



National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee

The National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (NAWAC) is an independent statutory committee, established under the Animal Welfare Act 1999 to advise the Minister for Primary Industries on animal welfare matters. Its functions include recommending codes of welfare for issue, and making recommendations on legislative proposals including regulations relating to surgical procedures and traps and devices, and identifying research needs. It also promotes the development of guidelines for the use of traps and devices, and hunting and killing animals in a wild state.

Key items discussed at the 13 November meeting were:

- **Horses and Donkeys Code of Welfare** - A final draft of the Animal Welfare (Horses and Donkeys) Code of Welfare was considered by the Committee. Subject to minor changes and independent peer review, it will be recommended to the Minister in early 2014.
- **Animal Welfare Amendment Bill** - The Committee received an update on the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill from MPI. Submissions closed on 4 October 2013 so some of the major themes among submissions were highlighted. NAWAC's potential new responsibilities were also discussed. If the Bill passes, NAWAC will have the ability to consider whether minimum standards should be made into mandatory and enforceable regulations. The Committee would also be tasked with releasing guidelines on what 'generally accepted practice' is in terms of hunting, fishing and pest control.
- **Systems review** – The newly formed systems review subcommittee, tasked with leading changes to the way NAWAC addresses its work priorities in the future, made their first report back to NAWAC. Current priorities were listed and voted on. Breeding, wildlife, and shade and shelter were identified as the animal welfare issues to be added to the work plan for 2014, along with codes currently in development.
- **Meeting dates for 2014**
 - Wednesday February 12th
 - Wednesday May 14th
 - Wednesday August 13th
 - Wednesday November 5th

These are subject to change. NAWAC may update its operational processes (such as number of meetings) during 2014 due to the potential changes in the Act or other work priorities.