



HORSE INDUSTRY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting 25

Mon 8 November 2021

10:00am to 12:00pm

Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment

18 Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra ACT 2601

Teleconference

Department

Wayne Terpstra (Chair)	Animal and Biological Imports
Michelle Blowes	Animal and Biological Imports
Emma Ford	Animal and Biological Imports
Emma McGrath	Animal and Biological Imports
Kym Russell	Animal and Biological Imports
Peter Finnin	Animal Biosecurity
Murli Baker-Gabb	Animal Biosecurity
Monique Maddison	Animal Biosecurity
Kate Usher	Animal Biosecurity
Cherry Chung	Animal Biosecurity
Ben Wilson	PEQ Operations
Tamara Nolan	PEQ Operations
Brendan Schembri	PEQ Operations
Leah Wells	Veterinary and Export Meat Group
Ingrid Massa-Ward	Exports Division
Timothy Naylor	Live Animal Exports
Tania Ware	Live Animal Exports
Eunice Chuah	Live Animal Exports
Lincoln Fishpool	Finance Division
Tim Karlov	Ag2030 COVID-19 and Engagement

External – via teleconference

James Gilkerson	Australian Veterinary Association
Ross Kendell	Horse Industry Consultant
Andrew Small	Racing NSW
Karen Day	Racing Australia
Grace Forbes	Racing Victoria
Zoe Wells	Racing Victoria
Cameron Croucher	Equine International Air Freight (EIAF)
Jeffrey Wilkinson	Equine Veterinarians Australia
Kathleen Mullan	Harness Racing Australia
Chris Burke	First Point Animal Services/International Racehorse Transport (IRT)
Josh Murphy	New Zealand Bloodstock
Patricia Ellis	Australian Horse Industry Council

APOLOGIES

Internal

Robyn Martin	Biosecurity Animal
Lee Cale	Cargo Operations and PEQ Biosecurity Operations
Kerry Daly	Animal Biosecurity
Paul Douglas	Finance and Business Support

External

Melanie Latter	Australian Veterinary Association
Myles Foreman	Racing Australia

Meeting commenced at 10:10am

Mr Terpstra as the Chair welcomed members.

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the 25th meeting of the Horse Industry Consultative Committee (HICC). The Chair acknowledged apologies from those who could not attend.

2. Minutes from Meeting 24 and outstanding Action Items

The Chair called for comments on the Minutes for the 24th HICC meeting. No comments were received, and the minutes were accepted.

Action Item 1 from HICC 24 was listed as Agenda Item 3 for further discussion in this meeting.

Action Item 2 from HICC 24 was completed.

Action Item 3 from HICC 24 was listed to discuss further offline, on the request of Mr Burke (IRT). This item related to mutually agreeable solutions that improve usability of the PEBS system, or adaptation of a suitable system for horse imports.

Action Item 4 from HICC 24 was completed, and an update on Cost Recovery progress for this financial year was listed as Agenda Item 4 of this meeting.

Action Items 5-6 were listed as completed.

Action Item 7, an update on NEXDOC release schedule, was listed as Agenda Item 5 of this meeting.

Action Items 8-9 were listed as completed.

Action Item 10, relating to EU Border Inspection Post interpretations of EU export conditions, was listed as Agenda Item 6 of this meeting.

Action Item 11, an update on the glanders review, was listed as Agenda Item 7 of this meeting.

Action Item 12 was listed as completed.

Action Item 13 was listed as Agenda Item 9 of this meeting.

Agenda Item 14 was recently completed, and an update was listed as Agenda Item 8 of this meeting.

ACTION ITEM 1: ABIB and PEQ Ops to engage with Mr Burke about PEBS issues that IRT continue to encounter.

3. Travelling grooms and COVID-19 related travel restrictions

Mr Terpstra (Chair) introduced Mr Karlov as replacing Mr Tucker in the role of COVID liaison. Mr Karlov advised there are lots of issues with travel both internationally and domestically. The Australian Government has been working at all levels to get harmonised arrangements for workers in agriculture and animal welfare, as well as more broadly across the Australian economy. Unfortunately, the health orders issued by each State and Territory come down to the risk appetite of their individual Chief Health Officers. Some take a very risk averse approach, wanting the risk of travellers to be equally as low as someone in hotel quarantine, while others are more open. The matter has been to National Cabinet with the Prime Minister, and an agricultural worker's code for cross border movement was negotiated in November 2020. Not all State and Territory governments have signed up to the code. As the Australian Government has no jurisdiction over what State and Territory governments choose to do about COVID-19 related travel restrictions, we are not able to offer specific assistance on domestic travel.

Mr Burke (IRT) advised they do currently have good lines of contact with local health departments for domestic travel, especially regarding Sydney and Melbourne airports, but their main difficulty now is about the Australian Government requirements for international travel. Importers can't find contacts to help them with getting grooms out of the country to collect horses overseas and travel back in with them, or to bring an international traveller to Australia to leave with an export consignment of horses the next day. Staff (grooms) have been stopped at the airport on the way out to collect horses. Previously, they were able to get travel exemptions for these purposes, but now there is more difficulty under caps, the importers would like a contact person who can advocate that a certain groom is allowed to enter/exit with horses. Mr Burke added that the current difficulty seems to be that the grooms are usually considered to be flight crew, but when they travel one way without the horses, because they are not employed by the airline, they are considered passengers. The importers need to understand how they can get passengers onto planes to travel to collect horses.

Mr Karlov advised that the various exemptions and caps are State and Territory based, and is hoping that the restrictions begin to ease from 1 November 2021 as NSW and Victoria lead the re-opening of domestic travel after vaccination targets were reached. In the meantime, Mr Karlov will try to find a contact in Home Affairs to help.

Mr Croucher (EIAF) advised that their difficulties are the same as those reported by IRT, and added that EIAF has spent a lot of time with State government agencies on domestic travel issues, but is hopeful that the domestic arrangements are easing now.

ACTION ITEM 2: Mr Karlov to seek a Home Affairs contact to assist importers with difficulties arranging international travel for grooms bound to collect horses for import or export. ABIB to provide contact details for importers to Mr Karlov.

4. Update on Biosecurity Cost Recovery Arrangement (paper)

Mr Terpstra (Chair) introduced Mr Fishpool (Assistant Director of Biosecurity Cost Recovery, Finance Division) to give an update on cost recovery results for the 2020-21 Financial Year (FY) and first quarter 2021-22 FY. It was noted that the details of the current Biosecurity Review will be covered separately in a meeting between the department and importers in late November or early December.

Mr Fishpool advised a revenue variance of \$348,000 for the 2020-21 FY, which was largely due to an accounting error in June 2020 where approximately \$219,000 was allocated to the previous FY. When this is adjusted, the total position becomes a surplus of \$113,000 instead of a \$105,000 deficit.

The next reporting period, first quarter of 2021-22 FY shows the revenue variant is very modest. A \$50,000 increase in operating expenses was seen, and investigation showed \$40,000 was due to two errors. At least one has been fixed in October 2021, which the next quarter figures will demonstrate. After a single quarter of reporting, it is difficult to read into particular trends, and the full year forecast hasn't been updated yet.

Mr Burke questioned whether Figure 2 of the *Biosecurity Cost Recovery Arrangement for Horses* paper was the adjusted revenue figure, and if the 2019-20 revenue should have been \$210,000 more. Mr Fishpool confirmed the revenue columns to the left were prior to adjustment and the middle columns on the graph demonstrate the adjusted figures. The columns to the left should have shown the 2020-21 revenue to be \$219,000 higher, which is demonstrated in the adjusted revenue columns in the middle of the graph.

Mr Burke advised there will be no shortage of horses coming in, with horse compounds at Mickleham being full for November and December, and more loads planned for January.

Mr Fishpool advised HICC members that figures during the FY may appear lower due to lag times associated with invoicing. The department is working on ways to commence invoicing at the start of intakes to align the revenue more with intake dates and reduce the lag effect on the numbers.

The placemats provided to members as an agenda paper serve as part of the communications strategy the department is using with the current Cost Recovery Impact Statement (CRIS) work. The first sets out the core context for the review, and the second sets out the scope and gives an estimated timeline. Mr Fishpool reiterated that more detailed work with affected stakeholders, such as horse importers, will take place during separate sessions during their stakeholder engagement period from November 2021 to March 2022. The CRIS should be finalised in time for the new Biosecurity Cost Recovery Arrangement to commence at the beginning of the 2022-23 FY.

Mr Terpstra (Chair) observed that historical Cost Recovery Reviews have been a bit hit and miss in terms of their timing, because of the political appetite around the process, which may depend on things like election cycles and economic conditions. The understanding around the current CRIS is that there is ambition to normalise and automate cost recovery review processes so there are less occurrences of periods of over recovery and under recovery. It was noted that there will be an election cycle between now and the implementation of this CRIS and Mr Fishpool was asked to comment on potential impacts. Mr Fishpool advised that the department had started consulting early with the Department of Finance to try to mitigate issues, and to ensure the work continues to align with our current Cost Recovery guidelines. There has been significant financial investment in the work Finance Division is doing to streamline these review processes on a regular and ongoing basis in the future. It was noted that PwC Consulting has developed most of the project governance, and is working on a more adaptive modelling system. Previously, Activity Based Costing was used, but this is time consuming. PwC is developing a quicker system to run, that can cut out non-relevant information and model different scenarios, normalising the process to reduce over and under recovery, as Mr Terpstra touched on.

ACTION ITEM 3: Finance Division to consult with importers on the review of the Biosecurity Cost Recovery Arrangement, in a teleconference to be planned with ABIB assistance for late November or December.

5. Update on release schedule for NEXDOC

Ms Massa-Ward (Director of Enhanced Traceability, Exports Division) advised that the NEXDOC project has had significant changes in the last few months. It is moving away from a 'big bang' approach with delivery of all functionality at once, and moving towards smaller incremental deliveries. This has taken a while to embed, but will provide more consistent benefit at a faster rate to all commodities. NEXDOC will modernise and provide a better digital connection for a streamlined export experience. The live animal export commodities have moved up in the delivery sequence, and livestock and reproductive materials have commenced. Horses, which are still on manual certificates, are expected to enter a Discovery Phase in early 2022 to determine the priority work that needs to occur to bring them into NEXDOC and automate this process. The Live Animal Exports area and HICC will be consulted to determine priorities moving forward. Exports Division appreciates that the horse industry is interested in collaborating on NEXDOC and hopes to engage in consultation early in the new year.

ACTION ITEM 4: Exports Division to provide consultation opportunity to HICC when the NEXDOC project progresses to include horse exports. This is expected to be in early 2022.

6. Issues with EU export conditions – different interpretations at EU Border Posts

Mr Burke (IRT) observed that the main issues with EU export conditions appear to be around the politics associated with BREXIT, with European ports making horse movements difficult. For example, full transit certificates for Europe are now required for horses bound from the UK to Australia with a one hour stop over at an EU port. There is a lack of clarity and consistency in some EU ports about the ability to mix consignments of Australian horses for the UK and EU.

Mr Croucher (EIAF) added that some Border Inspection Posts (BIPs) are more trade facilitatory than others in allowing horses to transit en route to the UK. EIAF's work around is to try to route the horses via those locations. They are still also finding that some ports might have different rules month to month. Shippers are being notified about changes at the last minute.

Mr Burke isn't sure on the appropriate way forward, and whether the department can try using its contacts to get an answer out of the EU or if the ports just have the autonomy to make decisions on the local level.

Mr Terpstra (Chair) suggested we could engage Animal Biosecurity Branch (ABB) to flag the issues with the department's Agricultural Counsellors in Brussels. Dr Finnin (ABB) and Dr Usher (ABB) agreed that there are ongoing issues across various industries. They have engaged directly with DG SANTE in the past about similar issues, but this has not had any effect consistency at BIPs. ABB is happy to go back again through our Agricultural Counsellor to raise the trade effects of inconsistency at BIPs.

Live Animal Exports (LAE) has recently written to the EU about other commodities. Dr Naylor (LAE) observed that specific examples of the difficulties would assist the department to best engage with the EU on the matter. Shippers were requested to provide examples of horse or consignment identification, dates and details of arrangement 'abc' for these horses then contrasting 'xyz' arrangements for other horses on another date. Dog and cat exports have had some success after different interpretations for the same commodities on different dates were given as specific examples.

ACTION ITEM 5: IRT and EIAF to document specific examples (including horse or consignment identification, dates and details of interpretations of movement requirements or paperwork variations) by mid-January 2022. These can be provided to ABB to use in engagement with EU via our Agricultural Counsellor in Brussels.

7. Glanders Review

Dr Usher (ABB) advised that the Glanders review is now out for internal comment within the department. ABB is amending and incorporating comments as they are received. At the last HICC meeting there were questions about testing, and whether new methodologies have been considered. ABB advised they had been, but new tests need to be fully validated before they can be considered for use in international animal movements. The review will progress to Assistant Secretary (Dr Finnin) and then to First Assistant Secretary (Dr Martin) before progressing to consultation with industry.

Dr Ellis (Australian Horse Industry Council) requested a timeframe before the review becomes available for comment, and Dr Usher advised it is making good progress and after an Appropriate Level of Protection (ALOP) meeting later this week, it may be able to progress towards internal clearance. The earliest date for industry consultation to commence would be in around four weeks (mid December 2021).

ACTION ITEM 6: ABB to finalise the Glanders Review and then release for external/industry (e.g. HICC member) comment. The earliest release date would be early December 2021.

8. The Philippines export protocol

Dr Usher (ABB) advised that the export protocol for horses to the Philippines was finalised in October 2021. Effective immediately, all horse consignments will travel on the newly agreed health certificate. Dr Usher noted that the Philippines Bureau of Animal Industry were actively engaged during the negotiation process and also thanked Mr Croucher (EIAF) for working closely with the department on the export protocol. The import conditions initially proposed by the Philippines were not appropriate given Australia's robust horse health status. The department negotiated less stringent conditions for a number of diseases including Japanese encephalitis. A major success was that a previous requirement for insect proof pre-export facilities to meet Japanese encephalitis requirements has been dropped. This was replaced with a requirement for no cases within a 100km radius of the premises the horses resided on within 30 days prior to export. Strangles vaccination requirement remain in the agreed conditions, despite the disease being ubiquitous. ABB were unable to negotiate changes to this requirement, but as more favourable conditions for other diseases were agreed, the outcome was a success.

Mr Croucher agreed it was promising that there was some clarity and improvement in the conditions. The main exporter issue around the strangles vaccination is that the horses must be held for longer in pre-export facilities to complete the required course. However, Mr Croucher noted that overall we are still in a better position than three months previously.

9. Appendix B issues

Horse importers led discussion about current issues with Appendix B certification. Recently there have been some operational difficulties in obtaining timely Appendix B certificates from Ireland and the Netherlands.

Importers reported that they believe other countries do not understand what Australia is looking for in Appendix B documentation. Some difficulties raised included private veterinarians signing off on the sections relating to country disease freedom clauses before Official Veterinarian endorsement, and suspension of certification while new versions of the Appendix B are being implemented.

Early notification by industry to the department can help in timely management of issues when they arise. Post in Brussels is regularly engaged in Appendix B certificate issues and will continue to be updated and consulted regarding any issues that may arise in the future. ABB's direct line of

communication with colleagues in the Netherlands proved helpful in being able to resolve a recent issue.

Appendix B certification remains important in the management of biosecurity risk for the importation of horses into Australia. In country Official Veterinarians must certify to premises and country freedom information, which cannot be obtained by any other means. The question of a digital certificate was raised by importers. However the department advised that although the department is looking into e-certification, it is not an option in the near future.

Importers observed that there may be issues with lack of communication from central agencies to regional Official Veterinarians who are completing the documentation. For example, the Official Veterinarian may not have access to the correct template, which is held centrally. They also have to scan documents, which is time consuming. The department advised that the new guidance document is now available on the department's website, as are templates for generic and locally agreed certificates. The department noted that ongoing communication with international Posts and in country contacts will be beneficial to ensure that messaging is being distributed appropriately.

Mr Burke stated that IRT has a full-time position, worth about £45-50,000 per year, dedicated to Appendix B certification. There are frequent risks that the certification may not be done in time, as some countries only sign off after horses have left the country. This may stop consignments at the last minute, incurring a 100% airline cancellation fee worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, and causing significant burden and stress on importers.

Mr Terpstra (Chair) suggested keeping Agricultural Posts briefed in about the issues, and request that they find opportunities to flag these with these countries and spread the messaging about the guidance document. Dr Blowes advised that Jo Grainger (Post) was very helpful and engaged in the recent Ireland case so the department would work on keeping her involved. The department offered to meet with horse importers to discuss Appendix B certificate issues specifically.

ACTION ITEM 7: ABIB to arrange a meeting with ABB, IRT and EIAF to discuss specific Appendix B issues and find ways to improve the system or communications to minimise risks to future horse import consignments.

10. Hendra Virus Genotype 2 - follow up discussion

Dr Baker-Gabb (ABB) introduced himself to HICC as having led the horse team in ABIB around 10 years ago and recently finding himself in the horse area on the policy side in ABB. A brief summary of existing Hendra Virus (HeV) knowledge was given, noting that the virus is carried by flying foxes, and spread to horses grazing in areas where these flying foxes have been in the trees overhead. The recently detected Hendra variant, Hendra Virus Genotype 2 (HeV-g2), has created some interest in Australia. New advances in rapid sequencing and metagenomics has led to different approaches to disease monitoring and surveillance for transboundary and zoonotic diseases. The HeV-g2 was isolated recently in an historical 2015 sample as part of a wider project examining horses as sentinels for zoonoses. HeV-g2 was then also diagnosed in a horse in October 2021 near Newcastle, which became the most southerly case of HeV on record.

The identification of HeV-g2 may extend the expected geographical range of Hendra spill over into horses. The disease caused by HeV-g2 appears to be very similar to HeV-g1. HeV-g2 is genetically very similar to HeV, and based on information from the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP) we have a high level of confidence that the vaccine protects against both genotypes. Australian laboratories have updated their PCR testing protocols for suspect cases to detect both genotypes. Serology tests are also available for HeV, and since these cross-react with Nipah virus, which is less closely related to HeV than HeV-g2 is, it is expected that the serological tests are equally effective for both Hendra virus genotypes. ACDP has a project underway to provide further evidence of this.

Dr Baker-Gabb advised that trade impacts are minimal at this stage. If concerns were to arise they would be based upon perception of the disease in specific markets. From a technical perspective, the current export arrangements already cover for both genotypes.

Mr Burke (IRT) asked why more southern cases haven't been detected yet, if HeV-g2 has been around since at least 2015. Dr Baker-Gabb advised the possibilities could include densities of flying foxes and their interactions around horse populations. There was some discussion of the case from which HeV-g2 was isolated and its history.

Dr Forbes (Racing Victoria) asked if there was any update relating to communications with trading partners or export protocol updates. Dr Baker-Gabb advised all Agricultural Posts would be notified by cable with general information. Dr Finnin (ABB) added this would brief them in case of questions from other countries, and Posts would be notified to refer back to Dr Baker-Gabb's team. Dr Finnin advised that all relevant protocols had been assessed and no problems were foreseen at this stage, but requested feedback from horse shippers if problems were encountered. EIAF and IRT advised they had not heard of any concerns themselves. The department is working through obligations around OIE reporting of this new genotype, and no report has been made at this stage.

Mr Terpstra (Chair) advised the department is working towards a definitive decision on what to do next, and will have a conclusion soon, after filling in gaps in the information available. If notifications need to happen, HICC will be kept in the loop and given a chance to understand any relevant implications.

Dr Usher added that this is business as usual as the department has confidence in the vaccine and current testing options to manage biosecurity risks for horses exported from Australia.

Dr Wilkinson commented that the Hendra vaccine is a sterilising vaccine that also knocks out Nipah virus, and HeV-g2 is far more closely related to HeV than Nipah is. As such, there's no reason to suggest the vaccine won't be just as effective. The message for veterinarians is to continue to encourage horse owners to vaccinate.

ACTION ITEM 8: ABB to keep HICC members up to date on any relevant developments relating to Hendra Virus Genotype 2.

11. Animal Health Committee – draft Official Animal Testing Policy

Dr William Wong (Animal Disease Preparedness and Response), introduced himself to HICC as a Principal Veterinary Officer looking after laboratory work, including Subcommittee on Animal Health Laboratory Standards (SCAHLs), which reports to Animal Health Committee (AHC). Dr Wong had requested industry feedback on the department's draft '*policy for laboratories performing official testing for animal diseases*'. The draft policy was circulated to stakeholder groups associated with various animal commodities, including by email to HICC members on 28 October 2021. Other industry bodies invited to comment include National Farmers Federation, Livecorp etc.

The draft policy was developed after a working group was formed under AHC to ensure a framework for relevant Australian government and private laboratories to meet national and international standards when testing for notifiable and exotic diseases relating to export markets. The working group had already passed the draft on to SCAHLs, who agreed it could go on to AHC for endorsement, but the department has provided time for industry consultation as well before endorsement at AHC.

Mr Burke advised IRT recently had to test for an exotic disease that couldn't be negotiated out of the export protocol, so a sample had to be sent to an overseas laboratory for testing. The current

understanding of the draft policy is that if there is no Australian laboratory, they should refer to the relevant government for advice. For international trade matters, the department is the relevant authority. IRT is concerned that this is contradicted in point 9, where the policy states samples cannot be referred overseas without permission from the CVO of the State or Territory where the samples originated. Mr Burke noted that for the recent testing, they had state CVO permission.

Dr Naylor advised that LAE had assisted Mr Burke with the recent consignment, and they had written permission from the Victorian government. Dr Naylor had notified Dr Mark Schipp (Australian CVO) but had not requested permission.

Dr Wong agreed that the way Dr Naylor had handled the recent shipment permissions and notifications had been acceptable, and Dr Finnin (ABB) suggested making the document clearer about permissions required. As it stands, it says at point 3 that if a test cannot be done in Australia and needs to go overseas, the department should make the decision but at point 9 it becomes unclear as the State or Territory CVO is listed as the decision maker.

Dr Wong advised that the draft policy had been to AHC and had in principle support, but State and Territory CVOs had wanted to clarify some definitions. Point 9 was not raised at the time, but Dr Wong will take it on notice and work to improve the wording.

Mr Terpstra stated that the next AHC meeting was Wednesday 10 November 2021, and suggested Dr Wong may have opportunity to raise the issue of State or Commonwealth government sign off for international laboratory testing for live exports.

Mr Burke asked if commercial laboratories that meet the NATA standards, as set out in the draft policy, would be able to be used for export testing once the policy was finalised and implemented. Dr Naylor advised commercial laboratories with NATA accreditation are already allowed to be used, and many exporters do use them.

Dr Wong advised that it could be weeks to months before the draft policy gets to AHC, as there were still several industry groups yet to provide comment. Dr Wong committed to keeping HICC up to date on progress.

ACTION ITEM 9: Dr Wong to update HICC on progress of draft policy for laboratories performing official testing for animal diseases.

12. Other business

The Chair called for other business to be raised. Mr Kendall (Horse Industry Consultant) advised that he and Zoe Wells (Racing Victoria) had received comments about how well both Werribee International Horse Centre (WIHC) and Canterbury Park International Horse Centre (CPIHC) are operated, and are concerned about comparisons with the Mickleham Post-Entry Quarantine Facility (MQF). Specific concerns were raised about WIHC and CPIHC being required to pass an Approved Arrangements (AA) annual audit against AA7.12 criteria. Mr Kendall is concerned that MQF is not subject to the same requirements, and that there were similar comments about post arrival quarantine facility standards during the Callinan report after Equine Influenza in 2007.

Mr Terpstra (Chair) agreed that MQF hadn't had the same number of audits, for a variety of reasons, since it came online. The department is routinely auditing the MQF avian facility and is currently working to align audit schedules for the horse compounds as well. Dr Blowes (ABIB) advised that in the past, audits of the government run facilities were every two years, as there are differences such as the legislation they operate under. ABIB is, however, reviewing the audit frequency to ensure alignment between MQF and the AA sites. Both horses and birds are high risk commodities, and for the last two or three years the avian facility has been audited annually with an AA auditor as part of

the audit team. This year ABIB has arranged to audit MQF horse compounds with an AA auditor as well, to ensure the facility operates to the same standard as the AA sites. The department appreciates feedback from industry to highlight areas to pay attention to, which assists the process of continual improvement.

Dr Forbes (Racing Victoria) fully supported Mr Kendall's comments. The horse racing industry is a multi-billion dollar industry, and since most imported horses arrive in Victoria, post arrival quarantine facilities are high stakes from the perspective of Racing Victoria. Dr Forbes supported annual auditing to the same standard across private and government post arrival quarantine facilities.

Dr Blowes advised that the audit schedule for both AA sites and MQF will likely be annual going forward, and that any changes to frequency would involve industry consultation. It was noted that, in accordance with general principles for AA sites, a non-compliance rate of two or more failed audits would cause reversion to two audits in six months. The same principle would be applied to government facilities.

Mr Burke (IRT) asked what would happen to the previously planned future expansion of the horse compounds, now the section of land had been lost to a human quarantine facility at Mickleham. Since it was unlikely people would continue to need the facility, the question was raised about use by grooms. Mr Terpstra (Chair) advised that the human quarantine facility was sponsored by the Australian Government but was to be run by the Victorian state government. Since it didn't look like there would be a burning need to use the facility moving forward, Mr Terpstra committed to asking about whether the facility could be put to other use, including for grooms. The department is considering future expansion of the government animal quarantine facilities, but there are currently protocols in place constraining updates. Industry will be kept up to date when it is possible to say more.

ACTION ITEM 10: ABIB to update industry on future expansion plans for the animal post arrival quarantine facilities at MQF, along with future use of the planned human quarantine facilities on the site.

13. Close meeting and next meeting

The Chair closed the meeting and discussed the timing of the next meeting. The next 'full' HICC meeting will be held in April/May 2022. The secretariat will provide a range of dates closer to the time. Location for this would be dependent on any COVID-19 restrictions at the time.

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Meeting finished at 12:01pm.

Summary of Action Items

ACTION ITEM 1: ABIB and PEQ Ops to engage with Mr Burke about PEBS issues that IRT continue to encounter.

ACTION ITEM 2: Mr Karlov to seek a Home Affairs contact to assist importers with difficulties arranging international travel for grooms bound to collect horses for import or export. ABIB to provide contact details for importers to Mr Karlov.

ACTION ITEM 3: Finance Division to consult with importers on the review of the Biosecurity Cost Recovery Arrangement, in a teleconference to be planned with ABIB assistance for late November or December.

ACTION ITEM 4: Exports Division to provide consultation opportunity to HICC when the NEXDOC project progresses to include horse exports. This is expected to be in early 2022.

ACTION ITEM 5: IRT and EIAF to document specific examples (including horse or consignment identification, date and details of interpretations of movement requirements or paperwork variations). These can be provided to ABB to use in a brief to Agricultural Counsellors in EU Posts.

ACTION ITEM 6: ABB to finalise the Glanders Review with internal approvals at Assistant Secretary and First Assistant Secretary levels and then circulate to HICC members for comment. At this stage, it is estimated this could be mid-December 2021.

ACTION ITEM 7: ABB and ABIB to arrange a meeting with IRT and EIAF to discuss specific Appendix B issues and find ways to improve the system or communications to minimise risks to future horse import consignments.

ACTION ITEM 8: ABB to keep HICC members up to date on any relevant developments relating to Hendra Virus Genotype 2.

ACTION ITEM 9: Dr Wong to update HICC on progress of draft policy for laboratories performing official testing for animal diseases.

ACTION ITEM 10: ABIB to update industry on future expansion plans for the animal post arrival quarantine facilities at MQF, along with future use of the planned human quarantine facilities on the site.