



Australian Government

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

National Implementation Plan of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy

As endorsed by Primary Industries Ministerial Council

April 2006

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AAWS	Australian Animal Welfare Strategy
AEC	Animal Ethics Committee
AHA	Animal Health Australia
ANZCCART	Australia and New Zealand Council for the Care of Animals in Research and Teaching
ANZSLAS	Australia and New Zealand Society for Laboratory Animal Science
APVMA	Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicine Authority
ARC	Australian Research Council
AWAC	Animal Welfare Advisory Committee
AWHN	Australian Wildlife Health Network
AWI	Australian Wool Innovation
AWSC	Animal Welfare Science Centre, Victoria
AWWG	Animal Welfare Working Group
AW NGO	Animal Welfare nongovernment organisations
BRS	Bureau of Rural Sciences, Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
CAWE	Centre for Animal Welfare and Ethics
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DAFF	Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
DEH	Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage
DEST	Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training
DFAT	Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MCOP	Model Codes of Practice
MLA	Meat and Livestock Australia
NCCA	National Consultative Committee on Animal Welfare

NGO	nongovernment organisation
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
OIE	World Organisation for Animal Health (formerly Office International des Epizooties)
OOS	out of session
PIHC	Primary Industries Health Committee
PIMC	Primary Industries Ministerial Council
PISC	Primary Industries Standing Committee
PR	public relations
QA	quality assurance
Quads	Quadrilateral alliance (United States, Canada, New Zealand and Australia)
R&D	research and development
RDC	research and development corporation
RSPCA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
RTO	registered training organisation
SARDI	South Australian Research and Development Institute
SOP	standard operating procedure
TOR	terms of reference
VDPI	Victorian Department of Primary Industries
VPC	Vertebrate Pests Committee
WIRES	NSW Wildlife Information and Rescue Service

Summary

The Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) is a national strategy that aims to maintain and improve the high standards of animal welfare that currently exist in Australia. It describes a broad and comprehensive vision that covers the care of, use of, and impacts of human activity (direct and indirect) on, all sentient¹ species of animals in Australia.

The Strategy recognises the numerous stakeholders who have diverse interests and differing points of view. Stakeholders include animal owners; the veterinary profession; animal producers, processors and transporters; animal welfare bodies; researchers; consumers; and government agencies. The Strategy also provides a framework for sustainable, scientifically based improvements in animal welfare.

Strong characteristics of Australian animal welfare policy are the inclusive and transparent mechanisms for engagement and consultation between governments, the animal industries, animal researchers, animal welfare bodies and the community. The Strategy builds on such characteristics; for example, recognising achievements such as national Model Codes of Practice for the Welfare of Animals. The Strategy also deals with identification of areas in the animal welfare system that need to be enhanced; for example, it clarifies the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in regard to animal welfare and outlines the challenges for these stakeholders. This inclusive approach will help to establish wide-ranging national goals for animal welfare that can be regularly monitored and evaluated.

The Strategy provides an opportunity to develop systems that make certain Australia's animal welfare standards take account of the best available scientific information and are acceptable to the broad Australian community. It will also help in raising international awareness of Australia's responsible approach to animal welfare management, and this, in turn, will strengthen the country's reputation in this regard.

A communication plan, central to the Strategy's implementation, will help to raise awareness and understanding of the importance of animal welfare. The plan will increase awareness within Australia and overseas of the country's mechanisms for setting and enforcing animal welfare standards within the context of the Strategy.

¹ A sentient animal is one that has the capacity to have feelings and to experience suffering and pleasure. Sentience implies a level of conscious awareness.

Implementation of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy

Background

The Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) is aimed at the whole Australian community and covers all uses of sentient animals, including the following six key animal sectors:

- livestock/production animals
- animals used in research and teaching
- aquatic animals
- companion animals
- animals used for work, sport, recreation or display
- animals in the wild.

There are 20 agreed areas of activity, defined under three goals and associated objectives in the Strategy. These goals and objectives have equal importance within the Strategy but are numbered for reference purposes.

The Strategy was developed over five years, receiving final endorsement by Agriculture ministers of the state and territory governments in May 2004. The development process included detailed consultations with the Australian community and with key animal welfare stakeholders, such as the livestock industries, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), Animals Australia, the Australian Veterinary Association, the National Health and Medical Research Council, and relevant national, state and territory government agencies. This inclusive consultation was completed under the auspices of the National Consultative Committee on Animal Welfare (NCCA).

The Australian Government fully supports the Strategy. In the 2005–06 Budget, the Australian Government confirmed a \$6 million commitment towards the implementation of the Strategy over four years until 31 December 2008. The government's support reflects the fact that animal welfare is an increasingly important issue for all Australians.

The National Implementation Plan

Responsibilities

The Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC) was asked to coordinate the development of a national implementation plan, in consultation with key stakeholders.

The Australian Government will play a national coordination role in the implementation process. Australia's states and territories, which have responsibility for the relevant legislation and enforcement of animal welfare requirements within Australia, will provide comprehensive input into the implementation plan. All stakeholders, however, will be contributing towards implementation, and action plans to be developed for each of the six animal sectors are predicated on acceptance of this.

The Australian Government is funding the participation of non-government stakeholders in meetings and workshops. It seeks to form partnerships with state and territory governments and other stakeholder groups to develop and fund the initial implementation of the Strategy, and the ongoing activities, to produce enhanced animal welfare outcomes into the future. Funding of \$6 million over four years has been provided by the Australian Government to assist this initiative.

Expected outcomes of implementation

The Strategy will provide a much needed clear and consistent national framework that will help governments and stakeholders to set readily identifiable and clearly defined national standards. The Strategy promotes improved and consistent understanding of animal welfare through effective communication, education and training across the whole community. Thus, implementation of the Strategy will lead to a more informed community, helping to reach agreement on ways to manage animal welfare that are consistent with contemporary community expectations. Implementation will also help to raise international awareness of Australia's responsible approach to animal welfare management.

Implementation of the Strategy will help achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare, which are based on national and international benchmarks, and scientific evaluation and research, and which take into account community attitudes. As part of a broader strategy to further improve welfare outcomes for all animals, implementation of the Strategy will strengthen Australia's position as a world leader in animal welfare.

Priorities

Priorities for implementation, outlined below, can be summarised as:

- establish an AAWS Advisory Committee
- prepare a national implementation plan, comprising specific action plans for the six key animal sectors
- develop a communication plan to increase community awareness and recognition of the importance of sound animal welfare standards and practices
- achieve consistency of Australian animal welfare requirements, based on national and international benchmarks, and scientific evaluation and research.
- establish new national reporting and monitoring systems for animal welfare.

Establish an AAWS Advisory Committee

The first major step in the development of a robust and inclusive national implementation plan for AAWS was to establish a high-level, multidisciplinary advisory committee. Committee members were selected because of their broadly based experience across a wide range of stakeholder groups, and because of their ability to steer complex issues and policy development to a successful conclusion. Nominations were endorsed by Warren Truss, the then Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The committee's inaugural meeting was held on 5 July 2005.

The committee will:

- oversee delivery of the plan's key priorities and targets

- help to facilitate communication with stakeholders and promote ownership of the Strategy
- undertake an advocacy role for implementation of the Strategy.

The Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) recruited a dedicated team to work with the AAWS Advisory Committee in developing the national implementation plan for the Strategy. Members of the advisory committee will use their expertise to guide the implementation of the Strategy and oversee the output of the six AAWS Sectoral Working Groups, while DAFF will help facilitate the process; for example, by providing funding for meetings of the committee. The Australian Government representative on this committee will provide input regarding DAFF's responsibility.

Prepare the Implementation Plan

The National Implementation Plan has been developed by the AAWS Advisory Committee with assistance from DAFF and other high level stakeholders at the AAWS National Strategic Planning Workshop, which was held in Canberra on 22–23 September 2005. The plan is to be endorsed following further consultation with stakeholder groups. Workshop participants also endorsed the establishment of working groups and suggested membership for the six key animal sector working groups. The AAWS Advisory Committee made the final decision on the working groups' compilation.

Action plans for each of the six key animal sectors will be developed in line with the national implementation plan. They will be developed by the relevant working groups, in consultation with key stakeholders and the Australian community. The action plans will spell out who is responsible for putting these plans into effect. They will also outline the main components, such as resources, funding, national coordination, and monitoring and evaluation of progress.

Develop a communication plan

The communication plan will include a detailed stakeholder analysis to provide a better understanding of the attitudes, interests and capacities of key stakeholders regarding the goals and implementation of the Strategy. This analysis will have a particular emphasis on developing effective communications between the implementation team and stakeholders.

The purpose of the communication plan is to keep the community, industry, government and international organisations and trading partners better informed of Australia's animal welfare achievements and approaches, and to foster broad understanding, in particular of animal welfare perspectives in industry practices.

Develop scientific knowledge

Technical support, including research and development, is required for the development of improved, sustainable, national and international animal welfare methodology, practices, codes and standards. Australia continues to emphasise the importance of working with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), which is developing international animal welfare guidelines.

Establish new national reporting and monitoring systems

The Strategy includes new cross-jurisdictional approaches to ensure improved coordination and national reporting on animal welfare. A better understanding of available data will lead to a more coordinated national approach to monitoring and evaluating animal welfare outcomes.

The Australian Government funding will provide seed capital for the delivery of the Strategy's activities. The states and territories are responsible for animal welfare within Australia, and the Strategy recognises this. All jurisdictions and relevant industry and community organisations will be closely involved. They will be expected to collaborate and to contribute their expertise towards developing the Strategy's National Implementation Plan, as well as implementing the six key animal sector action plans.

The AAWS Advisory Committee will monitor the progress of this initiative. It will present regular progress reports to PISC, which is responsible for coordination of the development of the implementation plan. Reports will additionally be provided to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry, NCCAW and other key stakeholders. A key performance milestone will be the development of the national implementation plan and associated sectoral Action Plans, in consultation with key stakeholders and the Australian community.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 1 *Achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes*

Activity 1 Establish a shared understanding of respective roles and responsibilities across all relevant Australian, state, territory and local government agencies and nongovernment organisations

Objective To ensure that administrative, legislative and planning mechanisms support effective management of animal welfare in Australia

Delivery

- Review Ministerial Council arrangements to ensure comprehensive coverage of animal welfare issues
- Involve local government and all relevant stakeholders
- Review all committee structures, functions and membership at National, State/Territory and Local Government level

Resources

- DAFF funded consultancy has completed review NCCAW
- State/Territory Governments to review jurisdictional committee structures

Priority High ☆ ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes

- Shared understanding by governments and all other stakeholders of respective roles and responsibilities using an appropriate model
- Uniform requirements across all jurisdictions
- International treaties, obligations and developments understood

Target date

▪ NCCAW review	31 December 2006
▪ Other existing committees review	TBA
▪ Ministerial Council	TBA

Activity status NCCAW review completed – new NCCAW Committee met for its inaugural meeting 8 June 2007.
** SCOTT

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 1 *Achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes*

Activity 2 Facilitate the maintenance of effective animal welfare units in each jurisdiction, recognising inter-agency interests, to assist and coordinate the delivery of animal welfare advice, policy development and support services

Objective To ensure that administrative, legislative and planning mechanisms support effective management of animal welfare in Australia

- Delivery**
- PIHC/PISC to review with other relevant government organisations the current resources etc
 - Implement AHA performance measures for animal welfare in the area of its jurisdiction and report to PIMC
 - Explore animal welfare performance measures not covered by AHA

Resources Quantify resources allocated and those required by all levels of government, industry and NGOs

Priority High ☆ ☆ ☆

- Expected outcomes**
- PIHC/PISC to review of jurisdictional government animal welfare resources
 - Coordinated workplans and trained staff
 - Shared commitment to national performance standards

- Target date**
- Jurisdictional government welfare resources TBA
 - Implement AHA performance measure for livestock production animals TBA
 - Develop and implement animal welfare performance measures in other sectors December 2008

Activity status Not commenced

Links to work due to commence in AHC AWWG. All jurisdictional representatives agreed to review activities under a state focused NIP. This covers the livestock sector.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 1 *Achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes*

Activity 3 Facilitate the timely development and revision of codes of practice, standards, guidelines and legislation for the welfare of animals where scientific, social and industry developments justify changes being made to existing practices

Objective To ensure that administrative, legislative and planning mechanisms support effective management of animal welfare in Australia

Delivery Establish a new 'business plan' for the management, coordination, prioritisation, financing, and resourcing of an annual workplan

Resources DAFF consultancy, with broad terms of reference and broad consultation requirements, to report to AAWS Advisory Committee and DAFF, and be available for comments from Animal Welfare Working Group, Animal Health Committee, Aquatic Animal Health Committee, industry and other relevant animal welfare groups

Priority High ☆ ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes

- National approach developed to fund and manage timely development and revision of National Standards from existing MCOPs (Model Codes of Practice)
- National Standards implemented through new and existing QA and consultative arrangements, and, where necessary, enforced through regulation

Target date ▪ Completion of land transport code April 2008

Activity status Livestock production animals sector:

- Agreement to national approach completed
 - AHA business plan completed.
 - Land transport code conversion to Australian Welfare Standards progressing.
 - All model codes converted to standards by end 2010.

Companion Animals sector:

- Engaging consultants on proposal for business plan for national code development.

Aquatic animals:

- Consultant engaged to examine the development of national codes of practice.

Research and Teaching sector:

- Australian Code of Practice for the Use of Animals in Research and Teaching, 7th ed, is regulated in all jurisdictions.
- NHMRC has now upgraded the status of the Code Liaison Group to a Committee that has responsibility for timely review of this Code.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 1 *Achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes*

Activity 4	Promote the adoption of a harmonised approach to the development and application of clear, contemporary, adequate and consistent animal welfare legislation and codes of practice across all state, territory and local government jurisdictions, for appropriate and agreed outcomes		
Objective	To facilitate improved consistency of legislation across states and territories for improved and sustainable animal welfare outcomes		
Delivery	Appoint a consultancy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ review the current legislation (including gaps) and to produce a 'needs analysis' report, including core outcomes and scope (species), for PISC/PIMC ▪ develop a model bill of 'essential elements' in consultation with jurisdictional legislation drafters to facilitate a harmonised national approach (consider other legislative frameworks) 		
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DAFF-appointed consultant ▪ AAWS resources ▪ State/territory resources ▪ DEH resources and obligations 		
Priority	Highest	☆☆☆☆	
Expected outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs analysis report finalised, identifying inconsistencies, gaps and solutions ▪ Model bill of essential elements developed, agreed to by all stakeholders and PIMC ▪ Consistent administrative arrangements across jurisdictions to facilitate policy and compliance systems 		
Target date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Needs analysis report ▪ Gaps analysis report ▪ Consultancy report - consistent animal welfare outcomes for livestock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 30 June 2008 July 2007 Sept 2007 	
Activity status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DAFF, with the assistance of a consultant, has developed a gap analysis report on current animal welfare legislation. ▪ Consultancy currently reviewing consistent implementation of livestock standards. ▪ AHA Business Plan for development of clearly enforceable national Standards underway funded by DAFF. 		

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 1 *Achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes*

Activity 5 Encourage the use of effective consultative and communication mechanisms to engage all animal-use industries, including the livestock industries, the aquaculture and fishing industries, companion animal carers and the companion animal industry, recreational animal industries, the veterinary profession, researchers, community groups, animal welfare organisations, governments and the community in developing animal welfare policies, standards and education
Publicise the existence and content of existing animal welfare legislation, model codes of practice, position statements, standards and guidelines using appropriate media

Objective To involve all stakeholders in ownership of the AAWS

- Delivery**
- Develop an AAWS public communication strategy that will be a platform for improved broad communication on animal welfare in consultation with all stakeholders
 - Undertake benchmarking exercise and deliver the multifaceted strategy
 - Include a regular external review of the strategy's effectiveness by analysing feedback from all stakeholders, and modifying as necessary
 - Research and monitor community attitudes to, and behaviours about, animal welfare

- Resources**
- Leverage existing networks across animal sectors
 - Identify, acknowledge and use leaders and industry champions
 - PR consultants, under the auspices of DAFF, to design multifaceted communication strategy
 - Strong use of media in all communities
 - AQUAPLAN 2005–2010, Strategy 5
 - AAWS stakeholders and partners

Priority Very highest ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

- Expected outcomes**
- Enhanced understanding of the Australian animal welfare system and contemporary and animal welfare issues
 - Multifaceted communication strategy, including improved information sharing and targeted delivery in the community
 - Involvement of all stakeholders in ownership of the AAWS
 - Public communication strategy
 - Website
 - AAWS advisory committee acts as public champion for animal welfare
 - Benchmarks established for monitoring change in attitude to, and behaviours about, animal welfare
 - Improved animal welfare

- Target date**
- Appoint consultant for public relations research July 2006 (completed)
 - Develop Communication strategy 30 June 2007
 - Preliminary benchmarking project December 2007
 - Implementation of communication strategy July 2007 – June 2009

- Activity status**
- Preliminary research finalised.
 - Finalising development of AAWS Communication Strategy.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 1 *Achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes*

Activity 6	Undertake a review of the existing animal welfare infrastructure, policies and programs in place in Australia	
Objective	To produce a concise outline of current processes as a basis for sustainable improvement	
Delivery	Produce concise inventory of current animal welfare arrangements, activities and achievements for all six AAWS Sectoral Working Groups ² in the AAWS	
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AAWS Sectoral Working Groups, including appropriate funding ▪ Animal Welfare Unit, DAFF, to coordinate and support inventory 	
Priority	Highest	☆☆☆☆
Expected outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stocktake of Australia's animal welfare processes ▪ Gaps in animal welfare processes identified ▪ Benchmarks established for monitoring change in animal welfare processes 	
Target date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stocktake of Australia's animal welfare processes ▪ Gaps in animal welfare processes identified ▪ Benchmarks established for monitoring change 	<p>31 December 2006</p> <p>30 June 2007</p> <p>31 December 2007</p>
Activity status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed AAWS Sectoral Working Groups • Stocktake in each AAWS sector completed by September 2006. • Gaps identified and sectoral priorities established. • Projects underway as funding is available to address sectoral needs in light of these priorities. 	

² Refer to background for list of AAWS Sectoral Working Groups

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 1 *Achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes*

Activity 7 PIMC will assume lead responsibility for the monitoring, review and reporting on progress under the Strategy and will coordinate the development of an AAWS Implementation Plan in consultation with key stakeholders. This plan will:

- incorporate specific action plans and nominated lead agencies
- identify any additional resources and funding required to deliver the plan
- provide a basis for national coordination of the Strategy and reporting on implementation progress.

Objective To ensure effective and timely implementation and monitoring of the Strategy

Delivery

- AAWS Advisory Committee to establish Terms of Reference for AAWS Sectoral Working Groups, act as mentors for AAWS Sectoral Working Groups and report to DAFF
- The six AAWS Sectoral Working Groups to develop Action Plans, including clarification of consultation processes, defining key outcomes and how they will be measured

Resources

- Adequate resources for AAWS Sectoral Working Groups
 - AWAC in each jurisdiction to provide liaison with relevant AAWS Sectoral Working Groups

Priority Highest ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes

- Action plans for each of the six sectors.
- An effective system for monitoring, evaluating and continuously improving progress and outcomes

Target date Regular progress reports to each PISC/PIMC meetings

Activity status

- National Implementation Plan finalised February 2006
- PISC/PIMC endorsed National Implementation Plan March/April 2006
- AAWS Sectoral Working Groups established and action plans developed July 2006.
- Communications, Research and Development and Education and Training Working Groups have been established.
- Work priorities set and projects underway – 2006-2007.
- Regular reporting to PIMC and additional funding has been allocated for 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 1 *Achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes*

Activity 8	Maintain a nationally representative committee of key stakeholders on NCCAW to advise the Australian Government on developments under the Strategy to be authorised by PIMC
Objective	To ensure effective and timely implementation and monitoring of the Strategy
Delivery	Review NCCAW membership as a component of the NCCAW review
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DAFF Secretariat ▪ AAWS Advisory Committee
Priority	Medium ☆ ☆
Expected outcomes	NCCAW has appropriate membership
Target date	Review of NCCAW complete 31 December 2006
Activity status	<p>First meeting of new NCCAW held on 8 June 2007.</p> <p>Second meeting to be held on 20 February 2007.</p>

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 2 *Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards*

Activity 9	Facilitate the development, collection and collation of national statistics on animal welfare	
Objective	To strengthen the current framework as a basis for enhancing the delivery of acceptable animal welfare outcomes	
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine existing and future data and data sources on animal welfare, incorporating consideration of community expectations ▪ Develop a national animal welfare reporting system through a series of workshops 	
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consultant to develop specifications for system and its management ▪ Utilise appropriate sources of information ▪ DAFF funded workshops 	
Priority	High	☆☆☆
Expected outcomes	National system for collating and analysing animal welfare data	
Target date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Appointed consultant to identify data to be collected for national statistics on animal welfare 31 March 2006 ▪ Consultancy report finalised 30 September 2006 ▪ Workshop on animal welfare benchmarking held 30 June 2006 ▪ AHC AWWG reviewing this matter for research and teaching sector. Report is due July 2007. 	
Activity status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MLA/AWI Animal Welfare Objective Measures Workshop held October 2005 ▪ MLA/AWI Animal Welfare Objective Measures Workshop held February 2006 ▪ Sectoral project to review performance measures for animals in research and teaching sector underway. 	

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 2 *Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards*

Activity 10 To contribute to the benchmarking of international animal welfare outcomes by assisting in the development of international standards through the World Organisation for Animal Health (Office International des Epizooties — OIE)

Objective To strengthen the current framework as a basis for enhancing the delivery of acceptable animal welfare outcomes

- Delivery**
- Monitor and evaluate scientific literature and policy development processes
 - Work with OIE (in particular the OIE Working Group on Animal Welfare), Quads Animal Welfare Working Group and other relevant international organisations
 - Facilitate stakeholder engagement, input and development of OIE and other international guidelines and standards
 - Develop a mechanism for stakeholders to have input into OIE and other international committee processes

Resources DAFF coordinating responses from relevant industry research organisations, other Australian Government agencies and key scientific animal welfare specialists in Australia and overseas

Priority High ☆ ☆ ☆

- Expected outcomes**
- Strong science-based input to OIE and Quads and other international committees to influence development of sustainable international guidelines
 - Australia has enhanced representation on relevant international standards-setting organisations
 - Improved stakeholder understanding of OIE’s relevance in development of international animal welfare guidelines and standards

Target date Annual (February) engagement of stakeholders to comment on OIE welfare guidelines in finalising Australia’s position by 30 April each year

Activity status Australian experts appointed to four ad hoc working groups on land and sea transport, the slaughter of animals for human consumption, and the killing of animals for disease control purposes.

R & D working group investigating possibility for involvement of Australia in an OIE collaborative animal welfare science centre. New Zealand was recently accredited and following OIE reporting the group will consider whether a mechanism can be developed for an Australasian collaborative centre.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 2 *Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards*

Activity 11	Promote acceptable animal welfare practices in the care and management of Australia's wildlife
Objective	To strengthen the current framework as a basis for enhancing the delivery of acceptable animal welfare outcomes
Delivery	Development of national standard operating procedures and guidelines for care of captive and non-captive Australian wildlife
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AAWS Sectoral Working Group ▪ AWHN, veterinary specialists, zoologists ▪ Indigenous communities ▪ WIRES, National Parks and Wildlife Services ▪ Recreational and professional fishermen ▪ Relevant state/territory agencies
Priority	Medium ☆ ☆
Expected outcomes	Specific guidelines and standards endorsed by PIMC and included in AAWS sectoral Action Plans
Target date	To be discussed at Wild Animals WG meeting on 7 December 2007
Activity status	AAWS Sectoral Working Group established and commenced work in February 2006 to review existing guidelines, standards and operating procedures

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 2 *Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards*

Activity 12 Promote the development and use of humane and effective methods to control pest animals in Australia

Objective To strengthen the current framework as a basis for enhancing the delivery of acceptable animal welfare outcomes

Delivery

- Develop, promote and maintain national standard operating procedures (SOPs) for humane control of pest animals
- Review current APVMA processes to require an animal welfare assessment for new and existing vertebrate pest control techniques
- Key stakeholders to outline barriers to development of more humane control techniques and the relative humaneness of control methods and inconsistencies in use or legislation across Australia
- Inclusion of animal welfare as a criterion in the evaluation and funding of research projects
- Animals Ethics Committees oversee the ethical treatment of animals in research undertaken in pest animal control methods

Resources

- RSPCA
- Livestock Industry
- VPC
- Invasive Animal CRC
- Relevant harvesting industries
- Local government
- Jurisdictional pest management authorities
- Involvement of APVMA
- Non-government organisations

Priority Medium ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes

- National SOPs agreed by PIMC and relevant NGOs
- Management programs incorporate SOPs
- The withdrawal of the registration of some agreed inhumane control techniques
- Barriers to the development of more humane control techniques minimised
- Animal welfare continues to be an important criterion in the evaluation and funding of research.

Target date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National SOPs agreed by PIMC and relevant NGOs June 2008 ▪ Management programs incorporate SOPs 30 June 2008 ▪ Review current APVMA processes to require an animal welfare assessment for new and existing vertebrate pest control techniques 31 December 2006 ▪ Animal welfare is used as a criterion in the evaluation and funding of research projects 31 December 2006 - TBA ▪ Animals Ethics Committees oversee the ethical treatment of animals in research undertaken in pest animal control methods Current/ongoing ▪ Key stakeholders to outline barriers to development of more humane control techniques 31 December 2006
Activity status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All State and Territory representatives agreed that their jurisdictions would adopt suitably modified Codes of Practice for Humane Pest Animal Control. ▪ The agreed modifications to the COPs have been identified, funding has been obtained and an editing process agreed to re-draft the COPs. ▪ All States and Territories have agreed to phase out those control methods identified in the COPs as <i>Not Acceptable</i>. These are: Steel-jawed traps (rabbits, foxes, dogs, cats), Strychnine baiting (foxes, dogs), Chloropiclin fumigation of warrens (rabbits), Warfarin baiting (pigs) and Yellow phosphorous (CSSP) baiting (pigs). ▪ When an agreed objective methodology for ranking control methods for humaneness has been developed, the COPs will be further modified to include ranking of control methods. ▪ Administrative steps are still required by the VPC and the States and Territories to give effect national adoption of the agreed COPs; these have been identified.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 2 *Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards*

Activity 13 Seek effective input from AWACs, AECs and government bodies (including NHMRC, CSIRO), with inputs from community and other stakeholders across the spectrum of use of animals in Australia

Objective To ensure formal processes for community involvement in the development and implementation of welfare standards

Delivery

- Existing processes through PIMC and other ministerial councils
- Existing AWACs, AECs, NHMRC, NCCAW and other advisory bodies
- Work with above groups on development of the AAWS National Implementation Plan and Animal Sector Action Plans
- Target groups under the AAWS Communication Strategy and Welfare Reporting System
- Provision of information resources and support to enable effective community involvement

Resources

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AWACs ▪ Jurisdictional animal welfare units ▪ AWWG, AHC, PIHC/PISC/PIMC ▪ AAHC ▪ NCCAW ▪ AWSC ▪ CAWE ▪ AEC's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Industry and AHA ▪ State/territory local government groups ▪ AAWS Sectoral Working Groups ▪ AW NGOs ▪ ANZSLAS ▪ ANZCCART ▪ SARDI ▪ Research bodies
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Priority High ☆ ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes

- Formal processes in place for building community awareness of, and involvement in, development and implementation of welfare standards
- Performance measures in place for community awareness and involvement

Target date Ongoing

Activity status

- AAWS Sectoral Working Groups to consider existing mechanisms for seeking and considering input from community and other stakeholders
- Consultation consultancy underway as part of livestock standard conversion process.
- AWACs met following AAWS national workshop in October 2006 to share information regarding structure and resourcing.
- NHMRC has formal consultation process and guidelines to incorporate public views in the process of revision of the Australian Code.
- AAWS database to be finalised, will facilitate identification of these groups and individuals.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 2 *Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards*

Activity 14 Identify possible research and development needs and encourage greater investment in research areas by industry and government through existing funding mechanisms

Objective To maintain and improve the scientific basis for animal welfare standards

- Delivery**
- Existing mechanisms with established processes overseeing the delivery of research, development, priorities and funding.
 - Workshop with industry and all animal user groups, animal welfare experts, RDCs and AAWS Sectoral Working Groups to consider areas not covered by existing processes.
 - Meetings with RDCs, ARC, and other funding bodies to identify possible areas of collaboration regarding national research and development needs for animal welfare
 - Explore establishment of an Animal Welfare CRC in the next available round

- Resources**
- DAFF to coordinate workshops and preparation of proposals
 - RDCs and other funding bodies to commission research

Priority High ☆ ☆ ☆

- Expected outcomes**
- Inventory of completed and current R&D studies across sectors developed.
 - Investigation of mechanisms to maintain and communicate
 - Priority list of key animal welfare R&D studies developed for each sector
 - Enhanced collaboration between RDCs and research institutions, within Australia and internationally
 - Defined national research expertise and capability

- Target date**
- Inventory of R&D studies 31 December 2007
 - Gap analysis of R&D studies 30 December 2007
 - Workshop 31 December 2006
 - Completion of application for Animal Welfare CRC as required
 - Other activities Ongoing

**Activity
status**

- Animals in Research and Teaching Working Group to coordinate with other AAWS Sectoral Working Groups and research bodies commencing February 2006
- Establishment of animal welfare CRC was considered and will not proceed at this point.
- Research and Development working group has been established to identify gaps in animal welfare research and funding mechanisms as well as the feasibility of an animal welfare CRC or other coordinating mechanism.
- Workshop July 2006 notified R & D areas.
- AAWS National Workshop 2006 confirmed.
- R & D advisory group currently investigating studies in these areas. This will be furthered by a consultancy.
- R & D advisory group also investigating mechanisms for establishment of an Australian based component as an OIE collaborating centre for animal welfare research.
- Animal welfare has been listed as a Research and Development priority in the RDC future document.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 2 *Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards*

Activity 15 Explore options for funding and establish national animal welfare research priorities

Objective To maintain and improve the scientific basis for animal welfare standards

Delivery

- Research priorities identified in Activity 14
- The six AAWS Sectoral Working Groups review existing funding options
- Explore funding options of Animal Welfare CRC (refer to activity 14)

Resources

- All research organisations
- All relevant funding bodies (eg industry funds, private corporations, animal welfare organisations and philanthropic trusts)
- Potential Animal Welfare CRC

Priority Medium ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes Options for funding and enhanced collaboration and prioritisation developed and signed off at national level

Target date June 2006

Activity status

- Key animal welfare science groups to meet regularly
- Establishment of animal welfare CRC was considered and will not proceed at this point.
- Research and Development working group has been established to identify gaps in animal welfare research and funding mechanisms
- As for previous (14).
- R & D group has successfully lobbied to have animal welfare included as an RRDP for livestock – May 2007.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 2 *Achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in whole of community standards*

Activity 16 Establish a process whereby welfare research is continually monitored and, where applicable, sustainable standards can be updated

Objective To ensure that new knowledge gained through research on animal welfare is broadly communicated and adopted into national animal welfare standards

Delivery

- Coordination of RDCs through RDC Chair
- Ensure a process exists for capturing the outcomes of research, and use the AAWS Communication Strategy to assist existing communication mechanisms for informing industries and the community about animal welfare research outcomes
- Incorporate the updating of scientific knowledge as a key component of standards review process
- Examine options for knowledge transfer, including regular scientific conference on animal welfare

Resources DAFF appoints animal welfare scientist

Priority Medium ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes

- National animal welfare standards based on contemporary research
- Formal processes established for animal welfare scientific centres to provide advice to policy making committees
- AAWS Communication Strategy will include promotion and uptake of new welfare knowledge arising from research

Target date

- National animal welfare standards process agreed 30 June 2007
- Formal mechanisms to involve animal welfare scientific centres in development of standards and policy agreed 30 June 2007

Activity status

- Refer to Activity 3 re: consideration of process to develop and manage Australian welfare standards for livestock/production animals
- Livestock/production animals organisation have existing mechanisms for communicating outcomes of funded research in their sector
- AAWS AC meeting Aug 2006 resolved not to proceed with the proposal that would have addressed this Activity.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 3 *Achieve effective communication, education and training across the whole community to promote an improved understanding of animal welfare*

Activity 17 Promote (or develop and promote) the following:

- adoption of best practice standards for human-to-animal interaction
- consultation and the dissemination of information on animal care
- inclusion of animal welfare studies in educational curricula
- national competency-based training and other educational programs, including appropriate QA programs, to improve skills of people using animals

Objective *Animal handling skills and understanding*
To enhance the attitudes, skills and knowledge of animal carers and handlers and all other people whose actions have a potential effect/impact on animals such as wildlife or introduced animals by developing, where appropriate, national training competencies and standards

Delivery

- Review existing and proposed training and QA programs for adequacy of content on animal care and welfare, and institute new training components to cover identified deficiencies, including competency-based training in animal welfare
- Develop guidelines for incorporation of animal welfare content in curricula at all levels in all jurisdictions, and benchmark Australian animal welfare education programs locally and overseas
- Identify funding sources
- Establish and promote an AAWS website

Resources

- DAFF to develop, maintain and promote AAWS website
- DAFF to commission DEST to review the educational capacities of tertiary education providers and RTOs
- Educational providers, and materials (eg QA training manuals, applications and audits; competency training packages and programs for inspection staff)
- State, territory and other agencies responsible for education and training, and for wildlife, pest and feral animals
- Organisations and programs (eg AAWS Sectoral Working Groups, industry peak bodies, National Training Quality Council; registered training providers; training programs for each sector)
- People (eg responsible ministers, industry and community leaders, DEST)

Priority Highest ☆☆☆☆

Expected outcomes

- Consultant engaged to develop inventory of current training capacities and research–training linkages
- Enhanced public awareness of animal welfare and of contemporary animal handling and training courses
- Appropriate national training programs, incentives and opportunities on animal care, handling, production, use and management
- Contemporary, relevant, competency-based training courses, promoted in each animal sector
- AAWS website will be fully operation by August 2007.

Target date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public awareness and technical training Ongoing ▪ DAFF consultancy to advise of current training programs 30 December 2007 ▪ DAFF consultancy to review animal welfare content of current curricula and training programs 31 December 07 ▪ DAFF consultancy to develop guidelines for incorporation of animal welfare content in curricula June 2008 ▪ Training awareness package promoted through AAWS Communication Strategy 30 June 2008 ▪ AAWS website enhanced regarding information on animal welfare training programs 30 June 2007
Activity status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of Education and Training Working Group – March 2007 ▪ DAFF AAWS website exists ▪ DEST website exists re curricula and training programs ▪ Other websites and documentation relating to animal welfare training and education programs ▪ Engagement of National Agricultural Educators at their biennial conference, Jan 2006 ▪ AAWS Sectoral Working Groups to consider this issue in February 2006

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 3 *Achieve effective communication, education and training across the whole community to promote an improved understanding of animal welfare*

Activity 18 Identify, evaluate and, where necessary, create national internet sources for national, state/territory and local animal welfare information, and establish a process of national consultation with the general community on nationally important welfare issues

Objective *Animal handling skills and understanding*
To enhance the attitudes, skills and knowledge of animal carers and handlers and all other people whose actions have a potential effect/impact on animals such as wildlife or introduced animals by developing, where appropriate, national training competencies and standards

Delivery

- AAWS Communication Strategy as the overarching national approach
- Linkages between animal user websites
- Publicise animal welfare contact information points in communities
- Interactive feedback and consultation mechanisms to be incorporated into AAWS Sectoral Working Groups Action Plans
- State/Territory and Commonwealth governments and animal welfare stakeholders to deliver consistent messages as agreed through the AAWS Communication Strategy

Resources

- AAWS Advisory Committee
- AAWS Sectoral Working Groups
- Existing animal welfare stakeholder websites
- DAFF-commissioned Stakeholder Analysis project and related survey research into animal welfare attitudes, in the development of the AAWS Communication Strategy

Priority High ☆ ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes

- AAWS Sectoral Working Groups have effective consultation mechanisms in place and provide regular reports to AAWS Advisory Committee
- A comprehensive, interlinked network of websites

Target date

- Stand alone animal welfare website developed with linkages to other key animal welfare websites
August 2007
- Interactive feedback and consultation mechanisms incorporated in Action Plans
30 June 2006

Activity status

- DAFF AAWS website exists
- DAFF Animal Welfare Unit appointed a full-time public relations specialist to assist with AAWS communication
- Stand alone animal welfare website under development.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 3 *Achieve effective communication, education and training across the whole community to promote an improved understanding of animal welfare*

Activity 19 Inform international bodies of Australia’s policies and standards for animal welfare through the development of readily available explanatory material outlining animal welfare arrangements and achievements in Australia

Objective *International*
To improve the availability of information on Australia’s standards of animal welfare performance internationally

Delivery

- Strategic approach to design and publication of explanatory material for distribution to key international bodies, consumer groups and industries
- Targeted follow-up promotional material and advocacy by government at international forums and in bilateral agreements

Resources

- BRS and stakeholder coordinated information networks
- PR consultant
- DAFF, DFAT, DEH
- Industry PR and marketing arms
- Tourism Australia

Priority High ☆ ☆ ☆

Expected outcomes

- Stakeholders use AAWS Communications Strategy to deliver appropriate and consistent messages on Australia’s policies, guidelines and standards for animal welfare
- Australian animal welfare system is recognised and accepted by international trading partners

Target date

- Publication of Australian Animal Welfare Strategy 31 December 2005
- International promotion of the existence of the AAWS publication ongoing

**Activity
status**

- Publication of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy completed
- AAWS formally launched by Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in October 2005
- AAWS publication, brochures and promotional magnets distributed nationally and internationally – ongoing.
- DAFF promotion of the Strategy in various international fora.
- DAFF ANIMAL WELFARE unit has developed links with key international NGO, WSPA. This includes support for the AAWS.
- DAFF Animal Welfare Unit has entered discussions with EU on welfare cooperation and met with governments of Netherlands, UK, OIE, Compassion in World Farming to promote AAWS in May 2007
- DAFF ANIMAL welfare unit has also developed links with Singapore's agrifood and veterinary administration agency (AVA).
- Promotion of the AAWS at the 4th Pan Commonwealth Veterinary Conference in November 2007, that involved World Bank and 50 countries and NGOs
- DAFF (Thornber/Adams) coordinated special edition of *Veterinaria Italiana* on 'Welfare aspects of long distance transport' involving 24 manuscripts that will be published in 2008

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy National Implementation Plan

Goal 3 *Achieve effective communication, education and training across the whole community to promote an improved understanding of animal welfare*

Activity 20	Identify and disseminate relevant information to appropriate organisations throughout Australia
Objective	To monitor developments in animal welfare in other countries
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monitor and evaluate scientific literature as an integral part of national and international animal welfare policy development ▪ Review national and international animal welfare websites and promote dialogue on relevant issues through the AAWS Communication Strategy ▪ Active participation in international fora with appropriate reporting of outcomes ▪ Formal government participation in international meetings/conferences ▪ Participation by private sector animal welfare stakeholders in international meetings/conferences
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of experts and budgets to represent Australia in international meetings/conferences ▪ Monitoring and reporting of animal welfare developments by Australian Government Diplomats ▪ Commercial trading networks and international resources ▪ Scholarships, international training programs and exchange programs in animal welfare
Priority	Medium ☆ ☆
Expected outcomes	International information is identified, analysed and disseminated as appropriate
Target date	Ongoing
Activity status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Australian experts represented on each of OIE ad hoc working groups that developed animal welfare guidelines for land transport, sea transport, humane slaughter and humane killing for disease control ▪ Key animal welfare experts from various sectors represented on AAWS sectoral working groups. ▪ DAFF Animal Welfare Unit active in QUADS AWWG. ▪ DAFF in association with NHMRC joined International Council for Laboratory Animal Science (ICLAS) in 2007