



Peta Lovell



## ANIMAL WELFARE

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Primary responsibility for animal welfare legislation and enforcement in Australia rests with individual states and territories. There is no national animal welfare legislation. National standards and guidelines are being developed to improve the consistency of animal welfare laws across Australia.

Each jurisdiction has officers responsible for administering, enforcing and reviewing animal welfare legislation. The responsible agency is within the agriculture portfolio (in four jurisdictions), the local government portfolio (in two jurisdictions) or the environment portfolio (in two jurisdictions).

The Australian Government verifies that the requirements for animal welfare have been met at dedicated export abattoirs and during live animal exports.

Australian animal welfare legislation focuses on the 'duty of care' required of people responsible for delivering acceptable animal welfare outcomes. In the livestock and nonproduction sectors, the ongoing development of standards, guidelines and model codes of practice assists people to understand their responsibilities and expectations concerning animal welfare. The standards, guidelines and model codes also inform the development of contemporary, evidence-based quality assurance programs.

Australia's key policy document for improving animal welfare outcomes is the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS). In accordance with the AAWS, the states and territories, through the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC), have committed to harmonising the key features of their legislation to ensure that consistent laws, policies and arrangements apply across Australia.

The defining feature of animal welfare in Australia is the array of mechanisms for engaging key stakeholders — governments, animal industries,

animal welfare bodies, the veterinary profession and the research community — in the development of animal welfare policies and standards. These mechanisms include animal ethics committees within individual institutions, state and territory animal welfare advisory committees and, at the national level, the National Consultative Committee on Animal Welfare and the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy Advisory Committee.

Australia works closely with New Zealand on animal welfare matters. New Zealand is a full member of the Animal Welfare Committee of the Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC).

Further information on Australia's animal welfare arrangements is available on the website of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF).<sup>79</sup>

## 8.1 Jurisdictional updates

### 8.1.1 Australian Government

#### *Review of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy*

A key goal of the AAWS, which provides the national policy statement and framework for animal welfare, is development of nationally consistent arrangements for animal welfare.

In 2010, the AAWS was revised to improve program administration, transparency and stakeholder engagement. The next phase of the strategy covers the period from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2014. With an overall vision and mission to achieve sustainable improvements in the welfare of animals, the strategy is based around four goals to guide investments and prioritise activities:

- **Animals** — the welfare needs of animals are understood and are met.
- **Systems** — national systems deliver consistent animal welfare outcomes and prioritise how and when specific improvements may be made to the animal welfare arrangements in place in the states and territories.
- **People** — people make ethical decisions regarding animal welfare, supported by knowledge and skills.
- **International** — Australia actively fosters partnerships to understand and contribute to international developments.

The revised strategy is expected to obtain national endorsement in April 2011.

#### *Conversion of model codes of practice into Australian animal welfare standards and guidelines — land transport of livestock*

The current model codes of practice for the welfare of animals are referenced in different ways in the animal welfare legislation of the states and territories. This lack of consistency has been identified by PIMC, industry and animal welfare groups as a priority issue to be addressed. A major initiative to improve the consistency of animal welfare outcomes and arrangements is the development of clear, contemporary and consistent animal welfare standards and guidelines for livestock industries across all state, territory and local government jurisdictions. These standards and guidelines will be based on the current model codes of practice, scientific evidence (where it exists), current industry practices and community expectations. Animal Health Australia is leading their development.

Codes for the land transport of livestock were the first to be reviewed and converted into animal welfare standards and guidelines, under an agreed national process. The standards and guidelines for livestock transport apply to the major commercial livestock industries in Australia: cattle, sheep, goat, horse, pig, alpaca, poultry (meat chickens, layer hens, turkeys, ducks, geese, pheasants, guinea fowls, partridges, quails and pigeons), emu, ostrich, buffalo, deer and camel.

PIMC endorsed the livestock transport standards in May 2009, but asked that more work be undertaken on standards for maximum allowable time off feed for bobby calves, use of electric prodders on pigs, and transport time for spent hens.

For maximum allowable time off feed for bobby calves, a scientific study by the University of Melbourne and the Animal Welfare Science Centre, funded by DAFF and industry, supported 30 hours as a defensible outer legal limit, with good practice in other areas of calf management. A regulatory impact statement on the proposed standard for the maximum allowable time off feed for bobby calves is to be provided for public consultation in early 2011. The final regulatory impact statement, including a summary of the feedback from public consultation, and the draft standard will be considered by PIMC during 2011.

The standard for the restricted use of electric prodders on pigs during loading and unloading was endorsed by PIMC in November 2010. Electric prodders must not be used during the loading, transport and unloading of pigs except where:

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79 [www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare](http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare)

- other reasonable actions to cause movement have failed
- individual pigs weigh 60 kg (live weight) or more
- there is reasonable risk to the safety of the driver or the pig(s).

Research on the maximum transport time for spent hens will inform any future change to the current standard. The PISC Animal Welfare Committee will consider this research, and any comments from a broadly based reference group, before deciding whether to recommend any amendment to the current standard to PIMC.

### ***Australian animal welfare standards and guidelines for cattle and sheep***

Development of separate animal welfare standards and guidelines for sheep and cattle began in late 2008, under the management of Animal Health Australia. The sheep and cattle writing groups began drafting the standards and discussion papers in early 2009 and have made solid progress. Both writing groups have had multiple meetings, and reference group meetings were also held in 2010.

Due to industry concerns about a lack of commitment by jurisdictions to consistently implement standards, in late 2010 the cattle and sheep industries suspended their funding for the development of the respective standards and guidelines. A stakeholder meeting is planned in early 2011 to reinvigorate the process. Despite the delay, it is expected that development of these standards and guidelines will be completed in early 2012. The draft standards and guidelines and a regulatory impact statement will then be released for public consultation.

### ***Australian animal welfare standards and guidelines for exhibited animals (zoos)***

The development of animal welfare standards and guidelines for the zoo industry — the first for a nonproduction animal sector — began in mid-2008. This project is jointly funded by industry, the states and territories, and the Australian Government. It is being led by a writing group involving the Zoo and Aquarium Association; Industry & Investment NSW; the Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation; and DAFF.

Because of the complexity of the operations, situations and animals involved in the zoo industry, the standards and guidelines have been organised into two parts: a general set of standards applying to all facilities keeping animals for display purposes, and a series of taxon-

specific standards for the particular welfare requirements of different species. The first of the taxon standards covers koalas, wombats, crocodylians, macropods (kangaroos and wallabies) and ratites (ostriches, emus, cassowaries and rheas). These taxon standards and the general standards were drafted in 2010. A regulatory impact analysis and public consultation will be undertaken in 2011 before the standards are sent to PIMC for national endorsement. Reference to the standards and guidelines in state and territory legislation is anticipated for 2012.

Taxon standards have also been drafted for anurans (frogs and toads), but these are on hold until more work is done on complex issues such as spatial requirements. Priorities for further taxon standards include primates, carnivores and ungulates (hoofed mammals).

### ***Slaughter without prior stunning***

Government ministers agreed in November 2009 that the animal welfare risks during slaughter without prior stunning can be managed by applying a risk management framework of measures that can co-exist with religious belief. Since then, PISC has consulted broadly with a range of stakeholders, including religious organisations, meat processors, relevant regulators and animal welfare groups on what form such a framework could take. It intends to finalise these discussions during 2011 and report back to the primary industries ministers.

### ***Mulesing***

Mulesing was introduced to protect Australia's merino flocks from parasitic attack by blowflies (referred to as flystrike) and is accepted under the laws of Australia's states and territories. Until suitable alternatives are implemented, mulesing remains the single most effective procedure for providing merino sheep with lifelong protection from flystrike.

Flystrike management is the highest research and development priority of the industry organisation Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI). Progress made to date by AWI and other organisations includes:

- addition of breech wrinkle to the Australian Sheep Breeding Values, allowing woolgrowers to select bare-breeched breeding stock and fast-track their progress to reduce breech wrinkle in their flocks
- use of pain relief products where mulesing is still the best form of flystrike prevention
- commercial release of intradermal injections that flatten wrinkles in areas susceptible to flystrike (expected in 2011 or 2012)

- development of an interactive web-based tool,<sup>80</sup> to help farmers select the best flystrike prevention strategy for their sheep.

The National Wool Declaration, administered by Australian Wool Exchange Limited, allows buyers to source wool that meets their animal welfare requirements. The government has provided nearly \$165 000 to Australian Wool Exchange Limited to implement the National Wool Declaration on-farm integrity program, which will provide buyers with greater assurance of the verified mulesed status of the wool.

## 8.1.2 Australian Capital Territory

### *Codes of practice*

During 2010, the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) accelerated its schedule for reviewing codes of practice to include reviews of three outdated codes: the Code of Practice for the Sale of Animals in the ACT (other than from saleyards), the Code of Practice for the Humane Destruction of Kangaroos in the ACT, and the Code of Practice for the Care of Sick and Injured Native Animals.

### *Animal Welfare Advisory Committee*

The ACT's Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) formed in 1992, with the introduction of the *Animal Welfare Act 1992*. The committee's terms of reference and operation have now been reviewed, and members have been appointed under the new terms of reference.

### *Policy, regulation and changes to the Animal Welfare Act 1992*

#### *Commercial poultry*

The ACT Government has made a number of policy and regulatory changes relating to the welfare of commercial poultry. All government departments and entities source whole eggs from either barn or free-range suppliers.

New regulations have been introduced for the sale of whole eggs from supermarkets and other retail outlets. Signage explaining which production method has been used must be displayed above retail eggs, and eggs from different production methods must be separated on retail shelving. A red border must outline any retail shelving that displays 'cage'-produced eggs.

A number of regulations concerning commercial poultry have also been introduced, relating to cage specifications, handling procedures and inspection routines.

### *Enforcement of codes of practice*

In line with national agreement, the ACT Government has created three new offences under the *Animal Welfare Act 1992*: reckless failure to comply with a code of practice (maximum penalty 100 penalty units), failure to comply with a mandatory code of practice (maximum penalty 50 penalty units) and direction to comply with a mandatory code (a penalty unit is currently \$110).

### *Other issues*

Lobby groups continue to be concerned about:

- the sale of animals, particularly dogs and cats, from pet shops or over the internet
- inappropriate breeding of companion animals ('puppy farms')
- battery cage egg production
- management of eastern grey kangaroos
- control of dogs (including dangerous dogs) by Domestic Animal Services.

## 8.1.3 New South Wales

Two new codes of practice for trade in animals were introduced in New South Wales under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (General) Regulation 2006: the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice — Breeding Dogs and Cats* (produced with assistance from AWAC) and the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice — Commercial Pig Production* (which implements standards endorsed at the national level by PIMC).

A new Exhibited Animals Protection Regulation 2010 and Animal Research Regulation 2010 commenced on 1 September 2010. This legislation introduces improvements resulting from the regulatory review process that is conducted every five years.

New South Wales has published the *Guidelines for the Housing of Sheep in Scientific Institutions*, which promote the benefits of evidence-based welfare.

To promote better decision making for animals during drought, New South Wales also published *Welfare Decisions for Beef Cattle* and *Welfare Decisions for Sheep*. These will assist livestock managers, advisers, transport operators and welfare officials to make decisions about feeding of cattle and sheep, suitability of animals for transport or sale and, in extreme cases, humane destruction of animals on the property.

## 8.1.4 Northern Territory

Public consultation on the review of the Northern Territory *Animal Welfare Act 1999* was conducted during

80 [www.flyboss.org.au](http://www.flyboss.org.au)

2009–10. The Animal Welfare Branch of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services delivered Animal Awareness Week (21–27 June 2010), promoting animal welfare within schools and the broader community. A training structure for animal welfare officers and inspectors was established, and 10 inspectors completed training.

A memorandum of understanding between the Department of Housing, Local Government and Regional Services and the Department of Resources was developed and implemented to enable the two departments to cooperate in administering and enforcing the Act. Supporting policy and procedures for investigation and prosecution of livestock welfare incidents have been implemented.

The Northern Territory Government has established an annual Animal Welfare Fund. Grants are available to all Northern Territory not-for-profit animal welfare organisations to assist them to implement animal welfare projects.

### 8.1.5 Queensland

In Queensland, standards from the national *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals — Pigs* have been adopted into the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001* through the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Regulation 2010. A program to monitor the compulsory requirements of the national *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals — Domestic Poultry* has been developed and will be implemented in early 2011. The process of adopting the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock* into the *Animal Care and Protection Act 2001* has begun. Queensland standards and guidelines for animal welfare are being developed for breeding dogs and rodeos. Funding received through the AAWS is supporting the introduction of the ‘Smiling Animals in the Dreamtime’ education package for Indigenous communities.

### 8.1.6 South Australia

South Australia is regulating the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock* as they are developed and is amending the *Animal Welfare Act 1985* to address most of the agreed legislative provisions required for national consistency. The South Australian AWAC has provided comments to the writing groups developing the animal welfare standards and guidelines.



Local issues being addressed include the revision of the *South Australian Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals in the Pet Trade*, streamlining of research and teaching administrative processes, and review of training options for authorised inspectors. The *Livestock Act 1997* has been reviewed and the *Impounding Act 1920* is currently being reviewed to ensure that both Acts are contemporary, practical and, as much as possible, consistent with similar legislation in other jurisdictions.

### 8.1.7 Tasmania

The Tasmanian Government has announced that it will adopt the majority of standards in the revised *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals — Pigs*, but will go further than the code and phase out dry sow stalls. Regulations are currently being developed under the *Animal Welfare Act 1993* that will legislate most of the code and restrict the use of dry sow stalls to six weeks per gestation in 2014, and ban their use altogether in 2017.

A program of random inspections of intensive piggery and poultry premises has been implemented in conjunction with the RSPCA to ensure that producers are complying with animal welfare standards. This program will be extended to other livestock industries as animal welfare standards are developed.

### 8.1.8 Victoria

The Victorian *Livestock Management Act 2010* will commence on 1 January 2011 and will regulate the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock* and the *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals — Pigs*. The Act provides a single, consolidated regulatory framework for livestock management standards as they develop and will enable these standards to be demonstrated by a single industry system. It also provides for a new co-regulatory mechanism that formally recognises



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commercial and existing industry compliance arrangements, including quality assurance schemes that demonstrate compliance with standards.

### 8.1.9 Western Australia

The Animal Welfare (Pig Industry) Regulations 2010, derived from the nationally agreed standards in the *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals – Pigs*, were proclaimed in November 2010; they are subject to a disallowance motion to be discussed when parliament resumes in February 2011.

The extended dry season has resulted in large numbers of livestock being transported long distances to areas of better feed, including to eastern Australia.

The *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock* has been promoted among transporters, livestock producers and saleyard operators, particularly the 'fit to load' requirements.

Regulation 14 of the Animal Welfare (General) Regulations 2003 was amended to make tail docking of dogs by a registered veterinarian for supposed prophylactic reasons illegal.

## 8.2 Australian Animal Welfare Strategy

### 8.2.1 AAWS activities

The AAWS focuses attention on key animal welfare issues and coordinated investments to deliver sustainable improvements in animal welfare. The strategy has relevance for the entire community. It covers all sentient animals — that is, animals with a capacity to experience suffering and pleasure. Sentience is the reason that welfare matters. The strategy has been jointly developed by the Australian Government, state and territory governments, industry and the community. It is managed by DAFF on behalf of stakeholders.

The strategy was endorsed by PIMC in 2004, and was externally reviewed in 2008–09 to evaluate its implementation and identify opportunities for improvement. In 2010, the Advisory Committee for the AAWS led a process to update the strategy in response to the recommendations from the review and to prepare an implementation plan for 2010–14 (phase 2). The revised AAWS will be presented to PIMC ministers for endorsement in April 2011.

The revised strategy has been developed using a combination of an outputs–outcomes–benefits framework and a program logic model. This will clearly identify how the investments and activities will deliver results; the assumptions made about the connections between investments, activities and outcomes; and the resources needed to achieve the identified aims.

Implementation of the strategy is a shared responsibility, which relies on the commitment of time, resources and funding from stakeholders across all sectors and from all levels of government. In particular, the strategy will require the state and territory governments — which are responsible for developing, implementing and enforcing animal welfare policies and legislation — to ensure that their current and proposed activities are consistent with the strategy and can support its goals and objectives. The Australian Government has committed approximately \$4 million to the program for phase 2 (July 2010 – June 2014). This funding will be used for specific joint initiatives to address priority issues at industry, sectoral and national levels. Co-contributions to activities under the strategy will be sought from governments and other stakeholders.

Twelve partner projects were funded through the AAWS in 2010, including animal welfare codes of practice for wild-capture fishing industries; development, publication and evaluation of a guide on preparing livestock for transport; and support for a workshop to develop a

community of practice for high school agriculture teachers. More details on specific projects are provided in Section 8.2.2.

## 8.2.2 Overview of the AAWS sectoral working groups

The AAWS covers all Australian animals and all segments of the community, with a broad range of issues to be addressed. To assist with the process, six categories of animal use or management have been identified. Each has an assigned working group that involves a range of stakeholders to identify, prioritise and manage activities. The six working groups are:

- aquatic animals
- native, introduced and feral animals
- animals used for work, sport, recreation and display
- companion animals
- livestock and production animals
- animals used in research and teaching.

The strategy has also identified three areas — research and development, education and training, and communication — that cross the boundaries of the animal sectors and require specific attention and investment. Three working groups have been established to address these areas.

### *Aquatic animals*

The Aquatic Animal Welfare Working Group has continued a project to develop welfare codes of practice for the commercial wild-capture fishing industries, consistent with overarching principles for the welfare of vertebrate finfish that were previously developed. Draft codes have been developed for purse seining, beach seining, mesh netting, trawling, line fishing and pot/trap fishing. The draft codes have been circulated to industry and other stakeholders for feedback. In 2011, the draft codes will be finalised and published for adoption by fishing operators.

### *Native, introduced and feral animals*

A longstanding objective of the working group on native, introduced and feral animals is to ensure that animal welfare, or humaneness, is an integral part of the decision-making process for vertebrate pest animal management programs. To this end, the group has supported the development of codes of practice and standard operating procedures for humane vertebrate pest control, the development of a model for assessing pest control methods, and the use of this model to assess the humaneness of the most commonly used control methods.

Managing overabundant species — in particular, large, feral herbivores such as camels, donkeys and horses — is a necessary part of effective land management practice. However, this is a highly emotive and contentious issue. In 2010, the working group noted with some concern various proposals regarding the management of horse and camel populations in remote areas. The working group has developed a position statement outlining the animal welfare issues that need to be considered in such situations and the humaneness of a range of interventions.<sup>81</sup>

The working group supports the following eight implementation principles<sup>82</sup> as the general basis for humane management of vertebrate pest animals:

- The aims or benefits and the harms of each control program must be clear.
- Control should be undertaken only if there is a likelihood that the aims can be achieved.
- The most humane methods that will achieve the aims of the control program must be used.
- The methods that most effectively and feasibly achieve the aims of the control program must be used.
- The methods must be applied in the best possible way.
- Whether or not each control program achieved its aim must be assessed.
- Once the desired aims or benefits have been achieved, steps must be taken to maintain the beneficial state.
- When there is a choice of methods, the method used should achieve a balance between humaneness, community perception, feasibility, emergency needs and efficacy.

### *Animals used for work, sport, recreation and display*

The working group on animals used for work, sport, recreation and display continues to divide its activities between three subgroups: for dogs, horses and zoos.

#### *Working dogs*

In 2009, the Australian Working Dog Survey investigated the husbandry, sourcing, breeding, assessment, training and veterinary care of working dogs in Australia. This was the first time that such information had been

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81 [www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/nccaw/guidelines](http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/nccaw/guidelines)  
82 Humane Vertebrate Pest Control Working Group (2004). A national approach towards humane vertebrate pest control. Discussion paper arising from the proceedings of an RSPCA Australia/AWC/PC joint workshop, August 4–5, Melbourne. RSPCA Australia, Canberra.

collected on a national scale. Key findings of the survey<sup>83</sup> included the following:

- Dogs received an average of 14 months (378 hours) of training before reaching a competent working standard.
- The average age of working dogs was just over five years, and the average age of retirement almost eight years, although there were significant variations between sectors.
- The average time at work for dogs in different sectors varied significantly. On average, government dogs (customs, quarantine, police and defence) worked 25 hours per week; dogs in private industry (agriculture and security) and assistance worked 14 hours per week; and sport dogs worked 8 hours per week.
- Most working dog trainers have no formal education in dog behaviour or training (52%) or are trained on the job (42%); only 6% have undertaken formal (certified) training. Working dog handlers generally received on-the-job training (63%).

The results from the survey will feed into a project to develop an action plan to improve welfare outcomes for Australia's working dogs. This project is expected to be completed in 2011.

### **Horses**

Progression of the draft *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines — Horses* has been delayed by difficulties in negotiating suitable funding arrangements for the regulation impact analysis and public consultation.

### **Zoos**

The major work for the zoos subgroup has been the ongoing development of general and taxon-specific *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines — Exhibited Animals (Zoos)*. Details of this project are provided in Section 8.1.1.

### **Companion animals**

The pet care industry contributes around \$5.7 billion to the Australian economy, and 84% of the Australian community has pets.<sup>84</sup> The sector covers dogs, cats, birds and other small animal pets, as well as companion horses.

The AAWS Companion Animal Working Group has identified the development of national animal welfare standards and guidelines for dogs and cats as a high priority. These standards and guidelines are being developed cooperatively with the states and territories and animal welfare groups, with funding under the AAWS. A writing group has drafted standards and guidelines for companion animals; the draft will undergo public consultation in 2011 before being finalised. The final standards and guidelines will provide pet owners with clear information about their responsibilities for the health and wellbeing of their pets.

### **Livestock and production animals**

The working group on livestock and production animals recently reaffirmed the priority animal welfare issues for future activity as:

- harmonisation across governments to produce consistent animal welfare regulatory outcomes
- review and reformatting of the model codes of practice for the welfare of animals to Australian animal welfare standards and guidelines
- implementation of quality assurance programs as a vehicle for applying agreed animal welfare standards
- strategies for communication and extension
- identification of knowledge gaps in the science underpinning animal welfare, and facilitation of science-based research.

The working group has identified training of livestock handlers as a high priority for improved livestock welfare. An AAWS-funded project was undertaken to identify the principles and an acceptable framework for applying national animal welfare standards and guidelines within industry quality assurance arrangements. The project explored the feasibility of developing a consistent approach to training of stock handlers, especially for sheep and beef cattle. The revised *Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals — Pigs* was endorsed in 2007 and has been implemented by some jurisdictions.

The *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines — Land Transport of Livestock* was endorsed by PIMC in May 2009, and its implementation by the states and territories is a priority for 2011.

Standards and guidelines for the welfare of cattle and sheep are now being developed (see Section 8.1.1).

83 [www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/reports](http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/reports)

84 BIS Shrapnel Report, for the Australian Companion Animal Council, *Contribution of the Pet Care Industry to the Australian Economy*, 6th edition, 2006.

## ***Animals used in research and teaching***

A number of initiatives to improve the welfare of animals used in scientific research and education are under way. The overarching framework for such use is the *Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes*.<sup>85</sup> Projects that are approved and progressed by members of the AAWS working group in this area will underpin the code's operations by providing better resource materials for animal users and for training.

The following projects began in June 2010 to deliver those materials:

- An online, web-based training course is being developed to provide students and researchers with a working understanding of the principles, processes and structures that are in place under the code to protect the wellbeing of animals. The course will be assessable and consistent with international guidance provided by the International Council for Laboratory Animal Science on training of people responsible for animals in the laboratory setting. It is intended that the course will be finalised, including through a process of international review, and made available during 2011–12.
- A range of audiovisual information is being developed that covers ethical perspectives on the use of animals for research and teaching, as well as the structures and processes that are in place under the code to protect the wellbeing of animals. This information will be accessible by the general public, teachers, researchers and students. It is intended that the material will be finalised and made publicly available during 2011–12.

In addition, Australia has begun revising the 2004 edition of the code. A series of expert groups has been convened by the National Health and Medical Research Council to review each of the current code's sections and advise a reference group on what should be included in a new code. This process will draw on existing best practice in the research and teaching community to cover the ethical expectations of the Australian public for use of animals in research and teaching. It is expected that this work will continue through 2010–11, with public consultation on a new draft code to occur after June 2011.

### **8.2.3 Communications**

Detailed analysis undertaken for phase 1 of the AAWS identified more than 400 stakeholder organisations, including governments; advisory bodies; education,

research and training organisations; Indigenous communities; industry and business organisations; nongovernment organisations; and the veterinary and animal health sectors.

A national workshop of approximately 120 stakeholders was held in July 2010 as part of the consultation process for the development of phase 2 of the AAWS. Aims of the workshop were to provide an update on activities and progress at the sectoral level, and to assist sectoral groups to develop action plans and priority projects.

The strategy's overall communication program provides a basis for stakeholder management and supports reporting, accountability, transparency, engagement and promotional aims. Many of the sectoral working groups have identified communication projects among their top priorities for action during phase 2. National endorsement for phase 2 of the AAWS is expected in April 2011.

The communication program has two primary objectives:

- to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of sound practices in managing and ensuring the welfare of animals
- to increase awareness of roles and responsibilities in delivering a duty of care for the welfare of animals.

The strategy also provides funding for communication projects to be delivered by partner organisations that address industry or sectoral priorities. Projects funded in 2010 included:

- publication and evaluated application of a Stock Preparation Guide for Livestock Transport
- development of a range of audiovisual information on ethical perspectives on the use of animals for research and teaching.

### **8.2.4 Animal welfare education and training**

In 2009, focus groups with school teachers were used to examine approaches and barriers to teaching animal welfare in the classroom. The need to develop and to share teaching resources was highlighted.<sup>86</sup>

A study into secondary school agricultural students' behavioural attitudes to working with sheep and the impact of these attitudes on stock handling was also completed. Further work will continue to develop national resources for training students and others in low-stress stock handling.

85 [www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/ea16syn.htm](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/ea16syn.htm)

86 [www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/reports](http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/welfare/reports)

Education and training projects funded by the AAWS in 2010 included:

- development of a best practice learning resource on stock handling
- improving animal welfare in Indigenous communities through a project called 'Smiling Animals in the Dreamtime'
- development of a community of practice for the use of animals for high-school agriculture teachers
- mapping ProHand<sup>87</sup> training packages designed for animal handlers against current livestock industry competencies, and establishing recommendations for future accreditation of the ProHand courses against the competencies in the National Training Framework.

### 8.2.5 Animal welfare research and development

Australia's three major identified providers of animal welfare research and development (R&D) — the Animal Welfare Science Centre, the Centre for Animal Welfare and Ethics, and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation — have agreed to cooperate on animal welfare research programs under a non-exclusive relationship agreement that establishes an AAWS animal welfare R&D consortium. In addition, these three institutions are part of the newly expanded New Zealand – Australia Collaborating Centre for Animal Welfare Science and Bioethical Analysis, which was recognised as a World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) collaborating centre in May 2009.

The AAWS working group on animal welfare R&D has provided significant input to the development of a national mechanism to deliver animal welfare research, development and extension (RD&E) activities for livestock under the National Framework for Agricultural Research, Development and Extension initiative of PISC.

The national Animal Welfare RD&E Strategy will facilitate collaboration and partnerships between agriculture sector RD&E investors and providers with an interest in animal welfare, underpinned by defined funding arrangements. It draws on previous work under the AAWS that defined key areas for investment in such work, as well as the previous collaborative arrangements established for the AAWS animal welfare R&D consortium. The strategy aims to ensure that Australia's RD&E capability in animal welfare is backed by appropriate funding agreements, and that animal welfare RD&E capacity is maintained. The Animal Welfare RD&E Strategy was endorsed by PIMC in November 2010.

## 8.3 Livestock exports

### 8.3.1 Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock

Version 2.2 of the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock is currently in force. Exporters must comply with the standards to be permitted to export livestock by the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service.

### 8.3.2 Livestock Export Standards Advisory Group and the Consultative Forum on the Livestock Export Industry

The Livestock Export Standards Advisory Group was established in 2009 to provide advice to DAFF and the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry on the revision, development and implementation of the Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock. In 2010, the advisory group reviewed the standards and recommended a number of changes. Version 2.3 of the standards will come into effect in 2011.

A consultative forum on the livestock export industry was convened in 2010 to obtain views from a wide selection of stakeholders on the proposed changes to the standards.

## 8.4 International animal welfare

### 8.4.1 World Organisation for Animal Health

Australia supports the OIE's development of scientifically based international animal welfare guidelines. These guidelines are not intended to strengthen nontariff barriers to international trade through prescriptive animal welfare requirements. The Australian Government consults closely with the livestock industries in developing an Australian position on issues being discussed in this forum.

Australian experts participated in the OIE ad hoc working groups that developed the animal welfare guidelines for broilers and beef cattle, and Australia provides comment to the OIE on draft standards.

### 8.4.2 Regional Animal Welfare Strategy for Asia, the Far East and Oceania

Australia is assisting the OIE to develop and implement regional and subregional strategies in Asia, the Far East and Oceania. An inaugural animal welfare workshop for the Asia, Far East and Oceania region was held in Bangkok, Thailand, in 2007. The *Regional Animal Welfare Strategy for Asia, the Far East and Oceania* (RAWS) was endorsed in May 2008 by the Regional Commission for

87 [www.animalwelfare.net.au/comm/prohand.html](http://www.animalwelfare.net.au/comm/prohand.html)



Josephine Buckley

Asia, the Far East and Oceania and the OIE International Committee.

DAFF, in conjunction with the OIE, hosted a workshop in Bangkok in November 2008, in which participants agreed on an implementation framework for the RAWWS and drafted an implementation plan. The plan was endorsed by the Regional Commission for Asia, the Far East and Oceania in November 2009 and by the OIE International Committee in May 2010. A training course for OIE animal welfare focal points was held in March 2010, and a workshop to consider issues arising from the implementation plan was held in Bangkok in April 2010. Further activities are planned for the first half of 2011. A practical and applied implementation process is vital for the success of the RAWWS, as is the ongoing support of governments, welfare organisations, practitioners, scientists and industry.

#### **8.4.3 Welfare activities with Middle Eastern trading partners**

In May 2009, the Australian Government announced a three-year, \$3.2 million Live Trade Animal Welfare Partnership program, jointly funded by government and industry. Through this program, government and industry are working together to support Australian agriculture and trade.

The Live Trade Animal Welfare Partnership builds on previous investments to support a range of improvements, including better infrastructure to reduce livestock stress or injury, and training for feedlot and transport staff in overseas markets. In March 2010, the Australian Government announced funding for three projects worth around \$1.1 million in total under the program. In October 2010, the government also

announced funding for four additional projects, worth around \$1.1 million in total.

#### **8.4.4 Quadrilateral Animal Welfare Working Group**

In 2010, Australia participated in the Animal Welfare Working Group of the Animal Health Quadrilateral Group of countries — Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. The working group held regular teleconferences in 2010 to update member countries on developments of interest.

#### **8.4.5 European Union – Australia Animal Welfare Cooperation Forum**

In September 2008, the European Commission and DAFF agreed to terms of reference establishing the Animal Welfare Cooperation Forum of the European Commission and the Australian Government.

The aim of the forum is to provide a regular opportunity for information exchange and cooperation on animal welfare issues of operational and strategic importance to both participants. The forum promotes dialogue on current animal welfare systems, activities and priorities. It will further develop a science-based approach to animal welfare and strengthen the bilateral relationship on animal welfare issues, including advancing OIE work in this area.

The Animal Welfare Cooperation Forum met via videoconference in April 2010. Strategic issues discussed included social science research into community attitudes, bilateral agreements, risk assessment in animal welfare, opportunities for research collaboration and international capacity building. A face-to-face meeting of the forum is planned for 2011.