Committee            | Mar 2022 |          |
| 16. | Update the current version of the business plan to reflect that PCR costs are claimable by negotiation with AHA for 2021-22 and circulate to the committee. | AHA                  | Jan 2022 |          |
| 17. | Develop the 2022-2025 business plan and circulate to the committee in early 2022.                                                                           | AHA                  | May 2022 |          |
| 18. | Refresh SWF communication materials.                                                                                                                        | AHA                  | Mar 2022 |          |
| 19. | Send posters and magnets to NT.                                                                                                                             | AHA                  | Feb 2022 |          |