

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING CCC35**

23 June 2005

John Curtin House, Canberra

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jenni Mack (Chair), Anne Stanton, Sid Cowling, Sam Beechey, Jo Immig and Peter Cone.

APVMA OFFICERS PRESENT

Eva Bennet-Jenkins, Antonia Exposito, Phil Reeves (part), Tim Dyke (part), Penny Linnett (part), Bruce Johnson (part), Subbu Putcha (part).

APOLOGIES

Liz Hanna and Don Sutherland

AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members extending a particular welcome to new member Peter Cone. All members briefly introduced themselves to each other summarising the expertise they bring to the committee.

APVMA staff were welcomed. The Chair advised that CCC members Liz Hanna and Don Sutherland were unable to attend.

It was noted the final CCC member had been appointed. It was Joe Elbustani who grows greenhouse vegetables in the Sydney region. He has links to field vegetable growers and stone fruit and flower growers. He also has links with NESB grower groups and is an experienced committee member and community advocate.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The draft agenda circulated with the meeting papers was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF CCC34

The minutes of CCC34 were accepted as a true and accurate record of CCC meeting 34 (3 March 2004) .

AGENDA ITEM 4 – CORRESPONDENCE

The meeting noted no new correspondence to report since CCC 34. It was agreed that only new items should be reported on in meeting papers.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (not separately covered)

All matters have satisfactorily progressed. Sid noted he was yet to circulate the OFA letter to members.

ACTION

Liquid fertilisers used as carriers/diluents for pesticides (update)

ACTION 35.1

The APVMA to contact the fertiliser association to advise that mixing of agricultural products with fertilisers should not be promoted unless there are specific label instructions in this regard.

The APVMA will also advise Andrew Duncan on any further outcomes on this matter to keeping him informed of developments given his previous commitment to the issue.

It was suggested that a general label instruction not to mix could be pursued as a more useful way of achieving the aims.

ACTION 35.2

It was agreed that completed items could be deleted from the action list.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – MEMBER REPORTS

6.1 CCC Member Activity

- Sam Beechey
 - Delivering training to shearing instructors around Australia, two on government owned properties whom raised concerns of chemical storage at these locations
 - Attended ChemCert Training – high level of dissatisfaction within ChemCert at present with VIC suggesting they may withdraw
 - ChemCert have written to APVMA Chairman, Dr Kevin Sheridan addressing concerns

ACTION 35.3

APVMA to report at next meeting re ChemCert letter to Dr Sheridan

- Anne Stanton
 - Jo Immig's NTN/TEC Working Together to Clear the Air report launch in May
 - Discussions with VIC and SA on CCA alternatives and dismantling of existing structures
 - Contacted by Keith Loveridge over concerns of Roundup sprayed in street gutters and the implications to waterways
- Sid Cowling
 - Promoting AERP and encouraging constituents to submit any adverse experiences to the APVMA
- Jo Immig
 - Finalised article for Organic Magazine
 - Report on *How the Chemical Cocktail Inside our Homes is Poisoning Our Children* was launched and received television and radio coverage
 - Contacted by a Lismore social worker who is assisting a family suffering from pesticide exposure. Submission of report through AERP was strongly encouraged
 - Ongoing work in the Byron Shire on the use of endosulfan and glyphosate
 -

6.2 CCC Member brief

Item deferred to August meeting until new appointments were finalised and all new members present.

6.3 Member issues (for information)

6.3.1 Mirex use in Australia

A Member had requested information from the APVMA in relation to Mirex products registered for use in Australia and what role, if any, the APVMA plays in the decision relating to the exemption provisions from the international prohibition of Mirex use in Australia. A copy of the approved product label was also requested.

The APVMA response to the query and a copy of the approved label was provided at item 6.3.1.

6.3.2 2,4D MRL in grapes

The Committee noted the paper provided on 2,4D MRL in grapes which addresses a member's query about the recent draft report from FSANZ on MRLs for 2,4D in grapes.

The APVMA response to the query was provided at item 6.3.2 and at item 8.1 in the Pesticides Program report.

6.3.3 Herbicide tolerant (GM) crop products

Action arising from Meeting 34 was for the APVMA to provide a written response to questions raised by members regarding the APVMA's role in the management of pesticide use in GM crops.

The APVMA response to the question was provided at item 6.3.3.

6.3.4 EU REACH program (not discussed)

6.3.5 Dermal absorption of chlorpyrifos in human volunteers – OCS assessment

The APVMA provided members with a copy of advice received from the Office of Chemical Safety (OCS) regarding an article that claimed chlorpyrifos lingered on the skin.

6.3.6 Neurological symptoms in pesticide applicators – OCS assessment

The APVMA provided members with a copy of advice received from OCS regarding a study published by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences on Neurologic Symptoms in Licensed Private Pesticide Applicators in the Agricultural Health Study (April 2005).

AGENDA ITEM 7 – PROGRESS OF WORK PROGRAM ITEMS

7.1 Approval of CCC Work Program

The Chair stressed the importance of ensuring that the work program consisted of projects that were achievable and within the realm of the APVMA's operations.

The committee reviewed the workplan and agreed that:

- control of use issues (including those at 3.1.1 and 3.1.4) are beyond APVMA jurisdiction and would be removed from the plan however Jo would attempt to draw the issues together under themes for consideration by the committee;
- the item "obtain information about ways soft chemical can be fast tracked in registration process" would be altered to "review the minor use permit system and examine ways in which the process could be improved with particular regard to reduced risk chemicals"
- there will be no specific project in relation to urban chemical user education but it may be considered as part of AERP Ag promotional initiatives
- re further interaction with DAFF –DAFF to be invited to attend next meeting.
- monitoring and contributing the adequacy of the AERP promotional program would remain high priority. The committee would gather information in preparation for the review of AERP next year which would be a major work item for the committee.

7.2 CCC operational matters

The committee was in agreement that an operating manual for the CCC would be useful as there was some confusion over various procedures and to set out processes for new members. It was noted it would be useful to review this annually to ensure members remained familiar with agreed procedures. The following were considered important for inclusion:

- meeting procedures eg consensus approach
- member information requests
- role of committee and secretariat
- agenda setting and timely notification of issues to the Chair
- history of the committee
- dealing with correspondence
- member activities outside of meetings
- work plan procedure
- e-bulletin process.

ACTION 35.4 CCC to prepare operating manual for committee procedures

7.2.1 Meeting dates

Meeting dates for the remainder of 2005 were agreed. 25 August and 30 November. Noted that the November meeting is locked in due to it coinciding with the APVMA Board Christmas function, which gives CCC a valuable opportunity to meet with the entire Board.

7.2.2 Member agenda items

It was agreed that it was beyond the scope of the secretariat to act as a 'general research assistant' for the committee or individual members. Members should ensure that any general information requests are relevant to the APVMA's work and the committee's role.

In discussing member agenda items the agenda setting process was clarified. The agenda is derived from the work plan. Members wishing to add new items to the agenda should notify the Chair at the time the call for agenda items goes out. Any objectives should be clarified at this time. All items will be considered along with those arising from the committee's agreed workplan. However the Chair did note she would take a robust approach to agenda setting given the limited amount of meeting time and the demands of the committee's agreed work plan.

7.2.3 Communication issues (HTML ebulletin, increasing subscribers to community list, distinct identity for CCC Secretariat)

Process for preparing the e-bulletin was clarified. As previously agreed the Chair drafts the e-bulletin following finalisation of the minutes. Anne Stanton provides comment. Kathleen Allan arranges the hyperlinks and loads it on to the website. A list server notice is sent out alerting subscribers that the e-bulletin is available on the website.

ACTION 35.5

It was agreed that the draft e-bulletin would be distributed to all members for comment. Comments would be forwarded to the Chair who would finalise content and forward to the Secretariat.

Future editions would be produced in HTML text only format and distributed by email.

Ongoing distribution problems with the list server were discussed. Promotional activities as previously agreed would occur ie promoting in APVMA's e-bulletin.

Members to continue to encourage their constituents to subscribe the community list.

Identity for CCC has been created in the form of a committee letterhead and the committee secretary will be known as such and will use this title when on committee business.

7.3.1 PSIC workshop – report from Jo Immig

Jo Immig attended the PSIC stakeholder workshop on 25th May on behalf of the CCC. While the workshop format was disappointing and hampered true workshop style interaction, some useful information was provided.

It was noted that DAFF's chemical usage mapping pilot project in Tasmania had not proceeded according to plan, but was getting back on track with more funding from another source. It was agreed the APVMA would distribute hard copies of the maps that were referred to at the DAFF workshop. These include what crops are grown were plus information about what chemicals are registered for use on those crops.

ACTION 35.6

APVMA to distribute copies of use pattern maps

The strategic framework of minor use permits was a significant issue and it was agreed the committee could play a timely role in reviewing current process especially with regard to softer chemicals and integrated pest management.

The DAFF brochure 'An Overview of Australia's National System for Managing Agvet Chemicals' was distributed and seen as very comprehensive and well received by members.

A significant period of time was spent discussing issues from PSIC work program during 2003/2004 including:

AgVet Chemical User Training: PSIC initiative to develop a system for restricting access to high risk agvet chemicals to users who have the appropriate level of competency.

Clarity and consistency of pesticide label information needs to be improved to ensure the users are adequately informed.

Obligations under new International conventions for Chemicals (Rotterdam and Stockholm).

Policy framework for fertilizer regulation

The CCC discussed problems with DAFF's approach to consultation, partly demonstrated by the flaws in its approach to the workshop as well as a consistent position that they will not provide funding for community participation.

ACTION 35.7

It was agreed the committee would write to DAFF asking them to detail their community consultation strategy which would also highlight our concerns with the PSIC workshop. Jo to draft, Jenni, Anne and Peter to provide input. Jenni to settle and sign.

7.4 Agvet chemical container management

This issue has not progressed since the last meeting when members were provided with copies of the revised APVMA product labelling concepts and encouraged to seek feedback from their networks. No feedback was received.

7.5.1 Review of chemical review program

At its February meeting the Board considered a response to the CCC's review of the chemical review processes. The CCC's review aimed to identify ways to improve the effectiveness and transparency of the review program and for enhancing the current level of community participation.

The Board responded positively to the CCC's 14 recommendations covering communication, community input, timelines, overseas developments and level of resources available to the chemical review program agreeing to progress nearly all recommendations. Several can be implemented within a short time-frame with minimal resource impact, some are already being pursued through other initiatives and that a considered response will be given to CCC concerning internal allocation of APVMA resources.

The Board asked that the CCC be complimented on the quality of the report and be advised of the Board's endorsement of management's proposals for responding to the recommendations.

ACTION 35.8

The CCC asked the APMVA to provide a report on implementation of the recommendations in 6 months time and a further report 6 months after that.

7.5.2 1080 review

Subbu Putcha gave a presentation on the 1080 review (copy of slides – Attachment 1).

The review is recommending the strengthening of label instructions and controls on the use of 1080 to provide a greater margin of safety to minimise off-target species damage.

The initial review findings have highlighted that, with certain improvements, the APVMA can be satisfied that the continued use of 1080 is safe for the environment.

Concerns were expressed that animal welfare issues were not considered as part of the APVMA review process.

7.6 AERP

The APVMA updated the committee in relation to AERP promotional activities. Health related associations, major user groups, and local government have been targeted. It was promoted at the ChemCert Conference. The AERP is also to be promoted by way of advertisements in major rural newspapers and magazines and a Chemcert brochure has also been produced which is to be translated into approx 5 languages.

The committee was concerned that:

- the low number of reports, which were quite different to its and the APVMA's own expectations, suggested the program was not known about in the community
- the promotional strategy was not adequately resourced
- that no specific measures for assessing the effectiveness of the promotional activities existed.
- No promotion of the program to domestic users of pesticides.
- There had been minimal promotion of the program to health professionals, other than GPs

Members suggested the PR approach needed a rethink and urged the APVMA to make this a priority issue for the new public affairs manager.

The committee noted the promotional campaign would be a focus of its participation of the AERP review scheduled for next year.

ACTION 35.9

It was agreed that the APVMA would prepare a report against the promotional strategy detailing the initiatives to date and would give some thought to performance measures. CCC concerns would also be raised with the new public affairs manager.

The APVMA would also prepare a paper that set out the timing and the process for the AERP review.

ACTION 34.10

CCC members would make informal inquiries in their own communities to see if they could get a sense of the level of awareness of the promotional activities bearing in mind that the strategy to date had focused on GPs

7.7.1 Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (Dr Nick Buckley)

Dr Nick Buckley - Senior Consultant & Director, Department of Clinical Pharmacology & Toxicology, The Canberra Hospital, was invited to the meeting to address specific questions about MCS in Australia.

Dr Buckley provided two reviews out of meeting for the committee's interest. These will be made available with minutes.

ACTION 35.11

Following Dr Buckley's presentation the committee noted it would be useful to hear from a medical expert with a different view such as Dr Mark Donahoe from the Sydney who was involved in treating people with MCS.

7.7.2 OCS presentation

Dr Utz Mueller PhD, Team Leader Agvet Chemical Review, Office of Chemical Safety was invited to give an overview of the function of the Office of Chemical Safety and their role in the setting of MRLs etc

A copy of Dr Mueller's slides are at attachment 2.

8 APVMA Reports (reports were noted as read out of meeting but not discussed)

8.1 Pesticides program

The meeting NOTED the Pesticides Program report

8.2 Veterinary medicines program

The meeting NOTED the Veterinary Medicines Program report.

8.3 Quality Assurance and Compliance program

The meeting NOTED the Quality Assurance and Compliance Program report.

8.4 Board meeting – 7 April meeting circulate the website summary

NOTED.

ITEM 9 – OTHER BUSINESS

CLOSE

The Chair thanked members and staff for their attendance.

Meeting closed at 4.00pm.

Signed

Jenni Mack (Chair)

Antonia Exposito for
Kathleen Allan (Secretariat)