

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING CCC32**

26 August 2004
John Curtin House, Canberra

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jenni Mack (Chair), Liz Hanna, Jane Fuller, Anne Stanton, Andrew Duncan, Sid Cowling, Sam Beechey, Jo Immig and Alison Brinson

APVMA OFFICERS PRESENT

Eva Bennet-Jenkins, Dennis O'Leary, Antonia Exposito, Col Byrnes (part), Bruce Johnson (part)

APOLOGIES

NIL

AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members and APVMA staff and extended a special welcome to Jo Immig as the new member of CCC.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Agenda was adopted with the meeting noting Anne Stanton's request to include discussion of the Scammel Report on the agenda (item 9.2).

AGENDA ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF CCC30

The minutes of CCC31 were accepted as a true and accurate record of CCC meeting 31 (20 May 2004) with one minor change suggested to Item 27.5 Liquid Fertilisers – change reference "diluent" to "diluent/carrier".

AGENDA ITEM 4 – CORRESPONDENCE

The meeting noted the summary of correspondence In/Out. The question was raised as to whether or not CCC members wished to receive Gene Ethics announcements. Members requested to receive these on a trial basis, with the exception of Jenni Mack and Jo Immig, with the position to be reviewed at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the APVMA would acknowledge responses received to the CCC letter requesting information on issues regarding container management.

ACTION 32.1. Correspondence – APVMA to send acknowledgement letter to correspondents on container management.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1 Liquid fertiliser issues (Action 31.1)

APVMA reported that it had sought input from the Chemistry and Residues Program (CRP) and the registration teams of the Pesticide Program, as agreed at Meeting 31, on the issue of the use of fertilisers as diluents/carriers for agricultural chemicals particularly in relation to chemical compatibility, efficacy and labelling issues. The meeting noted that CRP (Chemistry) had prepared an issues paper on the matter. A copy of the paper will be distributed to CCC members. The APVMA advised that the most appropriate avenue to address the issues would be as part of the APVMA Label Review project which will include consultation through the Registration Liaison Committee, the Industry Liaison Committee (ILC) as well as the CCC.

Members were advised that the ILC has taken an interest in this item and had commented that industry regarded the use of fertilisers as diluents/carriers as not good agricultural practice. Some registrants were already including instructions on labels to advise users against this practice.

Andrew Duncan noted that APVMA should also be consulting with farmers, fertiliser manufacturers and chemical, boom spray operators.

ACTION 32.2 Fertiliser issues – APVMA to provide members with a copy of chemistry advice

5.2 PSIC NGO workshop (Action 31.2)

Jenni advised the meeting that a letter to DAFF had been prepared expressing the CCC's interest in being involved with the workshop. It would be sent at the conclusion of the meeting.

5.3 APVMA list-server (Action 30.5)

Members were urged to encourage their constituents to register on the list server to receive the eBulletin. There was brief discussion on compressing the community interest and eBulletin lists. To date there has been 107 subscribers to the eBulletin with the majority of them coming from industry and government. Copies of the memberships were to be made available to the meeting. Members were reminded to provide Kathleen Allan with URLs so that the appropriate hyperlinks could be set up.

Members suggested that Board members to be included on the e-bulletin list server.

ACTION 32.3 eBulletin - Board members to be added to the list server for the eBulletin

AGENDA ITEM 6 – MEMBER REPORTS

6.1 CCC Member Activity

- Andrew Duncan -
 - raised concerns in WA over spraydrift from bluegum plantations
 - urged promotion of AERP through rural press

- noted continued general level of dissatisfaction with the DrumMuster scheme in WA.
- Sam Beechey -
 - noted APVMA paper on adverse experience report for the Gudair vaccine (item 9.1) and in particular that a training program for use of the vaccine should be implemented.
 - noted that the Vic AWU was considering banning the use of CCA treated timbers over worker safety concerns. Also noted that further tests have been done on arsenic leaching from treated timbers. VIC AWU was awaiting the report on these tests.
- Liz Hanna -
 - spoke about her concerns with AERP and its penetration into the community
 - mentioned that the Public Health Association had many enquiries about the Scammel Report.
- Anne Stanton -
 - spoke about adverse experience reporting occurring many years after the event and long after the chemical was no longer registered
 - raised concerns of further studies being required regarding the risks with CCA treated timbers.
- Alison Brinson -
 - advised of her resignation from Chemcert
 - mentioned concerns in Victoria about ammonia nitrate fertiliser restrictions
 - mentioned her participation on the minor use working group and her appreciation of the APVMA minor use newsletter.
- Sid Cowling -
 - mentioned that he was disappointed with the number of responses he had received from constituents on the chemical review paper
 - mentioned the concerns of organic certifiers with CCA treated posts and advised that they were awaiting APVMA final report to see what action needs to be taken.
 - Jane Fuller -
 - mentioned her concerns that the APVMA's reliance on web-based communications was not community friendly. Many in the community did not use the web and were not prepared to pursue issues. She supported more targeted communication efforts.

6.2 CCC Member brief

- Jo Immig introduced herself and provided a brief overview of her interests that included issues associated with GM crops particularly potential for increase herbicide use and adverse environmental affects eg. increased proliferation of *Fusarium*. Noted concerns regarding the plague locusts and potential for broad scale use of fenitrothion and the importance of promoting the AERP to users of those chemicals.

6.3 Member issues

Specific issues raised are addressed as part of the agenda items.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – PROGRESS OF WORK PROGRAM ITEMS

7.1 Review of APVMA Chemical Review Program

Jenni Mack introduced the overview paper and noted that CCC should make practical and achievable recommendations that the APVMA could commit to. Suggested establishing a working group consisting of CCC members representing both users and the general community. Anne and Alison indicated their willingness to participate in such a working group. Jenni undertook to chair the group.

In an effort to progress the discussion Jenni sought to focus on the consideration of four key issues:

- looking at the data call-in phase and input of independent data into the system
- how to make better use of overseas decisions
- the use of interim decision making
- improving community input into the review process.

There was discussion of the basic principles that should be applied in reviews. Points made included – the need for reviews to be science based, the need for the likely impact on farmers to be taken into consideration and the fact that community experience should also be accorded value in the review process.

The meeting noted that it would be useful for the APVMA to commission its own data collection and place more weight on overseas decisions.

Members were advised that exchange of reports and work sharing exercises were already occurring with a number of regulators in other countries through international bodies such as the OECD.

There was brief discussion about applying the precautionary principle and what the Government's position was. The APVMA suggested that DAFF could be requested to address CCC on this issue.

Andrew stressed the importance of ensuring that interim review decisions were based on sound evidence. To do otherwise could place unfairly disadvantage farmers.

Members stressed the importance of community input into chemical reviews and raised the idea of the APVMA more actively seeking community input by way of specifically resourcing community feedback.

The working party will draw on comments from members and the results of meetings with APVMA staff to produce practical recommendations for presentation to the APVMA.

ACTION 32.4 Chemical review process - CCC to form a working group to develop recommendations to provide to APVMA.

ACTION 32.5 . Precautionary principle - DAFF be requested to address CCC on the Government position on the application of the precautionary principle in chemical regulation.

7.2 Agvet chemical container management

7.2.1 APVMA initiatives paper

Colin Byrnes updated the Committee on initiatives being undertaken by APVMA on the management of specific requirements for containers of agvet chemicals. These include working with Avcare on their container design and performance project; consideration of developing standards and requirements to demonstrate compliance with the Agvet Code Regulations; identification of any significant parameters that are not covered by the Regulations and how best to cover these, and progressing matters relating to labelling (eg adhesiveness of labels and the print quality and durability of batch number and date of manufacture) through the current Label Review project.

As container management review is not a formal APVMA project for 2004/2005 the main focus will be on working with Avcare on their project and on changes that can be considered as part of the APVMA labelling review project.

Eva advised she had not had any response from the NFF or the local government association regarding the container management issues.

Item to be further considered at next meeting.

ACTION 32.6. Container management - APVMA to provide members with copies of the responses received on container management issues together with a covering minute summarising the issues raised.

7.2.2 Avcare presentation

Claude Gauchat, Executive Director of Avcare and Steve Bennett, chair of the Packaging Group and Avcare representative on the drumMuster Committee joined the meeting and gave an overview presentation on their container management project including drumMuster.

A copy of Avcare presentation slides is attached.

7.3 AERP Ag

7.3.1 Update: communication and promotion strategy

The AERP Communication program is progressing according to schedule and details of the activities undertaken are included in the Quality Assurance and Compliance report. The strategy has been to promote the program amongst all relevant sections of the community. Recent examples include, contact with the National Rural Health Alliance and the Australian Medical Association regarding promotion of the AERP Ag within the medical profession and the general public. In addition, letters were sent to over 100 farming groups, an article was published in the July edition of "The Land" newspaper and presentations were made at the CertCert Conference and the Australian Ground Sprayers Annual General Meeting.

7.3.2 Appropriateness of definitions used in the program.

The terminology used in the AERP programs was reviewed in response to a concern raised by a member of CCC about the appropriateness of some definitions. The APVMA advised that it is important to emphasise that all adverse experience reports that involve reactions in humans requiring medical attention are prioritised as "high risk" by the APVMA. The definitions of "serious" and "minor" adverse experiences only relate to the urgency with which registrant reports are passed on to the APVMA. The APVMA is reluctant to change the definitions used at this stage, having only just completed extensive stakeholder consultation. However, the program is to be reviewed in 2006 which may be an appropriate time for the APVMA to reconsider the definitions.

7.3.3 AERP funding issues

Given the current budgetary constraints of the APVMA, further funds were unlikely to be allocated to AERP at this time. Committee requested there be more detailed case studies of the AERP reports and geographic distribution of outcomes. Committee also noted the APVMA's work with pesticide odour working group and would like further information on this initiative at a future meeting of CCC.

ACTION 32.7. AERP report - APVMA to include more detail in future reports including examples of case studies and geographic distribution.

ACTION 32.8. AERP report - APVMA to provide update on project work on pesticide odour.

7.4 Communication/consultation

Covered in Item 5.3.

7.5 Spray drift risk management: brief update

No progress to report.

8 APVMA Reports

8.1 Pesticides program

Program report noted.

8.1.1 CCA review issues

There was wide-ranging discussion on the APVMA review of CCA timber treatments. Some of the key points raised included

- Community awareness – the meeting noted concerns that there was still widespread confusion regarding the recommendations and proposed outcomes of the CCA review.
- Disposal of treated timbers – the meeting noted concerns that CCA treated timber could become toxic waste if the community seeks to dispose of large quantities .
- More public education on CCA required eg. Information Campaign. Web based communication between APVMA and public is limited to those whom own a PC

8.1.2 CCA review update

The APVMA advised that the assessment of the public submission in response to the draft review report had been completed. The information provided did however not alter the review findings. The APVMA was now developing the appropriate regulatory framework for the review outcome in particular in relation to new CCA product label instructions. Recent legislative change now requires the APVMA to have before it a new, varied label before it can finalise the review. The development of the label instructions as well as the requirement to have copies of printer's proofs or marketed labels will mean that the review is unlikely to be finalised before early 2005.

8.2 Veterinary medicines program

Program report noted.

8.3 Quality Assurance and Compliance program

Program report noted.

8.4 Board meetings – 18 June and 19 August

The APVMA briefly summarised the activities of the recent Board meetings in June and in August. The meeting noted that the Board had considered draft review reports for Dimetridazole and Carbon disulfide and that these reports are now out for public comment. The Board had also considered issues relating the reviews of CCA and virginiamycin as the APVMA progresses towards the finalisation of these reviews. Other items considered by the Board included the APVMA Fees Review, implementation of the registrant component of Ag AERP, the new Quality Assurance

Scheme for Agricultural activities and GMP Compliance by overseas veterinary manufacturers.

ITEM 9 – OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 APVMA background briefing – Gudair vaccine

Paper prepared by John Owusu noted.

9.2 Scammel Report.

APVMA is aware of the concerns raised in the report. The meeting noted that the issues raised in the report are primarily a control of use issue. The APVMA has assessed all the available information including input from the Department of the Environment and Heritage. There is however no specific scientific evidence that would cause the APVMA to take regulatory action at this time. The APVMA has received correspondence from a Mr Jonkers, similar to that tabled by Anne Stanton and will provide the CCC with a copy of its response to the Jonkers inquiry.

ACTION 32.9 - APVMA to provide members with a copy of its response to the Jonkers enquiry.

CLOSE

The Chair thanked members and staff for their attendance.

Meeting closed at 4pm.

Signed

Jenni Mack (Chair)

Kathleen Allan (Secretariat)