

NAHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING 2021 MEETING RECORD

Wednesday 24th November 2021 | Videoconference

In attendance: Emily Sears (AHA – Chair); Mikhaila Nye (AHA – Record); Laura Macfarlane-Berry (Aus. Gov. – NAHIP representative); Adam Robinson (Aus. Gov. – Animal Biosecurity); Andrew Breed (Aus. Gov. – Animal Health Policy); Joshua Allas (Aus. Gov. – Aquatics); Skye Fruean (Aus. Gov. – NAQS); Geoff Campbell (NSW); Emily Doyle (NSW); Elizabeth Stedman (NT); Janine Barrett (Qld); Greg Williamson (Qld); Jane Owens (SA); Emma Watkins (Tas.); Julia Sarandopoulos (Vic.); Erin Kelly (WA); Tiggy Grillo (WHA); Jess van de Weyer (Australian Pork Ltd. – Industry Forum representative); Leanne Peebles (Aus. Meat Industry Council – Industry Forum representative); Samantha Allan (AHA – *in part*); David Gale (Plant Health Aus. – *in part*)

Apologies: Mary Wu (Australian Meat Industry Council – Industry Forum representative)

Objectives of the meeting:

1. Brief committee members on program deliverables, achievements, issues and expenditure.
2. Receive and discuss urgent program matters.

Arrival, outline and zoom housekeeping (E Sears)

- The Chair welcomed participants to the meeting and outlined the objectives of the program and structure of the meeting.
- The Chair introduced the new members G Campbell (New South Wales), E Watkins (Tasmania), J Sarandopoulos (Victoria), and E Kelly (Western Australia).
- The Chair noted the agenda and requested any changes and items for additional discussion. No changes or additions were requested.

1. 2020-21 in review

1.1 Update on 2020 action items (M Nye)

- Spoke to the action register and noted the status of all action items.
- Noted Action Item #3, to facilitate a review of the needs of specific data projects and additional data fields with input from the DAWE, is ongoing. AHA is looking at opportunities to progress this through the NAHS Plan, with concurrent work being undertaken through the AUSPestCheck trial.
- All other items are complete.

Conclusion

Update on action items accepted by the Committee.

1.2 Program Status Report (E Sears)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Qld requested the inclusion of a graph (similar to Fig. 2) showing the breakdown of investigations by jurisdiction reflective of population. Committee members supported this analysis.
- Discussion regarding Fig. 3 and what diseases are shown, noting the high level of equine investigations is likely to mainly be for Hendra. Suggestion to include a graph showing investigations by species for priority diseases.
- NAQS requested the inclusion of investigation data for feral animal species. The committee supported this.

- WHA requested AHA annotate human associated data (e.g. screw-worm fly exclusions), as 'human' as opposed to 'primate', as this inaccurately reflects Australia captive wild animal surveillance data.

Conclusion

The Committee accepted the report as written, noting the request for feral animal NND investigation data to be included in future reports.

Actions

- i. AHA develop a report analysing the number of disease investigations for each jurisdiction reflective of population.
- ii. AHA and WHA to develop figures showing feral animal investigations for inclusion in the status report going forward.
- iii. AHA to explore using 'human' instead of 'primate'.

1.3 Animal Health Surveillance Quarterly update (M Nye)

- Provided an update with reference to the AHSQ Analytics Report included in the Project Status Report (Appendix A).
- Discussion regarding readership of AHSQ particularly by key trading partners. Suggestion to highlight key trading partner countries within each year as part of DAWE's update and to inform the potential context around international readership.
- E Doyle highlighted that the number of downloads in the graph likely doesn't show the full picture of readership of AHSQ, with some single downloads likely from decision makers, so may only show as one download but have a significant meaning for the value of AHSQ for trading partners.
- Discussion around the AHSQ analytics with comment that while the analytics are interesting, they are not a good measure of the overall value of AHSQ.

Conclusion

The Committee accepted the report as written.

Actions

- iv. DAWE to include information on the top/key trading partners in the Aus. Gov. update each year.

1.4 Animal Health in Australia Report update (E Sears)

- Reflected on the implementation of the revised two report format structure of the AHIA with a triennial update covering Australia's animal health system and arrangements and an annual update covering significant events, disease surveillance and status. Indicated that some initial positive feedback has been received from international delegates.
- Outlined that there were some challenges with hard copy distribution due to COVID.
- Development of the 2021 Annual report development will be commencing in the coming weeks.

Conclusion

The Committee noted the update provided.

2. Australian Government Report (L Macfarlane-Berry)

2.1 Update on relevant activities and issues influencing Australia's animal health surveillance needs

- Provided a presentation on AUSPestCheck including plans for new four-year funding received in the 2021-22 Australian Budget. The project will include upgrades for AUSPestCheck, surveillance training and other surveillance system strengthening activities. There will be an opportunity for jurisdictions to co-design the project in early 2022.
- Discussion regarding the review of data standards and the work within the AUSPestCheck trial developing and critiquing information fields to be nationally collated.
- Discussion around considerations to better define timeliness of reporting, noting that this is dependent on the disease and will look different for different diseases.
- Concern was raised by Qld regarding the potential costs to update current jurisdictional systems to be able to perform to the required level for AUSPestCheck. L Macfarlane-Berry advised a component of the new funding is planned to be made available to jurisdictions to support them implementing the planned activities.
- The aquatics component of AUSPestCheck is expected to be operational by July 2022, with the aim for the terrestrial component for notifiable animal diseases to also be operational by then subject to necessary approvals.
- Noted that the department has been successful in the application to host an Australian National University Master of Philosophy in Applied Epidemiology (MAE) scholar from February 2022 – December 2023. As part of their time with the department, they will be evaluating a current national database or system. The department welcomed input and suggestions of a suitable national database or system for evaluation.

Conclusion

The committee supported the report as written.

Actions

- v. Committee to provide suggestions of a suitable database or system for review by the MAE scholar to L Macfarlane-Berry.

3. Reports

3.1 Coordinator reports

NSW (G Campbell)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Raised that the extraction and verification process is very time consuming, and reinforced the ongoing need to better justify national information requirements

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

NT (E Stedman)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Noted difficulties in extracting data from the LIMS system for upload to NAHIS.
- Raised that national data and information requirements are not clear.

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

Qld (J Barrett)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Raised that Qld has identified a problem with testing and reporting for BVD Type 2. The issue has now been resolved but other jurisdictions are advised to check their testing protocols.
- Discussion around the complexities that can occasionally arise when reporting the location of a positive animal with a recent movement history, and when the location in which the infection was likely acquired may be unclear. This occurred with an E. canis positive during the year. The dog returned as positive in Qld following a recent negative test and movement from the NT. The location where infection was acquired was not definitive. As a result the positive was reported under Qld, with a comment in NAHIS and AHSQ around the uncertainty surrounding where infection was acquired.

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

Actions

- vi. [Jurisdictions to confirm their process for excluding Type 2 BVD.](#)

SA (J Owens)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Agreed with comments regarding the need to have clear national data requirements.

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

Tas (E Watkins)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Raised that timeliness of reporting is impacted by jurisdictional validation processes, and more frequent reporting is not possible under the current validation system.

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

Vic (J Sarandopoulos)

- Spoke to the paper provided.

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

WA (E Kelly)

- Spoke to the paper provided.

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

NAQS (S Fruean)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Noted that reporting lines for feral animal surveillance data was not currently meeting NAQS' needs, being a very manual process.

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

Actions

- vii. [NAQS to discuss reporting lines for feral animal surveillance data with AHA and WHA.](#)

WHA (T Grillo)

- Spoke to the paper provided.
- Noted that wildlife health information is collected through the electronic Wildlife Health Information System (eWHIS) and includes reports on all investigations of sickness or mortality reported in wildlife, not just those for specific diseases. This allows for the identification of recurring or unusual disease events.

Conclusion

The report was accepted.

3.2 Industry report (L Peebles)

- Provided a verbal update on surveillance needs and priorities on behalf of industry forum.
- A formal report will be circulated to the committee OOS following further industry consultation.
- A confluence of factors has resulted in extreme challenges for processors. Record high livestock prices, with members sustaining substantial losses for each head processed.
- BOM expecting a La Nina event with above average rainfall which will reinforce the national rebuild and restock. It is expected to take 1-2 years until more cattle come onto the market. Processes are operating at reduced capacity due to labour shortages. Development of the Ag visa conditions is occurring with government and industry.
- Export markets have seen a significant flow of products to the domestic market. High transport costs and the shipping crisis are primarily responsible for this. Producers have identified that it is more difficult and more expensive to export products. Exports to north and southeast Asia have been most effected. Industry is highlighting the current export challenges with the government.
- Ongoing pressure to animal health with risks of EAD incursion.
- Highlighted DAWE's standalone health certificate and the traceability grant program as wins for industry.
- A Robinson raised a query regarding non-tariff barriers to trade and if industry consider those as normal routine or those in addition to those that are scientifically valid. The question was taken on note.

Conclusion

The report from the Industry Forum Representative was noted by the Committee.

Actions

- viii.* L Peebles to provide a response back to A Robinson regarding the non-tariff barriers to trade.

4. Risk Review**4.1 Business Plan (E Sears)**

- E Sears noted that the business plan is due for renewal in 2022.
- Discussion on the risk register and the rankings of the risks outlined.
- Noted that risk of system failure is separated out from the risk of poor-quality data.
- NAQS proposed the addition of a risk around the pain points of data reporting such as not meeting timelines or following agreed processes.
- Qld proposed that the risk table (Table 3) should include descriptions of the risks listed and explanations for the ratings given.
- Discussion on making the risk register more centralised in the plan.

Conclusion

The business plan and risk register were noted by the committee, with further updates to be implemented and circulated to the committee for review/comment OOS.

Actions

- ix. AHA to develop the business plan for 2022-2025, including updates to the risk register and key indicators.

5. Other**5.1 AUSPestCheck Update (D Gale)**

- The chair welcomed D Gale from PHA to the meeting.
- D Gale is taking over from Nick Woods as manager of the AUSPestCheck trial
- Discussion on the timeline for agreement on data standards. The current standards, except for local data, are stable, noting updates are expected in the future as the trial progresses.
- Development of training material occurring in the first half of 2022, with training occurring in the second half of the year.

Conclusion

The Committee noted the update provided.

5.2 EAD Hotline Review Update (E Sears)

- Discussion on the proposal for the EAD hotline to sit within NAHIP. The NAHIP would act as a touchpoint for queries or issues from the jurisdictions, with a standing agenda item in the annual NAHIP meeting with an update and any issues raised by duty officers within the jurisdictions. It is not anticipated that the workload of the NAHIP coordinators would significantly increase.
- Discussion on the opportunity to utilise the EAD hotline data.

Conclusion

The committee were provisionally supportive of the EAD hotline sitting under NAHIP, noting that some members requested further scoping on workload, data and analysis associated with this.

Actions

- x. AHA to circulate the EAD hotline report to the Committee for comment OOS.
- xi. AHA to further scope the inclusion of the EAD hotline management with the NAHIP.

5.3 NAHS Plan Update (S Allan)

- The chair welcomed S Allan from AHA to update the committee on the National Animal Health Surveillance Plan (NAHS Plan).
- The plan is being finalised with the NAHS Plan Steering Committee. The TOR and program logic have been finalised. Implementation for the plan is scheduled for early 2022, with AHA prioritising the marketplace and public engagement interface.

Conclusion

The committee accepted the update provided with no further comments or questions.

Next meeting: September 2022

Meeting close: 3pm

NAHIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING 2021 ACTION REGISTER

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#	ACTION	WHO	BY	STATUS
i.	Develop a report analysing the number of disease investigations for each jurisdiction reflective of population.	AHA	February 2022	
ii.	Develop figures showing feral animal investigations for inclusion in the status report going forward.	AHA + WHA	September 2022	
iii.	Explore using 'human' instead of 'primate'.	AHA	February 2022	
iv.	DAWE to include information on the top/key trading partners in the Aus. Gov. update each year.	A Robinson	September 2022	
v.	Provide suggestions of a suitable database or system for review by the MAE scholar to L Macfarlane-Berry.	Committee	February 2022	
vi.	Confirm their process for excluding Type 2 BVD.	Jurisdictions	January 2022	
vii.	Discuss reporting lines for feral animal surveillance data.	NAQS + AHA + WHA	January 2022	
viii.	Provide a response back to A Robinson regarding the non-tariff barriers to trade.	L Peebles	January 2022	
ix.	Develop the business plan for 2022-2025, including updates to the risk register and key indicators.	AHA	May 2022	
x.	Circulate the EAD hotline report to the Committee for comment OOS.	AHA	February 2022	
xi.	Further scope the inclusion of the EAD hotline management with the NAHIP.	AHA	March 2022	