

NSDIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING 2025

MEETING RECORD

Thursday 15 May 2025

Start: 1:00 | Close: 16:00 (AEST)

In attendance:

PARTICIPANTS	
Mikhaila Nye (AHA – Chair)	Selina Ossedryver (Qld)
Sheaaz Sakur (AHA – Record)	Diana Miller (SA)
Bronwyn Hendry (AHA)	Jennifer Voss (Tas.)
Emily Sears (AHA)	Julia Sarandopoulos (Vic. - virtual)
Emily Sellens (Aus. Gov.)	Anna Erickson (WA – virtual)
Harriett Garvey (Aus. Gov.)	Leander McLennan (WA)
Guy Weerasinghe (Aus. Gov. NAQS)	Keren Cox-Witton (WHA)
Dominique Marendy (NSW)	Bomber Lancaster (ALFA – virtual)
Stacey Carnogoy (NT – virtual)	

Apologies: TBC (Australian Veterinary Association – NSDIP observer)

Objective of meeting:

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

Welcome and introductions (M Nye):

- The Chair welcomed participants to the meeting and outlined the objectives and structure of the meeting.

1. 2023-24 in review

1.1 Update on 2024 action items (S Sakur)

- Referred to the action register and noted the status of all action items from the May 2024 face to face meeting and the October 2024 virtual meeting.

May 2024

- Action items 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 10 were noted as complete.
 - The Committee received an update on Action item 1 regarding WHA's scoping project to expand its existing sentinel surveillance program, which currently involves veterinarians from universities, hospitals, and zoos. The project aims to broaden participation to include private practice veterinarians—particularly those in mixed or small animal practices with an interest in wildlife. A total of 141 survey responses were received, with detailed results to be presented at the October meeting. A key issue raised by private vets was the logistical challenge and cost of sending samples to laboratories. WHA is now planning a pilot study to explore funding opportunities and the practical implementation of this expanded network and encouraged the Committee to refer any interested veterinarians to them.
- Action item 2 was closed as it was decided that project would not go ahead.
- Action item 6 is closed following the cessation of AusPestCheck.

- Action item 9 was further discussed under Agenda item 3.1.

October 2024

- Action items 2, 4, 7 and 8 were noted complete.
- Action item 1 was discussed under Agenda item 2.1.
- Action item 3 was noted as in progress with the report on the equine neurological disease workshop having been circulated, however the poultry sampling report remained outstanding from NSW.
- Action item 5 was closed following advice from NSW and Vic, noting that there had been a transition in coordinators and the context was not clear. NSW identified a study titled "Understanding Veterinary Passive Disease Surveillance in Livestock Field Investigations Biosecurity Protocols in NSW (2022–24)" and will review the report. If any relevant findings emerge, they will be shared with the Committee.
- Action items 6 remained as outstanding. WA outlined that they were currently in the process of revising how SDI subsidies are paid to practitioners and will allow time for these changes to take effect before conducting a more formal email survey. Findings from this survey are expected to be shared at the October meeting. The post-mortem subsidy has been increased from \$330 to \$420, with an additional increase to the mileage component (exact amount to be confirmed). The revised subsidies cover only Private Veterinary Practitioner (PVP) investigation costs and do not include sample transport, which remains the responsibility of the veterinarian.

Conclusion

The Committee accepted the update on action items, noting action items 3, 5 and 6 from the October virtual meeting are in progress and any insights will be included in the WA coordinator report for the October meeting.

Action items:

1. NSW to review the report titled "Understanding Veterinary Passive Disease Surveillance in Livestock Field Investigations Biosecurity Protocols in NSW (2022–24)" and share it with the Committee as relevant.

2. Database and DMU Policy

2.1 Central Animal Health Database (CAHD) and data consultation project update + DMU and data upload feedback

- E. Sears provided a verbal update on the CAHD and the data consultation project, including progress on the development of new data standards and updates to the data management and use policy.
- The Committee was advised that Ausvet joined the NAHIP Committee the day before and presented an update on the CAHD. Recent work had centred on enhancing cybersecurity, upgrading infrastructure, and updating core software components.
- It was noted that in the future, functionality will be rolled out to enable users to access the database through their organisation's Microsoft or Google account.
- The Committee was also informed that the current database remains stable and secure, and will continue to support operational, administrative, and reporting needs.
- AHA has commissioned a consultancy project to gather input from members and stakeholders on the design of a secure, modern, and collaborative national animal health

database. The aim is to assess options that will enhance biosecurity and system resilience. Key deliverables include a final report detailing insights, stakeholder priorities, and recommended pathways for database development

- The consultation, led by business design firm Accelio, will include stakeholder mapping, targeted engagement sessions (interviews, virtual workshops, and surveys) and an analysis of requirements to prioritise future upgrades. Key deliverables include a final report detailing insights, stakeholder priorities, and recommended pathways for database development.
- The Committee discussed the use of the refined data standards for the NSDIP and agreed that the simplified reporting of the financial fields made things easier. Additional feedback discussed focused on the species list.
 - K Cox-Witton suggested that it would be more efficient to have the species list included as a tab in the workbook.
 - The Committee also raised questions regarding the ongoing maintenance of the taxonomy for the species list.
 - G Weerasinghe (NAQs) agreed to share the updated NAQS species list and noted the importance of aligning and synchronising the various species lists currently used across different platforms.
 - WHA noted that the species list in eWHIS is regularly updated and draws off inputs from the Australian Registry of Wildlife Health. It was noted that the CAHD species was originally drawn from the same list from the Registry, however had not been updated in several years. K Cox-Witton noted that often during upload they have to use outdated or incorrect species names and include notes indicating the correct species. The Committee collectively agreed that efforts should be made to adopt at least the most recent version of the eWHIS list, which WHA can share with AHA.
- S Ossedryver informed the committee that due to timings of the Qld upload, that they will need to apply the new data standard retrospectively for their October to December 2024 data.
- Victoria noted that they use a separate spreadsheet to record all their SDI investigations. This format now differs from the new workbook and as a result it may take some time to adjust.
- There was confusion among some Committee members regarding the grey-shaded cells in the workbook. It was explained that these cells are not intended to be uploaded, which is why they are heavily shaded. They were included to support the standardisation of NND formatting and nomenclature across jurisdictions and uploaders, in alignment with the nationally published list. Users can begin typing into the field, which will auto-filter options and automatically populate column 14 to maintain consistency.
- The Committee suggested adding a note after cell 17 to indicate that grey-shaded cells should not be copied and also recommended lightening the shading to improve readability.
- It was noted that the tooltip for "finding" had been incorrectly copied into cell 14 from cell 13.
- The Committee asked whether changes to NSDIP data reporting had impacted the AHSQ. It was clarified that NSDIP data does not appear in the AHSQ, but instead into the AHIA. Within the AHIA a summary of syndrome is derived from NSDIP which does not involve any data changes.
- Qld raised a wider query around the use of program funds to support courier costs for transporting SDI samples to laboratories. This was noted as a significant barrier to sample submission for PVPs, with reference to previous AVA feedback. Qld sought consideration to whether NSDIP funds could be used by jurisdictions to cover these transport costs as part of overall laboratory expenses. It was noted that due to challenges in providing internal funding

through grants and subsidies, using NSDIP funds would be a more practical solution in some jurisdictions.

- WHA noted that private veterinarians (PVPs) often use their subsidy payments to cover courier costs, meaning they do not receive the full subsidy themselves. Some labs also include courier fees within their standard laboratory charges.
- The committee had no objections to Qld using NSDIP funds to cover both transport and lab testing costs for eligible submissions.
- Qld mentioned that this process will involve a self-assessment at the time of submission. If the submission meets the criteria, the lab will cover the courier and testing costs. If not, the submitter will be invoiced for the courier cost.
- AHA indicated that it would review the Business Plan and make any necessary adjustments to clarifying whether "lab testing costs" include the cost of transporting samples to the lab when paid for by the laboratory.

Conclusion

The Committee acknowledged the update on the CAHD and data consultation project, noting the upcoming changes to the NSDIP workbook based on the discussions. These include the addition of a species list, clarification in the notifiable exclusion column, and resolution of formatting issues.

Action items:

2. AHA, WHA and NAQS to consult around an updated species list for CAHD.
3. AHA to review and, if necessary, revise the wording in the Business Plan to clarify that funds may be used to cover sample transport to laboratories.
4. AHA to update the NSDIP workbook, including adding the species list, refining the instructions in the notifiable exclusion's column, improving clarity of the top-level instructions, adjusting the shading for better readability, and removing the tooltip from cell 14.

3. Program evaluation

3.1 NSDIP Program evaluation (B. Hendry)

- B. Hendry provided a verbal update on the NSDIP program evaluation.
- As outlined in Section 8 of the NSDIP Business Plan an evaluation is scheduled at the end of the current business period (July 2022 – June 2025). This evaluation is to be led by the program manager in consultation with the NSDIP Advisory Committee (AC).
- In December 2024, AHA circulated a draft evaluation plan, including proposed survey questions, to the NSDIP AC for feedback.
- A recent AHA restructure has impacted the resourcing available to the Surveillance Team. As a result, once the evaluation plan and survey are finalised by the Committee, the evaluation process will be led by external consultants—Eastern Animal Health Professionals (Dr. Peter Dagg and Dr Penny Linett).
- The consultants will be available to commence work in October 2025. Based on their initial assessment, if the survey to private veterinarians remains open for one month, the evaluation could be completed by February 2026. Final milestones will depend on the Committee's decision regarding the survey duration.
- AHA noted that the survey questions were developed in accordance with the business plan, with oversight from AHC. Therefore, making significant changes to the survey at this stage would be challenging. AHA suggested forming a focus group next year to help guide future evaluation design, incorporating lessons learned from the current process and input from the

Committee. At present, the draft business plan for the next period remains open, to be informed on the nature of the evaluation.

- AHA sought input from Committee members on the distribution strategy for the survey—whether it should be widely distributed (potentially leading to inconsistent responses across jurisdictions), or limited to jurisdictional coordinators, who would then liaise internally and submit a single aggregated response. The Committee agreed the latter approach would be more manageable. Qld suggested that an additional survey question could be included asking respondents to describe the scope of their internal consultation, to clarify who was involved in forming each jurisdiction’s response.
- The Committee discussed the use of a 5-point Likert scale in the survey and supported removing the neutral midpoint and adding a “Don’t know” option. It was agreed that the outcome of using this revised scale in the evaluation could help inform whether a similar approach should be adopted for the Coordinator Annual Reports.
- The Committee was informed that Microsoft Forms does not support both Likert scale and open-text response in the same question. A non-compulsory text box will however be added below each Likert question to allow jurisdictions to provide additional context or comments, facilitating de-aggregation where needed.
- The Committee agreed to discontinue the PVP survey due to challenges in securing jurisdictional involvement, differing application of the program between jurisdictions and possible limited engagement from PVPs. While the value of the survey was recognised, it was agreed that it should be reconsidered following completion of the evaluation survey. Any gaps identified through that process can inform broader discussions on program evaluation and potential future strategies for involving PVPs.
- Victoria advised that they are currently conducting their own survey related to SDI and general surveillance programs and when complete, may share relevant findings with the Committee.

Conclusion

The Committee acknowledged the update on the progress of the NSDIP evaluation survey. With the PVP survey discontinued and the evaluation survey now limited to NSDIP coordinators, the Committee agreed that the involvement of an external consultant is no longer required. AHA will take on responsibility for delivering the survey internally, incorporating feedback provided by the Committee.

Action items:

5. *The NSDIP evaluation plan is to be updated to include an additional question at the end asking respondents to describe the scope of their internal consultation, remove the neutral midpoint from the Likert scale, add a "Don't know" response option, and include a non-compulsory comment field following each Likert scale question to allow for additional context.*

4. NSDIP Business Plan

4.1 Business Plan – including review of risk register (M. Nye)

- Spoke to the updates tracked in the draft 2025-28 Business Plan.
- It was noted that the business plan is reviewed and updated annually following the May meetings. These updates typically involve minor but necessary revisions, such as adjustments to financial figures or risks.

- AHA clarified that there are currently no plans to transition data to a new database, and as such, the previously listed risk regarding potential loss of historical data during a transition to the APC has been removed. The risk register layout was revised to align with the new AHA format—consolidated into a single table with overall risk ratings included at the end. Appendix B outlines the risk rating criteria.
 - The Committee was advised that the removal of the database transition risk reflects the current 12-month outlook. However, this does not preclude its reintroduction in future reviews if circumstances change.
- The 2025–26 budgets are based on the AHA Annual Operating Plan. It was noted that AHA are currently reviewing the display of financial information across programs and there may be subsequent updates in the presentation of financial information in the business plan.
- Within the strategic framework, a minor update was made under Section 3 regarding key indicators. It now specifies that the evaluation will be completed by 2026, rather than just evaluated.
- In the evaluation section, a note was added indicating that evaluation questions for the next cycle will be developed following the 2025 evaluation and incorporated into the next version of the business plan, scheduled for May 2026.
- An incorrect spelling of ‘investigation’ was identified and noted in Appendix A.
- Vic suggested additional information to be included in the timeline section within the background (pages 3–4) of the business plan regarding the completion of the review of the data standards which was a major milestone.

Conclusion

The Committee accepted the draft Business Plan, noting the identified corrections. AHA will make the necessary updates and circulate the final version to the Committee out of session.

Actions

N/A

5. Other Business

- WA indicated its intention to submit a training proposal for either the 2025–26 or 2026–27 period.
- Qld advised that their annual report on their 24/25 PVP training activities is in progress and that they are currently collecting evaluation feedback from their March workshop. They also informed AHA that unspent funds will need to be carried over.
- AHA will send out emails towards the end of the financial year to confirm any accruals from the 2024–25 period and to identify any outstanding activities.

Meeting close

- Thanked attendees for their valuable input in the meeting.
- Date of next virtual meeting was proposed for the week starting 13 October
- Date of next in person meeting was proposed for week starting 11 May 2026
- Meeting closed 16:00.

NSDIP ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MAY 2025

ACTION REGISTER

#	ACTION	WHO	BY
1	NSW to review the report titled "Enhancing Veterinary Passive Disease Surveillance in Livestock and Field Investigations Biosecurity Protocols in NSW (2022–24)" and share it with the Committee as relevant.	NSW	COMPLETED
2	AHA, WHA and NAQS to consult around an updated species list for CAHD.	AHA, WHA and NAQS	SEPTEMBER 2025
3	AHA to review and, if necessary, revise the wording in the Business Plan to clarify that funds may be used to cover sample transport to laboratories.	AHA	COMPLETED
4	AHA to update the NSDIP workbook, including adding the species list, refining the instructions in the notifiable exclusion's column, improving clarity of the top-level instructions, adjusting the shading for better readability, and removing the tooltip from cell 14.	AHA	JULY 2025
5	The NSDIP evaluation plan is to be updated to include an additional question at the end asking respondents to describe the scope of their internal consultation, remove the neutral midpoint from the Likert scale, add a "Don't know" response option, and include a non-compulsory comment field following each Likert scale question to allow for additional context.	AHA	JULY 2025

OCTOBER VIRTUAL 2024 MEETING

Item	Description	Who	When	Status
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	JULY 2025	CARRIED OVER
6	WA to share insights on any feedback from PVPs on the increased subsidy rates (when available).	WA	OCTOBER 2025	CARRIED OVER