

HORSE INDUSTRY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Meeting 17

Thursday 6 October 2016

10.30am to 1.30pm

Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Mickleham Post Entry Quarantine Facility

Donnybrook Road

Mickleham VIC

Participants

Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

Jackie South (Chair)	Animal and Biological Imports Assessments Branch
Amy Little	Animal and Biological Imports Assessments Branch
Charlotte Burgoyne	Animal and Biological Imports Assessments Branch
Tanya Pintabona	Animal and Biological Imports Assessments Branch
Mumbi Kamau	Animal and Biological Imports Assessments Branch
Jagtej Singh	PEQ Operations
Gaylene Podhajski	PEQ Operations
Michael Okines	PEQ Operations
Peter Finnin	Veterinary, Export Meat and Scientific Services
Alyce Adams	Veterinary, Export Meat and Scientific Services
Natasha Webb	Animal Biosecurity Branch
Deryk Bartlett*	Cost Recovery & Funding Analysis

External

Josh Murphy	New Zealand Bloodstock
Cameron Croucher	Equine International Air Freight
Chris Burke	International Racehorse Transport
Mark Burnell	Australian Horse Industry Council
Andrew Small	Canterbury Park Approved Arrangement
Grace Forbes	WIHC Approved Arrangement
Paula Ward	Equestrian Australia
John Peatfield	Thoroughbred Breeders Association
James Gilkerson	Australian Veterinary Association
Jeffrey Wilkinson	Australian Equine Veterinary Association
Ross Kendell	Equine biosecurity consultant
Andrew Kelly	Harness Racing Australia

Apologies

Cristy Secomb	Australian Equine Veterinary Association
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*teleconference

Meeting commenced at 10:30am

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed members to the 17th meeting of the Horse Industry Consultative Committee (HICC). The Chair acknowledged new members and emergency procedures and information was provided.

2. Minutes from Meeting 16

The Chair called for comments on the Minutes for the 16th HICC meeting.

Ross Kendell sought clarification on **Agenda Item 5 (Meeting 16)** following Amanda McDonald's update on the *Biosecurity Act 2015*. Jackie South explained that the changes give the Commonwealth more onshore powers in the event of an emergency exotic disease outbreak.

Mark Burnell commented on **Agenda Item 9d (Meeting 16)** regarding import of EI and EHV vaccines for use in horses for export. The EHV vaccine supply issue has been resolved but currently there are no new EI vaccines being imported because there are delays in the EI vaccine stock being available. Commercial viability is marginal given the high cost of applying for a vaccine permit/product registration in Australia compared to the number of vaccine sales (vaccine only used for horses being exported).

John Peatfield asked why Australia can't just utilise stock held by New Zealand. Jackie South explained that the department cannot accept another country's risk assessment, especially for high risk product like vaccine.

The conversation concluded that this is currently a commercial issue for industry to pursue further, as the department only becomes involved once an import permit application is lodged. Current stocks held by Elanco Animal Health should be sufficient for 18 months.

Action Item 3 (Meeting 14): PEQ Operations reported that the horse walker is being used with communication and training ongoing. This action item was closed off.

Action Item 1 (Meeting 16): Will be covered in Agenda Item 3.

Action Item 5 (Meeting 16): Chris Burke reported that no further information has been provided. Larger businesses are being forced into the airway bill issue which may assist with a resolution. HICC forum cannot add value to this item and it was closed off.

Minutes from the last meeting were accepted.

3. Program Financial Update

Deryk Bartlett presented the finance paper. Areas of focus against budget raised were the costs of the new PEQ facility, number of horses and indirect (overhead) expenditure.

It was agreed that FABs will analyse a full year of horse intakes and costs compared to the CRIS at the end of November (a full year since the new charges were implemented). FaBS will present a paper on this at the next HICC meeting.

Industry asked for the baseline costs of opening a compound for 2 weeks and whether larger consignments were subsidising costs of one-off racing or small consignments.

ACTION ITEM 1: FaBS to provide advice on the cost of opening a compound for a small consignment in the form of a fixed vs. variable costs analysis.

4. Mickleham Post Entry Quarantine Facility

a) Surgical Services (paper)

The department outlined a couple of options for the provision of surgical services. The department has provided two surgical facilities for emergency surgery on horses during quarantine. The department sought an initial agreement with a veterinary surgical services provider (Melbourne University) but the cost of the service was more than expected. The department entered into an interim arrangement with an alternative provider (Ballarat Veterinary Practice (BVP)). The cost to have this service available is currently \$100 000 - \$150000 per annum and the department is seeking a permanent contract with this provider.

The department outlined a number of options for the provision of surgical services and noted that a contractual arrangement with a provider, will remove the option of choice of surgeon to provide the service.

Chris Burke stated that procuring a service provider is IRT's preference so that financial recovery can be obtained from all industry participants. IRT had invested in surgical equipment and services while operations occurred at Eastern Creek, which was used once in 10 years for a non-IRT horse for which IRT was never compensated..

Grace Forbes (WIHC) outlined the surgical services arrangement at Werribee International Horse Centre. However, emergency service coverage for the Mickleham facility is more complicated due to the full year requirement (as opposed to a defined time of year).

BVP have advised that the current interim arrangement costs are half of the costs that the practice will charge for a long term contractual arrangement. Annual costs will be approximately \$300000 (\$12000 per intake). Some members expressed concerns that these costs were prohibitive. However discussions around costs associated with keeping an additional surgical team on call 24/7 and within a 30 minute drive amounts to a large cost to the practice. The final figure offered by BVP is similar to that offered by Melbourne University.

John Peatfield pointed out that owners of valuable horses (such as shuttle stallions) are unlikely to allow only one agreed surgical team to attend their horses. All owners have a right to a second opinion and their own nominated surgeon. Owners of high value horses will want input into which provider is used.

Peter Finnin commented that BVP has provided a good interim service to date and have been good to work with but providing this service all year around is going to be expensive. If the department does not contractually engage a service provider then the importers are free to choose their own equine surgeon.

James Gilkerson commented that there is a large difference in costs and risks associated with returning retired Hong Kong racehorses versus shuttle stallions - so a one size fits all solution may be difficult. Provision of a surgeon is not a core biosecurity responsibility, so if owners want surgery then the industry should provide appropriate surgical services. Dr Gilkerson further noted that there are only 14 registered equine surgeons from a handful of practices in Victoria.

ACTION ITEM 2: Industry to propose level of coverage required on a consignment by consignment basis

ACTION ITEM 3:

South East to either finalise cost and contract with BVP or suggest service coverage on a consignment by consignment basis. If contract is not signed with BVP, the department may ask AEVA to approach members to gauge broader interest in providing the service.

b. Repairs and Maintenance

Chris Burke asked for clarity around the process of addressing repairs and maintenance work required at Mickleham for safety/welfare issues of staff and horses.

Gaylene Podhajski reported that the twelve month Defects Liability Period has just ended for both compounds and now they will be working directly with the Department of Finance as the owner of the property. PEQ Ops have a good relationship with the Department of Finance and they are receptive to getting problems fixed.

ACTION ITEM 4: PEQ Ops to provide to industry a complete list of repairs required to be undertaken at the Mickleham facility. The list should categorise the problems and give expected timelines for delivery. Updates to be provided monthly.

c. Emergency Access

Chris Burke highlighted that there is currently no defined process in place for emergency/after-hours access. The process needs to be

defined and provided to industry in writing so industry can give their staff directions and instructions in case of an emergency after-hours.

d. Veterinary Drug Access After-Hours

Chris Burke stated that veterinarians gaining access to their veterinary drugs after hours has been hindered. Hindering a veterinarian's access to medications poses a risk to animal health and welfare and liability issues for the veterinarians and the department. Industry requires a clearly documented process for accessing veterinary medications after hours.

ACTION ITEM 5: PEQ Ops to document all processes for after-hours, emergency and veterinary drug access in consultation with VEMS and ABIAB.

5. Import Conditions Review (paper)

Amy Little gave an overview on the Import Conditions Review that the department is conducting as part of the Agricultural Competitiveness White Paper initiative. The review will cover all plant and animal based commodities. The commodity review is not a risk analysis, rather it aims to ensure import conditions are clear, concise, understandable and capable of being met. When the Imports Review Team starts reviewing the horse import conditions, ABIAB will consult with industry for input. If HICC members want to be consulted on other commodities (e.g. veterinary therapeutics/vaccines) they should email the address provided in the accompanying paper.

6. Other Business

a. Import Protocols

Chris Burke inquired into the interaction of Animal Biosecurity Branch (ABB) with industry and the basis on which horse markets are established. Natasha Webb clarified that these decisions are made based on the trade implications between countries requesting an IRA and can also be a sign of good will with negotiating countries. Peter Finnin commented that the Ruminant Genetics Trade Advisory Group have a standard agenda item for their department meetings to discuss market access priorities and this could be added to the HICC agenda.

ACTION ITEM 6: Add market access matters as a standing agenda item to future HICC meetings.

b. Pre Export Quarantine Inspections

Industry inquired as to the likelihood of reducing the frequency of overseas pre export quarantine (PEQ) facility audits. Charlotte Burgoyne discussed that reduction in frequency of audits had already been achieved with some facilities reducing in audit frequency from every 2 years to 4 years. Factors involved in determining a PEQ facility's audit frequency include: level and history of compliance, number throughput of horses, complexity of the facility, and horse population control of the area. ABIAB has also streamlined the process

considerably over the past few years to ensure facilities are grouped geographically to ensure the greatest efficiency possible.

c. Export Protocols

Chris Burke expressed concerns that the department was making operational changes without industry input. Peter Finnin explained that the export process as a whole needs to be improved and consultation with industry will be undertaken.

Changes made by Dr Geoff Parker to inspection procedures were in response to horses that were exported to the UAE and later found to be infected with strangles. Inspections at night time with poor lighting will no longer be acceptable. The exports program is working hard to re-open the UAE market. Chris Burke stated that collaboration would be useful and wants to meet with regional staff to discuss industry engagement and management of the export issues.

d. International Transits through Sydney

Chris Burke reported on a consignment of horses from Singapore that was transiting in Sydney with onward travel to New Zealand. One of the horses showed signs of colic. Although in that case the horse was treated medically and was able to continue travelling to Auckland. Chris raised the question of how the situation would be managed if the case had been surgical.

Amy Little commented that as this horse would pose a biosecurity risk, the standard rules around surgery for horses undergoing quarantine would apply. A horse in this situation could only have surgery performed in Mickleham or would need to enter an Approved Arrangements site. Canterbury Park approved arrangement site may be a possibility for Sydney transits but the facility would need to be empty.

Andrew Small explained that when Canterbury Park is not holding a quarantine consignment, it is used as a retraining and rehoming program for retired race horses. The program has recently received increased funding and so would unlikely to be empty or available.

ACTION ITEM 7: Industry to propose a contingency arrangement in the case of a transiting horse requiring surgery.

e. Shuttle Stallion Consignment

The attendees discussed a recent request to import a mare in foal during the annual shuttle stallion consignment.

A risk assessment was undertaken to determine whether the department could put in place appropriate measures to manage the risk. However, industry resolved the situation by concluding that the shuttle stallion consignments would continue to be restricted to male horses.

ACTION ITEM 8: ABIAB to update Notice to Industry 1 on the department's website to include the agreement to exclude all female horses from being imported during the mid-year shuttle stallion consignments.

7. Next Meeting

Jackie South suggested March for next HICC meeting to be held in Canberra. Chris Burke requested a date within the last two weeks of March.

ACTION ITEM 9: ABIAB to provide members with several possible dates to hold the next HICC meeting in Canberra.

Meeting finished at 2:00pm

Summary of Action Items

ACTION ITEM 1: FaBS to give advice to industry on the cost of opening a compound for a small consignment. What is total cost to open a consignment with a minimal number of horses (fixed vs variable costs analysis)?

ACTION ITEM 2: Industry to propose level of coverage required on a consignment by consignment basis

ACTION ITEM 3: South East to either finalise contract with Ballarat Veterinary Practice, or another provider or suggest service coverage on a consignment by consignment basis. If a contract is not signed with Ballarat Veterinary Practice, the department may ask AEVA to approach members to gauge broader interest in providing the service.

ACTION ITEM 4: PEQ Ops to provide to industry a complete list of repairs required to be undertaken at the Mickleham facility. The list should categorise the problems and give expected timelines for delivery. Updates to be provided monthly.

ACTION ITEM 5: PEQ Ops to document all processes for emergency and veterinary drug access in consultation with VEMS and ABIAB.

ACTION ITEM 6: Add market access as a standing agenda item to future HICC meetings to ensure industry gets inputs into priority markets and input into which countries with which Animal Biosecurity Branch negotiates health certificates.

ACTION ITEM 7: Industry to propose a contingency arrangement in the case of a transiting horse requiring surgery.

ACTION ITEM 8: ABIAB to update Notice to Industry 1 on the department's website to include the agreement to exclude all female horses from being imported during the mid-year shuttle stallion consignments.

ACTION ITEM 9: ABIAB to provide members with several possible dates to hold the next HICC meeting in Canberra.