

**COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING CCC36**

25 August 2005

John Curtin House, Canberra

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jenni Mack (Chair), Anne Stanton, Jo Immig, Sam Beechey, Peter Cone, Don Sutherland

APVMA OFFICERS PRESENT

Ron Hogg, Dave Loschke, Tim Dyke, Kathleen Allan, Joe Smith (part), Simon Cubit, Bruce Johnston (part), Penny Linnet (part)

APOLOGIES

Syd Cowling, Joe Elbustani, Liz Hanna

AGENDA ITEM 1 – WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed members extending a particular welcome to new member Don Sutherland. All members briefly introduced themselves to each other providing an outline of their background, expertise and representation.

Attending APVMA staff were welcomed. Each provided a brief introduction. It was noted that Ron Hogg was acting Program Manager Pesticides whilst Eva Bennet-Jenkins was overseas.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – ADOPTION OF AGENDA

It was agreed that Item 8.5 (APVMA Market Research) would be postponed and replaced with a new item (Review of Consultative Committees).

AGENDA ITEM 3 – MINUTES OF CCC35

The Minutes of CCC35 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – CORRESPONDENCE

There has been a limited amount of correspondence which has not been formally listed in the correspondence register due to absence (due to injury) of the CCC Secretariat.

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

- 31.8 Dashboard report done
- 32.8 Pesticide odour- The APVMA reported on the activities of a working group seeking to address odour issues relating particularly to chemicals used in cotton. It was advised that the working group developed techniques to measure air-borne chemicals trialling the techniques in two typical cotton towns. The

drought, however, intervened but the trial has produced encouraging results nonetheless. A report is expected in September, and will come to the November CCC meeting.

- 33.4 Continuing consultations to be reported
- 35.1 No further progress given Eva's absence
- 35.2 In response to an enquiry the APVMA reported on ChemCert correspondence to the APVMA Chair. The APVMA is very supportive of chemical training and the work done by organisations such as ChemCert. The APVMA's view is that issues regarding ChemCert's operation are a matter for the ChemCert Board.
- 35.5 E-newsletter now distributed (and in html)
- 35.6 Chemical usage maps distributed.

AGENDA ITEM 6 - MEMBER REPORTS

Sam Beechey

Sam noted a Q fever outbreak in Victoria especially in the Western District and north east of Bendigo. Whilst screening has taken place, there was no vaccine available.

Sam also noted a case in Western Australia on unsafe chemical work practices which resulted in the issue of 82 notices by Worksafe. Problems with storage, handling and spillage.

Peter Cone

Peter has been busy on spray drift matters following the Avcare and APVMA forum in February. The substantial rains up the east coast of Australia have led to explosive weed growth. Trying to build awareness with NSW and Qld farmers through farmer organization newsletters. Putting together a ChemCert road show in NSW and Qld in October with a focus on the influence of weather on spray drift.

Concerned that some states, NSW and Qld in particular, are not adequately enforcing control of use as a result of drop in resources. Trying to get increased effort.

Trying to get the DAFF spraydrift publication reprinted in a less expensive format. It is considered to be a very useful publication but is too currently expensive to get broad distribution.

Jo Immig

Working on a joint project between NSW Department of Environment and Conservation and the Total Environment Centre promoting reduction in chemical use.

In her local area, ongoing concern about the use of endosulfan in macadamia nut plantations and glyphosate.

Working with the National Toxics Network in developing draft proposed legislation designed to achieve protection of children's environmental health.

Draft bill may be put up as a private member's bill to raise awareness among politicians.

Ongoing member request for information about APVMA's involvement in the registration process for GMO's.

Prepared Part 3 of pesticide article for *Organic Gardener* magazine. Should be out in the Spring Edition.

Anne Stanton

Noted correspondence from Peter Evans inviting people to attend and speak at a MCS rally in Adelaide.

Don Sutherland

Still finding his feet as a Committee member, a task made more difficult because of the need to attend to on-farm operational matters but is seeking to raise a profile with WA farmer organizations.

AGENDA 7.1 – OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

The Chair provided a background to the development of the guidelines. APVMA had a set of strategic guidelines for the administration of the CCC which had been approved by the Board. The Chair believed that it was useful that these guidelines be supplemented by a set of guidelines that deal with operational issues that were at the discretion of the Committee. Comment was sought by the Chair.

Comments raised by the Committee included:

- Relationships with other APVMA committees? – informal
- Reference to decisions being based on 'scientific fact' – to be replaced with text that refers to decisions being 'science-based'. Precautionary principle has not been adopted in Australia.
- Need to recognise that the Secretariat's ability to service information requests from CCC members is limited.

The Chair proposed and it was generally accepted that, the Committee should review the operational guidelines when it reviews its workplan.

AGENDA ITEM 7.3 – DAFF/PSIC PRESENTATION

The CCC had previously written to the PSIC at DAFF (25/05/2005) seeking improved community consultative arrangements. DAFF representatives Bill Magee (GM, PSIC) and Jenny Ritchie (Secretariat, PSIC) addressed the meeting.

Mr Magee and Ms Ritchie responded to questions about the proposal for the Minor Use Unit. They advised that options being considered by a working group with a recommendation going to PISC for an out-of-session decision within the next two months.

Ms Ritchie advised that PSIC is seeking to position itself as the policy conduit on agvet chemical policy rather than DAFF itself. PSIC is proposing to develop a web

page of its own. Ms Ritchie distributed copies of draft text for the website to better explain PSIC functions.

Members of the CCC reiterated a number of issues with Mr Magee and Ms Ritchie previously raised in the correspondence of 25/05/2005. These included the point that community believed it was poorly represented at the recent PSIC consultative forum, that there was no funding to support community participation, the meeting was too large, and that the agenda was too big for a three hour meeting.

Peter Cone sought clarification on two points - user training and aerial spraying – that were raised in the PSIC workplan. Anne Stanton asked whether the pilot program in Tasmania might become a model that communities might adopt in other parts of Australia. She was advised that the Tasmanian program involved a range of other tasks that limited its transferability to community groups like Landcare.

The Chair, in drawing discussion to an end, indicated that the CCC would look forward to seeing how PSIC consultation evolved to meet the needs of stakeholders.

AGENDA ITEM 7.4 – AGVET CONTAINER MANAGEMENT

The Chair indicated that this project arose out of a concern that the drumMUSTER program, which seeks the safe and effective disposal of empty chemical containers, had faltered. The project is currently in its second phase- that of writing to state farmer organizations, local government authorities and a sample of grower groups.

Peter Cone, an official of the drumMUSTER program in NSW, advised that it has overcome many of its problems and was now resurgent. It had recently, for example, taken on the ChemClear program as well.

ACTION 36.1

It was resolved that the CCC would write to drumMUSTER seeking an update on its current activities and future plans.

AGENDA ITEM 7.5 – MINOR USE PERMIT SYSTEM

The minor use permit system is a major focus of the CCC workplan. The APVMA gave a presentation on the system (see attached) in which the system was outlined and the directions in which it might develop with specific reference to the formation of Minor Use and Specialty Crops Development Unit.

Following the presentation discussion took place on the use of alternatives to pesticides, specifically the notion of new chemistry with reference to the US context. The APVMA explained that the US has a subsidized process and fast track registration processes both of which do not occur in Australia.

ACTION 36.2

The Chair proposed that a small working party get together to consider a direction for future CCC consideration of the issue. After discussion of a variety of operational and strategic issues it was resolved that Jo Immig, Jenni Mack, Joe Ebustani and

Peter Cone collaborate on the preparation of an initial paper which defines a framework for CCC consideration of minor use issues.

ACTION 36.3

The APVMA agreed to provide a copy of a paper written by the Minor Use Project Officer for OECD on minor use issues.

AGENDA ITEM 7.6 – AG AERP

The Chair provided background to the Committee's interest in this issue referring to the communication plan that had been developed to communicate the AERP project.

The APVMA spoke to the plan commencing with an explanation of the s.161 reference. This section of the Act refers to mandatory industry reporting. In the Vet AERP program, reports obtained via mandatory reporting constitute the large majority of all reports received. In terms of AG AERP, industry has contested the meaning of s. 161 arguing that the APVMA does not have the power to require mandatory reporting. The APVMA is to produce a guideline on how it will interpret s.161.

In response to a question about a review of the program it was explained that a review should take place not sooner than two years to allow the accumulation of a suitable range of data.

Promotion of the program had taken place and examples of the advertising and advertorial pieces that had been developed and distributed were provided.

Anne Stanton asked if the APVMA had identified a specific budget for the AERP and indicated her interest in studies to identify what prompts people to report and to enquire why there are such low rates of reporting.

In relation to the communication plan the APVMA indicated it was aiming to identify appropriate performance indicators and that the new APVMA Public Affairs Manager had not yet had the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the plan.

ACTION 36.4

The APVMA to report to the next meeting on progress in implementing the plan.

ACTION 36.5

APVMA to provide Anne Stanton with copies of the AERP posters for distribution

The APVMA advised that a new version of the Code of GMP and Manufacturing Principles is currently open for community comment and directed members to the APVMA website.

AGENDA ITEM 7.7 - MULTIPLE CHEMICAL SENSITIVITY

The APVMA reported that the issue of multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) was discussed at a recent APVMA Board meeting. MCS (or Ideopathic Environmental Intolerance) is a complex issue and the recently completed South Australian

Parliamentary report was very useful because it enabled a wide range of views to be captured.

The Board is communicating with the Department of Health and Ageing encouraging more research into MCS. It is also seeking to gain a better understanding of the 'right to know' principles being pursued in NSW. The APVMA is keen to remain in step with international best practice on this issue.

The Chair noted that the APVMA's view was encouraging and invited comment. Anne Stanton sought discussion on the weight of evidence versus the precautionary principle approach wondering if techniques such as bio-monitoring might provide new methods of assessing risks of chemical injury. Jo Immig sought clarification of the role that Prof Nick Buckley, who previously addressed the Committee on the issue of MCS, had in advising the APVMA on such issues.

The Chair, noting that the Committee's original intention had been to inform itself about MCS, proposed that the Committee should keep a watching brief on the issue.

AGENDA ITEM 8.0 - APVMA REPORTS

Two issues from the program reports were discussed:

- The Building Codes Board decision not to amend the Building Codes of Australia (BCA) to prohibit the use of CCA treated timber
- New spray drift guidelines

The reasons for the BCA decision were outlined in the report. In summary, the BCA indicated it would need, under its guidelines, to make a cost/benefit assessment of the proposed prohibition prior to considering any action.

The APVMA noted that councils and schools are moving to seal or remove CCA timber products and it is anticipated that use of CCA products will diminish over time.

The Chair suggested that community/consumer groups such as the ACA and the NTN might be able to assist on this issue and it may be appropriate for the committee to prepare some campaign materials for community groups and make it available on our webpage. .

ACTION 36.6

The CCC to prepare materials for consumer bodies with further information about CCA on request.

The APVMA presented a copy of, and spoke to the new draft 'Operating Principles and Proposed Registration Requirements in Relation to Spray Drift Risk.'

The new draft was welcomed. The CCC was particularly keen that comment on the draft should be sought from spray drift affected communities.

ACTION 36.7

Peter Cone to provide comment to the Committee on the draft.

APVMA to seek comments from community groups in spray drift affected communities.

AGENDA ITEM 8.4 – APVMA BOARD UPDATE

The APVMA Board met in August. The next meeting in October will be the latest meeting of the current Board. Selection processes for the new Board are progressing. Issues that were considered at the August meeting included:

Financial outcomes

The APVMA is performing close to target and recently had an unqualified audit report.

Animal welfare issues

The Board had a presentation from the DAFF co-ordinator of the National Animal Welfare Strategy. The Board is currently informing itself on these matters from different sources.

Regulation Impact Statements

A couple of consultation regulation impact statements on the revised Code of GMP for veterinary medicine manufacturers and the JECFA Approach to Setting Veterinary MRL's were considered.

Chemical reviews

The report of the review of carbaryl is due for release in a couple of weeks. This part of the review focuses on home garden use. Methyl bromide was placed under review essentially to formalise a number of actions already taken in line with Australia's commitments under the Monteval Protocol for ozone-depleting substances.

SA MCS Report

As discussed.

Peter Corish

President of the National Farmers Federation Peter Corish addressed the Board on a range of issues of interest to the NFF.

ANAO Audit

The timing of the proposed ANAO audit (anticipated for this year) is yet to be determined by ANAO.

Lease of Building

The APVMA current leases on John Curtin and Salvation Army House expire in 2006. The APVMA is looking at cost-effective options beyond this time.

AGENDA ITEM 8.5 – REVIEW OF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

The APVMA explained that the drive for the review came from a number of sources among them discussion about transparency, a concern that there needs to be informed consultation with users and a desire to clarify the most appropriate mechanism for consultation on policy.

The draft review report, which was provided, is not recommending change to the CCC structure. It seeks to facilitate CCC linkages with other stakeholders and APVMA consultative forums.

The Chair welcomed the review and its recommendations and noted it appeared that CCC initiatives were proposed to spread to other committees. She was particularly keen that community consultation with DAFF/PSIC on policy matters was strengthened.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – PROPOSED MEETING DATES

The proposed meeting dates for the next twelve months are:

CCC38 – Thursday 23 February

CCC39 – Thursday 18 May (last meeting for retiring members)

CCC40 – Thursday 17 August (first meeting for four new members)

CCC41 – Wednesday 29 November (depending on Board meeting and Christmas function dates for which have not been set)

ACTION 36.8

Members are to email the Secretariat in respect of the suitability of the proposed dates.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – OTHER BUSINESS

CLOSE

The Chair thanked members and staff for their attendance.

Meeting closed at 3.15 pm.

Signed

Jenni Mack (Chair)

Kathleen Allan (Secretariat)