

NSDIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

TUESDAY 22 OCTOBER 2024 | Videoconference

Start: 13:00 | Close: 14:30 (AEST)

MEETING OBJECTIVES:

1. Discuss the 2023-24 coordinator reports and AHA status report.
2. Receive and discuss any urgent program matters.

 = paper V = verbal P = presentation

PARTICIPANTS

Mikhaila Nye (AHA-Chair)	Callain Howarth (SA-proxy)
Sheaaz Sakur (AHA-Record)	Emma Watkins (Tas.)
Bronwyn Hendry (AHA-Chair)	Julia Sarandopoulos (Vic.)
Emily Sears (AHA)	Anna Erickson (WA)
Emily Sellens (DAFF)	Keren Cox-Witton (WHA)
Rebecca Forsythe (NSW)	Bomber Lancaster (ALFA – <i>Industry Forum Representative</i>)
Stacey Carnogoy (NT)	Teagan Fitzwater (NAQS – <i>observer, proxy</i>)
Selina Ossedryver (QLD)	Alice Marshall (AVA)

Apologies: Diana Miller (SA), Guy Weerasinghe (NAQS), Raymond Chia (APL), Johann Schroder (SPA)

Welcome and introductions (M. Nye):

- The Chair gave an acknowledgement of the country, welcomed participants to the NAHIS meeting and noted all apologies.
- Participants were reminded of AHA's policy to not record meetings, and that the use of AI chatbots is not permitted.

1. Data collection and reporting (E. Sears) – joint item with the NAHIP and NSDIP Advisory Committees

- E. Sears provided an update on developments with the national animal health surveillance databases since the meeting in May.
- AHA has been in ongoing discussions with Animal Health Committee and the wider AHA member representatives, including industry. AHA hold major concerns about the suitability of AUSPestCheck® for animal health, and as such AUSPestCheck® is not AHA's preferred solution for our members. At this stage, in agreement with DAFF, the pilot of AUSPestCheck® as a replacement for the Central Animal Health Database (CAHD) has ceased.
- AHA acknowledged that concerns have been raised regarding the longevity of the CAHD and reassured the committee that the CAHD will be available for the next 3-5 years, with possibility of extension. AHA has invested in critical security and stability updates to the CAHD, and these are scheduled for completion by the end of the year. This will enable AHA members to thoroughly investigate and scope all options for a future system, with adequate time and reduced risk of database failure while this work progresses. The Committee asked for the details and timing of the completed security updates to be shared when available.
- AHA will utilise the data standards and data quality work already undertaken and implement them in the CAHD, with an information paper being circulated to AHC.

- The Committee expressed concerns around the financial impacts of not progressing with AUSPestCheck® and queried if there was any information available on what a future database project may cost.
- The Committee suggested that a review of the AUSPestCheck® animal health project should be conducted to inform future database discussions and direction.
- Jurisdictions sought clarification on what would happen to the grant funding that was provided under the AUSPestCheck® project. AHA noted that this would be an area for DAFF to advise on in due course.
- AHA has undertaken an initial review of the Data Management and Use Policies and updated them to be less specific to a particular database to support their initial implementation into the CAHD and any successor databases. These were circulated as part of the meeting papers.
- AHA aim to implement the agreed changes in reporting structure into CAHD for the 2025 calendar year reporting (commencing with Jan-Mar data, due in May). This will enable jurisdictions to progress and implement any adjustments to internal workflows and remove the requirement to report testing outside of suspect national notifiable disease investigations in NAHIP. The timing of initial implementation will also provide an opportunity for reflection and any additional updates to be discussed during the NAHIP/NSDIP Advisory Committee meetings in May.
- The Committee noted that the NAHIP data quality work is still to be progressed, and the subgroup has not met since the last Advisory Committee meeting. The intent is that the Data Management and Use policies be reviewed at least annually and can include relevant outputs once this work is complete.
- AHA have circulated the updated version of the data management and use policies to both NSDIP and NAHIP committees. Where changes are needed, suggested alternatives/proposed wording is requested to be provided in the next two weeks. Following this a workshop will be held with each committee to finalise an initial version of the policies for implementation in the CAHD.
- AHA clarified that at this time, progress on the NAMP Data Management and Use Policy is on hold while a subgroup discusses the testing protocols and the subsequent reporting structure. AHA will be in discussion with the Screw Worm Fly Surveillance and Preparedness Program to progress and implement reporting updates within the CAHD, although as a non-subscription program at AHA has different governance arrangements and will follow a different process to NAHIP and NSDIP. AHA is also working with to confirm any required updates for the National TSE Surveillance Program

Conclusion

The Committee noted the update on the database system and plans to progress with interim updates into the CAHD while a broader scoping and consultation process is undertaken with the wider AHA membership on future database needs across all projects.

Action items

1. AHA to provide update to members upon the completion of scheduled CAHD updates.
2. Committee to review the revised Data Management and Use Policy and provide AHA with any suggested changes with proposed alternative text.

2. 2023-24 update

2.1 2023-24 Coordinator Reports

NSW (R. Forsythe)

- Spoke to the report provided.
- NSW will finalise and share the reports and resources with the NSDIP Advisory Committee on the equine neurological disease investigation workshops and the poultry sampling and necropsy

video resources. When finalised, AHA will link these resources on the AHA NSDIP webpage, similar to the existing sheep necropsy resource.

- Noted that the training came in under budget due to HPAI which prevented the development of additional planned materials.
- R. Forsythe advised the Committee of her upcoming maternity leave from the end of December and that NSW will provide information on their new committee representative once confirmed.

NT (S. Carnogoy)

- Spoke to the report provided.
- Noted machinery of government changes and that their department is now called NT Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (NTDAF).
- Cattle investigations tend to utilise the NABSnet program rather than NSDIP.

Qld (S. Ossedryver)

- Spoke to the report provided.
- Informed the Committee that a large portion of Qld NSDIP budget will be used to support the delivery of bi-annual Animal Disease Investigation (ADI) training, with two workshops planned for private veterinary practitioners (PVPs) in the 2024-25 year.
- Noted that the Qld government NSDIP wildlife coordination now sits with Stephanie Grimmett.
- Refinement of proposal on future application of NSDIP in Qld including the allocation of funds to lab expenses vs. PVP training is continuing.

SA (C. Howarth)

- Spoke to the report provided.
- Noted the use of online invoice submission forms by private vets in SA for disease investigations. NSW sought additional information on the use of the online form and invoicing system and whether there was any feedback including from vets to inform other jurisdictions.

Tas (E. Watkins)

- Spoke to the report provided.
- Acknowledged that the number of private vets seeing large animals is decreasing which is a concern for animal welfare and response times.
- Informed committee that half of Tas NSDIP cases this year had a notifiable disease excluded.

Vic (J. Sarandopoulos)

- Spoke to the report provided.
- Informed the committee of a new project about evaluating and enhancing disease surveillance and the contribution of PVPs in enhanced surveillance. The project will run over a three-year period and include a survey of PVPs and the implementation of any enhancements to address gaps. Vic aims to keep the committee advised of any relevant findings. NSW mentioned they have done a similar project and will share findings with Vic.
- The Committee discussed a potential variation regarding the syndrome list and the option of 'no suitable syndrome'. Sometimes there may be competing syndromes or the paperwork does not indicate a clear syndrome. Feedback indicated that for some jurisdictions in the absence of a clear syndrome on the submission paperwork that they defer to the pathologist to determine, based on clinical signs and history.

WA (A. Erickson)

- Spoke to the report provided.

- Outlined that in WA, PVPs need to discuss with a government field vet prior to attending which supports discussion and the quality of investigations. Noted that there has been a slight reduction in the number of cases and that this may be influenced by currently depressed sheep prices. In the northwest, PVPs tend to utilise the NABSnet subsidies for cattle investigations.
- Informed the committee that WA is increasing subsidy rates paid to PVPs. The Committee were supportive and requested that WA share insights with the Committee if they receive any feedback from PVPs around the increased subsidies.

WHA (K. Cox-Witton)

- Spoke to the report provided.
- Noted that while the full allocated budget was approved, there are often challenges in getting fresh samples to the lab, which ultimately resulted in a small under expenditure this year.
- Noted that the level of vet subsidy is generally from \$450-500, with an increase to \$600 for large events with multiple necropsies/or field investigations.
- Acknowledged that the funding is valuable as it enables vets to follow up interesting cases that they couldn't otherwise.
- Outlined that two additional veterinary clinics have joined the sentinel clinic network. WHA shared the link to the list of sentinel clinics. <https://wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au/Our-Work/Surveillance/Sentinel-Surveillance?t=2>

Conclusion

The Committee accepted the coordinator reports as written.

Action items

3. NSW to provide the training reports to AHA for circulation, and the associated resources (when available) for AHA to link on the AHA NSDIP webpage.
4. SA to share information on their online invoicing system for disease investigation requests and any feedback from PVPs with NSW.
5. NSW to share survey on surveillance review with Vic.
6. WA to share insights on any feedback from PVPs on the increased subsidy rates (when available).

2.2 2023-24 Status Report (M Nye)

- Spoke to the report provided

Conclusion

The Committee accepted the report.

3. Other Business

3.1 Other Business

- DAFF provided an update on its paper about its proposed project to increase EAD awareness and training of private vets, circulated at the May meeting (May – Action Item 2)
 - Informed committee that due to the H7 outbreak and lack of resources this project will not be proceeding.
 - The Committee reflected that locally based private practitioner training is important and that if DAFF has the resources in the future it would be valuable for it to partner with the jurisdictions to boost local based PVP and significant disease investigation training. This would be particularly valuable in jurisdictions that have fewer government veterinary resources.

- The Committee sought clarification around the provision of location details in the data reporting and whether, in instances where a location code (LGA or equivalent region) is used, could the database back-transform LGAs to centroid coordinates? AHA undertook to seek confirmation and provide advice.
- The Committee also discussed compulsory numerical values (e.g. number of cases or deaths) in the database, noting that there should be an alternative for cases where the value is not identified or available (e.g. unknown).

Conclusion

The Committee noted the update from DAFF on the EAD awareness training project and queried whether there is the ability to back-transform location codes (LGA or equivalent regions) to centroids latitude and longitude details in the CAHD, as well as alternative entry options for compulsory numerical fields in the database.

Action items

7. AHA to check if the CAHD can back-transform location code to centroid latitude and longitude and update the data fields accordingly in the data management and use policies.
8. AHA to check what other options could be provided when unable to enter compulsory numerical values in the database.

NSDIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING OCTOBER 2024

ACTION REGISTER

#	ACTION	WHO	BY	STATUS
1	AHA to provide update to members upon the completion of scheduled CAHD updates.	AHA	EARLY 2025	
2	Committee to review the revised Data Management and Use Policy and provide AHA with any suggested changes with proposed alternative text.	NSDIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE	NOVEMBER 2024	COMPLETED
3	NSW to provide the training reports to AHA for circulation, and the associated resources (when available) for AHA to link on the AHA NSDIP webpage.	NSW	EARLY 2025	IN PROGRESS
4	SA to share information on their online invoicing system for disease investigation requests and any feedback from PVPs with NSW.	SA	MAY 2025	COMPLETED
5	NSW to share survey on surveillance review with Vic.	NSW	MAY 2025	
6	WA to share insights on any feedback from PVPs on the increased subsidy rates (when available).	WA	MAY 2025	
7	AHA to check if CAHD can back-transform location code to centroid latitude and longitude and update the data fields accordingly in the data management and use policies.	AHA	NOVEMBER 2024	COMPLETED
8	AHA to check what other options can be provided when unable to enter compulsory numerical values in the database.	AHA	NOVEMBER 2024	COMPLETED