

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING CCC29**

20 November 2003  
John Curtin House, Canberra

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jenni Mack (Chair), Ben Cole, Alison Brinson, Jane Fuller. Liz Hanna, Sid Cowling, Sam Beechey

**APVMA OFFICERS PRESENT**

Eva Bennet-Jenkins, Tim Dyke (part), David Loschke (part), Dennis O'Leary (part), Kathleen Allan, Peter Dagg (part).

**APOLOGIES**

Anne Stanton, Andrew Duncan

**AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

The Chair welcomed members and APVMA staff.

**AGENDA ITEM 2 – ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The Chair advised members that the agenda would be rearranged to accommodate staff movements associated with the 10-year anniversary functions.

Alison Brinson asked that the Minor Use Forum be added as an additional agenda item under General Business.

Members adopted the amended agenda.

**AGENDA ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF CCC28**

The minutes of CCC28 were accepted as tabled dependant on the inclusion of the following amendment.

5.1 Member activity reports

*Sid Cowling*

Replace: "The Organic Federation.....successful"

With: "The Organic Producers Association of Queensland recently held a regional conference which was well attended and very successful. The Organic Federation of Australia is holding the second National Organic Conference in Adelaide in early October. The APVMA has been invited to speak on post-harvest treatment of farm produce".

## **AGENDA ITEM 4 – ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

*Action 28.1 Members to be provided with a summary of the Board paper on chemical training and related issues.*

Eva provided an oral summary of the Board paper. She advised that the paper summarised very briefly the current status of ag chemical training in Australia. It focussed on issues raised by a member of the community in these areas and discusses problems with the current system of ag training in the context of the issues raised. The issues ranged from broad topics for example labelling to very specific topics such as advances in pesticide application technology in tree cropping. It also covered such things as how well specific competencies for agvet chemicals were covered in hazardous chemicals courses and questions around accreditation.

The paper had generated discussions by the Board on the APVMA's overall regulatory role and the move to link supply to competency accreditation. The outcome of those discussions were that the APVMA can be involved in providing information and getting feedback but that it should not be involved in driving the provision of training.

*Action 28.8 Members to seek comments on the APVMA concept label and provide comments to the APVMA via Kathleen.*

A number of members provided comments on the APVMA concept label. It was agreed that a document listing all comments be created and distributed to members. This document is to be an evolving one with new comments added when received.

**Action 29.1: Kathleen to recirculate an electronic copy of the draft concept label.**

**Action 29.2: Kathleen to keep a list of all comments received from members on the APVMA draft concept label. This document should be distributed to members.**

## **AGENDA ITEM 5 – MEMBER REPORTS**

### **5.1 CCC Member Activity**

Members were asked to briefly summarise their CCC activity since CCC28 and to nominate major issues of importance to member networks.

*Sid Cowling*

- the Organic Federation of Australia held its second national conference in October, at which the APVMA presented a paper on post-harvest treatment of farm produce. The presence of APVMA staff was well received.
- the OFA AGM has elected a new Board which is focussing on priorities and tasks, including labelling of and chemical residues in organic food.

Recent Victorian and Queensland studies have highlighted the issues of chemical contamination in transport and handling and of chemical residues in multi-ingredient products where organic and non-organic ingredients are mixed.

- organic farmers are looking at certification protocols and their relationship to Environment Management Systems for farms.

*Alison Brinson*

- comments regarding labelling (see Action 28.11)
- the APVMA Minor Use Forum was a valuable event. Minor use is an important issue for a number of horticultural industries.
- the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is keen to see the progression of the Data Protection legislation.
- Chemcert is looking at its structure and strategies at both the State and National level.

*Liz Hanna*

- spent considerable time examining the APVMA communication plan
- emphasises that for the agvt chemical management scheme to be effective, user awareness is crucial
- interested in the EU REACH program
- actively promoting the importance and impact of chemicals in environmental health.

*Ben Cole*

- Ben advised members that he has been in contact with Pat Healy from the ANU regarding a study into the impacts of agricultural chemicals on occupational health and safety.
- Eva told members that the APVMA is aware of the report and is preparing a response. The APVMA has concerns regarding the accuracy of some information in the report.
- Ben prepared an article for TEC on the AERP.
- prepared a study response and paper on GM issues.

*Jane Fuller*

- DrumMuster – networks confirm that it is a good program however interest is often lost when producers find that drums are not accepted by the program
- spray drift impact

*Sam Beechey*

- maintains concern about chemical use in pastoral industries in general
- concerned about disease transmission and disposal of spent cleaning chemical with the Shear Express unit (mobile shearing unit based on a

semi-trailer that travels from property to property for shearing. Negates the need for a shearing shed.)

- possible link between chemical use and the increasing farm injury and death rate
- Sam expressed concern over the registration and commercialisation of the BioClip technology. Bioclip is a chemical shearing technique where sheep are injected with a protein that disrupts the wool follicle causing a break in the wool making the fleece fall from the sheep a short time later (approx 12 days). At the time of injection, a net is placed on the sheep to “catch” the wool. When ready for harvesting the nets and fleece are removed. Sam is concerned that the commercialisation of this technology is not addressing ongoing OH and S issues for shearers. There are also issues surrounding potential for increased sheep deaths from exposure once the wool has fallen off and the risk for animals to become entangled in fences and timber due to the nets. Sam also advised members that there are issues with using the technology in adult ewes due to a reported increased incidence in birth defects.

## **5.2 Member Details**

Alison Brinson provided members with a brief overview of the role and importance of ChemCert as well as a summary of the positions she holds with a number of organisations.

(See attached slides.)

## **5.3 Member issues**

### *5.3.1 Committee Review and input into CCC Chair report to APVMA Board*

#### Closed session

Jenni provided members with an overview of her presentation to be given to the APVMA Board meeting on 21 November. Members were asked to provide input where necessary.

The committee review will need to be scheduled for a future meeting.

## **AGENDA ITEM 6 – PROGRESS OF WORK PROGRAM ITEMS**

### **6.1 AERP Discussion Paper**

The Chair welcomed Peter Dagg to the discussions.

The report provided with the meeting papers was accepted as read.

Peter advised members that comments received by the APVMA about the proposed form would be accepted. The APVMA has conducted a pilot study specifically examining the usability of the report form. Fifteen reports have been completed to date. Members commented that the reporting form does not necessarily address the needs of those who are chemically sensitive. Eva reminded members that the

reporting form was a guide only and that persons making a claim did not necessarily have to use the form and therefore could provide additional detail or make a report by letter if preferred.

Peter clarified the composition and selection process for the AERP Advisory panel. The committee will consist of representatives from the APVMA Pesticides and Quality Assurance programs as well as experts from the Office of Chemical Safety (toxicology), NOHSC and the Department of Environment and Heritage. The panel will also include an agricultural expert and a medical practitioner. The APVMA will establish suitable selection criteria for these positions. The positions will be advertised and a formal selection process conducted. The medical expert on the panel may be able to consult with other experienced colleagues however they will need to be mindful of confidentiality issues. It is not proposed to have a separate medical or Doctor's advisory panel.

Members again expressed interest in contributing to the formulation of a promotion strategy for the AERP. Peter agreed to provide members with the details of the promotion strategy. This will be discussed at the February meeting.

**Action 29.3 Members to be provided with a proposed AERP promotion strategy for discussion at the Feb meeting.**

## **6.2 Communication/Consultation/Feedback with community networks**

Due to time constraints this item was deferred until the next meeting.

## **6.3 Spray drift risk management**

Jenni invited David to update members on progress of the spray drift risk management registration requirements.

David advised members that the APVMA has received 23 submissions on the spray drift proposal. Submissions have been received from a range of different stakeholder groups including the States, major industry representative organisations, the VFF as well as a number of individuals. A number of submissions express a similar range of concerns however there are some with opposing views.

David agreed that a substantive report incorporating the comments received in the submissions, would be made available for discussion at the next meeting.

Members emphasised that the regulatory framework needs to reflect actual practices and be easily applied to the farming sector.

Members stressed the need for education programs that reach deep into farming communities backed up by strong compliance programs to reinforce the message.

## **6.4 APVMA role in the management of antimicrobial resistance in Australia.**

Tim provided details on the role of the APVMA in the management of antimicrobial resistance.

(See attached slides and notes)

Tim also gave members a brief overview of the use of antibiotics for growth promotion in Australia and a summary of international developments in antimicrobial resistance management.

## **7 APVMA Reports**

### **7.1 Registration**

Members NOTED the Registration Programs' Report.

### **7.2 Chemical Review**

Members NOTED the Chemical Review Report.

#### *7.2.1 Update on member nominated significant reviews.*

A brief summary of progress on member nominated significant reviews is attached (see attachment 1).

### **7.3 AERP**

Members NOTED the AERP (Vet) Report.

### **7.4 Quality Assurance and Compliance**

#### *7.4.1 Quality Assurance – Manufacturers Licensing Scheme Report*

#### *7.4.2 Compliance report*

Members NOTED the Quality Assurance and Compliance reports.

## **AGENDA ITEM 8 – OTHER BUSINESS**

### **8.1 2004 Meeting dates**

Members agreed that the next meeting of the CCC be held on Wednesday 18 February 2004. Kathleen and Jenni will discuss future meeting dates and provide a proposal to members ASAP.

### **8.2 CCC Information Sheet**

**Action 29.4 Kathleen to update the Information Sheet after discussion with Jenni.**

### 8.3 DAFF Update (Steve McCutcheon)

Jenni invited Mr Steve McCutcheon, General Manager Product Safety and Integrity DAFF to address the meeting and provide a brief update on the latest issues being considered by the Product Safety and Integrity Committee (PSIC).

Steve advised members that the PSIC is currently formulating a whole of Government response to the Radcliffe and Allen reviews. A number of clear messages were established in the reviews, each of which is being addressed in the PSIC report.

#### 1. Operating environment.

The Allen and Radcliffe reviews identified that the differences in control-of-use legislation and impact on compliance activity varied significantly between the States. The PSIC report recommends the development of a set of national operating principles for control of use with State legislation to be audited against the operating principles. This will in part alleviate some of the issues associated with harmonisation of control-of-use.

#### 2. Data collection and monitoring

Primary Industry Ministerial Council Members (PIMC) members have agreed that agvet chemical use data collection and monitoring is an important issue that should be progressed. DAFF, lead by PSIC, will develop a map of land use areas and superimpose available data on chemical use in particular areas. Steve stated that there is an opportunity to better utilise existing usage information from chemical distribution points such as Elders/Landmark etc. DAFF is investigating the most efficient way of collating usage information and how to make it publicly available.

#### 3. User awareness and education

PIMC has indicated that there needs to be a greater emphasis on user awareness and education. A program addressing this issue was previously being developed by NFF however interest was lost and the program stalled. PSIC is encouraging the NFF to become more interested in the issue again. PSIC has also requested NSW Ag to develop a national strategy framework for training and accreditation of chemical users. It is proposed that this framework will be used for discussion and consultation purposes.

#### 4. Communication and Information

PSIC has agreed that there is a general lack of understanding in the community about the management of pesticides and veterinary medicines in Australia. PSIC is developing a national communication strategy for the system. The communication strategy will go beyond the registration (APVMA) system. Possible communication vehicles include brochures, websites etc.

Members sought clarification on the role of DAFF in the EU REACH program. Steve advised members that DAFF is not actively involved. REACH is primarily about a European Commission review and future management proposal of approximately 800 chemicals. As a result a number of these are no longer registered for use in the EU. Steve advised that DAFF is concerned that a management system for chemicals will be imposed on Australia by the EU similar to that for hormonal growth promotants

(HGP) for use in cattle. It is important that Australia argue on a risk management basis that our standards and management system are appropriate. Steve reminded members that DAFF and the APVMA do collaborate actively on an international level both from a policy and scientific or technical perspective.

#### **8.4 Minor use forum**

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

#### **CLOSE**

The Chair thanked members and staff for their attendance.

Meeting closed at 12.45pm.

Signed

Jenni Mack (Chair)

Kathleen Allan (Secretariat)