AVAWE - A Special Interest Group of the Australian Veterinary Association

NEWSLETTER
January 2010

### AVAWE Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Tanya Stephens</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tanya.carter@ozemail.com.au">tanya.carter@ozemail.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President-Elect</td>
<td>Susan Maastricht</td>
<td><a href="mailto:susanmaastricht@bigpond.com">susanmaastricht@bigpond.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary/Treasurer</td>
<td>Catherine Brett</td>
<td><a href="mailto:enfeldvelt@bigpond.com.au">enfeldvelt@bigpond.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIC Rep</td>
<td>Lloyd Klump</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lloyd.klump@dpi.vic.gov.au">lloyd.klump@dpi.vic.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA Rep</td>
<td>Teresa Collins</td>
<td><a href="mailto:T.Collins@murdoch.edu.au">T.Collins@murdoch.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA Rep</td>
<td>Susan Hazel</td>
<td><a href="mailto:susan.hazel@adelaide.edu.au">susan.hazel@adelaide.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACT Rep</td>
<td>Lyn Gallimore</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lyn.gallimore@daff.gov.au">lyn.gallimore@daff.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TAS Rep</td>
<td>Peter Holm</td>
<td><a href="mailto:holmp@bigpond.com">holmp@bigpond.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW Rep</td>
<td>Magdelana Awad</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mawad@rscansw.org.au">mawad@rscansw.org.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QLD Rep</td>
<td>Robert Cassidy</td>
<td><a href="mailto:robert.cassidy@racing.qld.gov.au">robert.cassidy@racing.qld.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletter Editor</td>
<td>Tanya Stephens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Objectives and Role of AVAWE

AVAWE is dedicated to the dissemination of scientific knowledge relative to animal welfare concerning the ethics of animal use, animal management and animal welfare policy.

AVAWE embraces the welfare of all animals used for companionship, work, food, clothing, research, teaching, recreation, entertainment and sport, as well as feral and wild animals.

AVAWE objectives include:

- To promote all aspects of animal welfare and ethics within the Australian veterinary profession with regard to the use of animals for companionship, work, food, clothing, research, teaching, recreation, entertainment and sport, as well as feral and wild animals.
- To provide a forum for discussion of the ethics of animal use, animal management and animal welfare.
- To provide a forum for consideration and dissemination of scientific knowledge relative to animal welfare.
- To provide a forum for consultation and education on animal welfare and ethics with the veterinary, animal welfare, scientific, political, educational and general communities.
- To promote humane management of domestic, feral and wild animals.

### THIS ISSUE:

- Objectives/role AVAWE
- AVA Conference 2010
- AVAWE AGM
- AVAWE Annual Dinner
- From the President
- ACVS
- Editorial
- Useful links & journals
- New Books
- Items of Interest
- Coming Events
- Policy Council Report

### AVA Conference – Brisbane May 23 to 27, 2010

This year the conference, will be a joint conference with our New Zealand colleagues and held in Brisbane from the 23rd to the 27th of May. Mark your diaries now and get on to that locum service! This will be a great conference.

As in the last few years, AVAWE has had a significant and growing profile at the AVA conference. Many thanks once again to Susan Maastricht, AVAWE president 2008-2009, who organised the 2009 AVAWE program.

As before, joint sessions with other SIGs have ensured an interesting program and our stand-alone sessions should generate a lot of interest. Sessions include several on Animal Law, on pain and behaviour, on whipping horses, teaching ethics and welfare to undergraduates, humane pest control, human/animal relationships in zoo animals, assessing quality of life, professional ethics, evidence-based medicine and animal welfare and pedigree dog diseases.
**AVAWE Annual General Meeting**

The AVAWE AGM will be held during the AVA Conference on. Please come along and bring some ideas for the 2011 conference and any suggestions to further invigorate our SIG.

**AVAWE Dinner**

*The AVAWE Annual Dinner is a highlight of the AVA conference social program since its inception at the Melbourne AVA conference 2007. This will be once again a grand affair. It will be held this year at Era Bistro, 102 Melbourne Street (cnr of Merivale Street), South Brisbane on Wednesday 26 May at 7.00pm for 7.30 dinner. As in past years, there will be an interesting guest speaker or two. Please register on the official conference program. Only $70 per person.*

**From the President**

Welcome to all our new AVAWE members and a Happy New Year to all.

Congratulations to our student members who have just graduated. We wish you a long and happy career and hope that you will maintain your AVA and AVAWE membership.

AVAWE membership has doubled over the last two years reflecting a growing interest in animal welfare and ethics within the profession. Particularly pleasing is the growing number of student members. A very successful initiative has been AVAWE sponsorship of veterinary student social events with guest speakers and these events have been held at most universities last year. The students were particularly interested in learning about animal law as this is an area of growing interest in the legal profession. Animal law is now taught at many law schools around Australia.

AVAWE has representatives on the staff of most of the Australian veterinary schools and the AVAWE has a close association with the Animal Welfare Chapter of the Australian College of Veterinary Scientists with many AVAWE members now members of the College.

Below the correspondence from Roxanne Fraser, the organiser of the James Cook University student event we sponsored in 2009.

Hi Tanya,

I'd like to thank you for your help in organising the Animal Welfare Lecture and BBQ that was held at JCU in October. It was a huge success. Dominique Thiriet, a Law Professor from the Law Faculty of JCU, gave an informative, interactive and eye opening talk on animal welfare and how it relates to the veterinary profession and what we as vets can do. She also led a discussion on the use of animals for teaching purposes which was well received and debated. The night finished with a bang with a BBQ and drinks held at the vet school. We had an attendance of 50 students, had a lucky door prize and gave out forms to join the AVAWE and AVA.

Roxanne Fraser
Small Animal and Exotics Special Interest Group Student President JCU Vet School, Townsville.

Suggestions from AVAWE members for other initiatives, social events etc. very welcome as are items for the newsletter.

Tanya Stephens

**Australian College of Veterinary Scientists: Animal Welfare Chapter**

The Animal Welfare Chapter was established to provide a forum for the training of veterinarians to a detailed knowledge and above average competence in animal welfare in all species. *It is very pleasing indeed that the Chapter has now developed Fellowship guidelines for Animal Welfare, Ethics, Science and Law.* The guidelines have been accepted by the College and this is a significant step in the development of the Chapter. The Animal Welfare Chapter has over 50 members. This puts Animal Welfare as a middle-ranked Chapter in the College and very much part of the mainstream. Membership exams will be held again this year. Contact the College for more information. [www.acvs.org.au](http://www.acvs.org.au)

Proceedings from last year’s Science Week are now up on the website at: [http://welfare.acvsc.org.au/welfare/science%5Fweek/science%5Fweek%5F2009/](http://welfare.acvsc.org.au/welfare/science%5Fweek/science%5Fweek%5F2009/)
Animal welfare was very much in the news in 2009 – from the BBC program on pedigree dog diseases aired on the ABC in September to the on-going discussion about mulesing, live animal exports and whaling. With whaling, much emphasis has been placed on the legal issues and there has been some comment on the fact that some eating whale meat is no different to eating sheep or cattle. This may be so but whales don’t die instantly after being harpooned and it would be considered poor welfare indeed for other animals that are slaughtered for food to die slowly!

I wrote about the BBC program “Pedigree dogs exposed” in the Feb 09 newsletter and when the program was screened by the ABC in Sept 09, it generated a lot of comment. I found the attitude of some of the dog breeders just as disturbing as the genetic defects! There appeared on their part to be a lack of insight and appreciation of animal suffering. The program sparked a high profile inquiry in Britain by the Associate Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare. The BVA Animal Welfare Foundation (www.bva-awf.org.uk) put out a news release in Dec 09 on guidelines for choosing your new dog which were formulated by the dog-breeding stakeholder group emphasising selection based on welfare grounds. This is a step in the right direction and veterinarians should continue to play a major role here. In Australia, Associate Professor Paul McGreevy has been very active in this area. His team at the University of Sydney Faculty of Veterinary Science has a website (www.vetsci.usyd.edu.au/lida) which includes a listing of inherited disorders in animals (LIDA). Beginning with dogs, the website has now been expanded to include cats. The AVA has a policy on genetic defects in domestic animals.

A terrifying thought for small animal practitioners would be the cessation of companion animal ownership altogether. A new book (Time to eat the dog) published by Robert and Brenda Vale, two architects who specialise in sustainable living at Victoria University, Wellington New Zealand, compares the ecological footprints of a menagerie of popular pets. According to the Vales, owning a medium-sized dog is equivalent to double the eco-footprint of a Toyota Landcruiser per year!

Upon reading this, I couldn't avoid a whiff of self-righteousness. Previously, I have avoided admitting that I own three Chihuahuas (talk about genetic diseases!), albeit acquired by default, but now I can proudly boast that my dogs have a small carbon footprint especially as they prefer shortbread biscuits to dog food! Not all Chihuahuas are so lucky. In San Francisco, animal shelters and rescue groups are reporting a surge in the number of abandoned Chihuahuas. It’s called the “Paris Hilton syndrome”. The dogs became popular because of celebrity ownership and were then abandoned. Luckily the Humane Society was able to re-home most of the dogs. This story sadly illustrates how dog ownership is susceptible to fashion trends.

The odds are also against Australian thoroughbred horses leading long happy lives. A 2008 report commissioned by the RSPCA to examine “wastage” of Australian thoroughbred horses found 60% of the animals processed at one abattoir originated from the racing industry. According to the Rural Industries Research Development Corporation, between 30,000 and 40,000 horses are processed for human and pet consumption annually. Andrew McLean, an honorary associate of the University of Sydney and founder of the Australian Equine Behaviour Centre, says that published studies from Europe and unpublished Australian data show that 2/3 of horses including race horses, are sent to abattoirs for behavioural reasons and that with better educated horse trainers and owners, “horses would get a better deal”.

In other news, according to an article by Katrina Fox in the Sydney Morning Herald, Dec 28 2009, Australia is to get its first political party dedicated to toughening animal protection laws, the Animal Justice Party, whose concerns include the welfare of farmed animals. Ms Fox, who is an animals’ rights activist and freelance writer, goes on to discuss the rise of the “happy meat” movement. Food for thought!

A copy of PETA’s Animal Times landed gratis on my desk at the practice. It makes interesting reading. Pages of celebrities who have become vegetarian, exhortations to join them, vegan recipes and then a page headed “Meet the cutest mutts alive” featuring pictures of cute dogs and cats which were winners of PETA’s Cutest Mutt Alive contests. I wondered if they all lived on shortbread biscuits. Surely they couldn’t be fed MEAT! More food for thought!

What makes my pet happy?
This is the title of a nice little leaflet produced by the British Veterinary Association Animal Welfare unit explaining the ‘five freedoms’ for pet owners. They have kindly agreed for us to do a print run of these for us to distribute. They would be ideal for practice waiting rooms. Let me know if you would like some. You can view the leaflet on their website at www.bva-awf.org.uk/support/.
### Some useful links and journals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law Veterinary Association.</strong> A UK group <a href="http://www.awselva.org.uk">www.awselva.org.uk</a></td>
<td><strong>Animal Welfare Science Centre Parkville</strong>, Melbourne, VIC. <a href="http://www.animalwelfare.net.au">http://www.animalwelfare.net.au</a> has the latest information on their seminar series and scientific meetings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAc)

Each state and territory except WA has an AWAC on which the AVA is represented. The AVA has its own AWAC, currently chaired by **Steve Atkinson**, which meets by teleconference twice a year and in person at the AVA annual conference. The AVA AWAC provides advice to the AVA Board and Policy Advisory Council.
New Books


The practical focus of this authoritative, comprehensive encyclopedia aims to promote the understanding and improvement of animals' behaviour without compromising welfare. Under the editorial direction of Professor Daniel Mills, the UK’s first specialist in veterinary behavioural medicine, over 100 international experts have contributed a wealth of fully cross-referenced entries from concise definitions to detailed short essays on biological, practical, clinical and ethical aspects of behaviour and welfare in domestic, exotic, companion and zoo animals.

**Improving Animal Welfare: A Practical Approach**, by T Grandin, Colorado State University, USA, CABI, 2009

New legislation on animal welfare standards has created the need for welfare programmes to be implemented on farms, during transportation and in slaughter plants, but while there is a wealth of information on animal behaviour, ethics and factors affecting welfare, there is little to guide veterinarians and managers in evaluating and improving animal welfare. Drawing on the author’s extensive experience in teaching and auditing, and contributions from expert guest authors, this textbook bridges the gap between scientific research and practical application. It provides a guide to evaluating and auditing welfare problems, and emphasizes the importance of measuring conditions that compromise welfare. It is an essential text for veterinarians and veterinary students, welfare auditing or welfare officer training, and broader animal welfare topics, helping students to apply their knowledge in the field.


Proceedings of the 4th International Workshop on the Assessment of Animal Welfare at Farm and Group Level.

This special issue contains about thirty papers covering a wide spectrum of current animal welfare issues as well as special reports and comments and reviews of a number of books.


A work proposing new ways of defining, measuring and discussing the changing role of animals in our society.


This book is about the way different scientific disciplines contribute to our understanding and management of animal welfare. The authors note that particular scientific ideas, once they have been rigorously and systematically formulated and objectively and critically reviewed, develop continuously as related scientific perspectives and knowledge evolve. In time most are refined, changed markedly or replaced. These general dynamics apply just as much to animal welfare science as to all other scientific disciplines.

Items of Interest

**ANIMAL WELFARE YOUNG SCIENTIST GETS THE BIGGEST AWARD!**

Research which could improve animal welfare for Australia’s sheep flock has taken out the top award for the 2009 Science and Innovation Awards for Young People in Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Dr Leah Bradbury will receive $20,000 from Australian Animal Welfare Strategy and $30,000 as winner of the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Award, for her research into the use of carprofen for long-term pain relief in sheep.

Carprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug that is traditionally used by veterinarians as supportive treatment for the relief of pain and inflammation in dogs, but research is needed to allow us to use it to best effect in sheep.

Dr Bradbury is a veterinarian at the University of Melbourne and will use the award to expand her research to determine optimal doses, timing and dosing levels for pain management in juvenile sheep. Her aim is to develop a single sustained release injection that gives long term pain relief—hopefully lasting up to seven days. Her research will provide key information to support licensing of the drug for use as an anti-inflammatory and analgesic in sheep.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ANZLAA (Australian and New Zealand Laboratory Animal Association)</strong></th>
<th>ANZLAA is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving the welfare of animals used in research and teaching. In addition to improving animal welfare through direct means, ANZLAA seeks to foster informed discussion and continuing professional development for those working with animals used in research and teaching. It is hoped that ANZLAA, through the pursuit of its goals, will help ensure that the use of animals in research or teaching is conducted in a manner that is ethical, humane and compassionate.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAO report on Animal Welfare</strong></td>
<td>A report of a Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) Expert Meeting held in 2008 reflects a higher profile being given to animal welfare internationally. The FAO has decided to give more explicit and strategic attention to animal welfare in its capacity building activities in countries with developing economies and the expert meeting was convened to determine how best to set about this. The report, “Capacity building to implement good animal welfare practices” is available at <a href="http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/resources/en/pubs_awelf.html">www.fao.org/ag/againfo/resources/en/pubs_awelf.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Animal Welfare Code</strong></td>
<td>The NSW Government released the new <em>Animal Welfare Code of Practice for Breeding Dogs and Cats</em> in September 2009. The code outlines minimum standards for breeders and aims to improve animal welfare. The new standards include animal health standards that breeders are required to meet as well as other animal handling, housing and commercial requirements. A copy of the code can be found on the NSW DPI website at <a href="http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au">www.dpi.nsw.gov.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Animal Ethics Dilemma Website</strong></td>
<td>A website of interest is Animal Ethics Dilemma at: <a href="http://ae.imcode.com/en/1001">http://ae.imcode.com/en/1001</a> The website is designed as an interactive learning tool, allowing exploration of ethical views and how they may influence decisions and behaviour related to animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Go3R.org – new search engine</strong></td>
<td>This search engine has been designed to allow searching for alternatives to animal use in research without the need for long instructions or code in the search term. Further information can be found in: Sauer U, Wächter T, Grune B, et al. (2009) Go3R - Semantic internet search engine for alternative methods to animal testing. ALTEX 26(1):17-31. <a href="http://www.go3r.org/">www.go3r.org/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guidelines for Writing Codes of Welfare</strong></td>
<td><em>Guidelines for Writing Codes of Welfare</em>, June 2009, National Animal Welfare Advisory Committee, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, New Zealand. The New Zealand Government recently published guidelines on how to write and review codes of animal welfare. Written for the New Zealand context, the guidelines are likely to be of interest to anyone writing or reviewing codes of animal welfare. Available at the MAF Biosecurity website <a href="http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/animal-welfare/stds/codes">www.biosecurity.govt.nz/animal-welfare/stds/codes</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognition for research on welfare at slaughter</strong></td>
<td>The inaugural Humane Slaughter Award, launched in 2008 by the Humane Slaughter Association, was presented to veterinarian Craig Johnson and his colleagues Troy Gibson, Kevin Stafford and David Mellor, at Massey University, New Zealand. The subject of their research was an investigation of pain in cattle slaughtered prior to stunning. The presentation was made in London last October at the Farmer’s Club, by James Kirkwood, the chief executive of the HSA. The results were reported in a series of five papers published in the New Zealand Veterinary Journal in April 2009 and concluded “This...demonstrates clearly for the first time that act of slaughter by ventral neck cut incision is associated with noxious stimulation that would be expected to be perceived as painful.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AAWS news: Ranking Humaneness


OIE collaborating centre for animal welfare science and bioethical analysis

OIE Collaborating Centres are centres of expertise in a specific designated sphere of competence relating to the management of general questions on animal health and welfare issues. An innovative, multi-centre partnership between the New Zealand and Australian Governments and internationally recognised research institutions to form an OIE Collaborating Centre was expanded to a membership of five research organisations at the 2009 OIE General Session.

The member organisations are: Massey University, New Zealand, the Animal Welfare Science and Bioethics Centre; Agresearch Animal Behaviour and Welfare Research centre, New Zealand; University of Melbourne, Australia, Animal Welfare Science Centre; University of Queensland, Centre for Animal Welfare and Ethics; CSIRO, Australia, Division of Livestock Industries.

OIE Welfare Guidelines

The 174 member countries of the OIE have endorsed and published animal welfare guidelines for land/sea/air transport, humane slaughter and killing for disease control. Work has progressed on humane urban dog control (in support of efforts to control rabies) and the welfare of farmed fish during transport. These two guidelines were adopted in May 2009 with minor amendments and are available on the OIE website ([www.oie.int](http://www.oie.int)).

RSPCA Animal Welfare Science Update


The aim of the Animal Welfare Science Update is to inform on developments in animal welfare science relating to the work of the RSPCA. The update provides summaries of the most relevant scientific papers and reports received by the RSPCA Australia office.

**October 09 edition includes:**

Animal-based welfare monitoring, temperature preferences of new-born dairy calves, assessment of emotion in sheep, use of topical anaesthetic and/or NSAID in Merino lamb castration.

**January 10 edition includes:**

Welfare of pedigree dogs, welfare assessment in pet rabbits, pain associated with different slaughter techniques, gas euthanasia for laboratory mice.


Coming Events

**RSPCA AUSTRALIA SCIENTIFIC SEMINAR**

**Tuesday 23 February 2010, CSIRO Discovery Centre, Canberra**

**Convergence or conflict: Animal welfare in wildlife management and conservation**

The Seminar will broadly examine the animal welfare issues associated with the management of wildlife across four overlapping themes:

- the impact and management of threatening processes, such as invasive species
- the conservation of threatened species
- the impacts of urbanisation and agricultural development on wildlife
- the impact of climate change on wildlife conservation.

The Animal Welfare Science Centre Seminar Series – 2010

Building better dogs: using what we’ve learned about genetic and experiential effects on dog behaviour to improve dog welfare
Thursday February 11th
10.00 - 16.30
Theatre South 1/64, Monash University, Clayton
Speakers to include Paul McGreevy (Univ. Sydney), Mike Goddard (Univ Melb), Pauleen Bennett, (AWSC, Monash) and students of the AWSC

AWSC Student presentations
Friday May 14th
10.00 - 16.00
Craven/Stevens Room, Attwood
The day will highlight current and recently completed AWSC post-graduate projects and will demonstrate the benefits of honours projects within larger studies.

Pig Welfare Research Day
Friday July 9th
10.00 - 16.00
Craven/Stevens Room, Attwood
Pig welfare research from several Australian institutions will be featured in this seminar.

Poultry Welfare Research Day
Friday September 10th
10.00 - 16.00
Craven/Stevens Room, Attwood
This seminar will highlight current Australian research in the layer and meat chicken industries.

ANZCCART CONFERENCE: HOBART IN JULY
The ANZCCART conference this year will be in our southern-most capital, picturesque Hobart! It will be held from: Tuesday 20 to Thursday 22 July.
More details will be available on the ANZCCART website as planning for the conference is finalised. http://www.adelaide.edu.au/ANZCCART/

UFAW Animal Welfare Conference
30th June 2010
York UK
Recent advances in animal welfare science
Merchant Adventurers’ Hall, York, UK
As part of its on-going commitment to improving the way we understand and care for animals, the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare is holding the second of a series of one day conferences on ‘Recent advances in animal welfare science’ on 30th June 2010.
http://www.ufaw.org.uk

Policy Council Report – Tanya Stephens

The AVA Policy Advisory Council (PAC) meets twice yearly. Policy Advisory Councillors are elected by each of the AVA Special Interest Groups and Divisions. I am the current AVAWE Policy Advisory Councillor. The term of office is for three years. Susan Hazel will be taking up this role at the end of my term. The PAC, as the name suggests, is responsible for advising the AVA executive on the public policies the AVA promotes. All members of the AVA are encouraged to be a part of this process. The next PAC meeting is to be held in May 2010 just before the AVA conference.
The AVA is currently seeking comments on a number of policies, many of which involve welfare issues and drawing on the expertise of our membership, comments on these are most welcome. The policies for comment by the 14th February 2010 are in an insert in the AVJ. These policies include “Electro-immobilisation”, “Genetically modified organisms”, “Transport of horses” and “Animal welfare organisations” (the latter is an AVAWE policy). At the PAC meeting in October 2009, the AVAWE policy on “Philosophy on animal welfare and the veterinarian” was finalised for review by the Board. Many thanks to all our members who made valuable contributions to our policies. The PAC provides a useful means of various SIGs working together and AVAWE is jointly working on a number of policies with other SIGs. These include “Animal shelters”, “Dogs and cats in pet shops”, “Boarding facilities”, “Use of dogs for teaching in vet schools”, “Welfare of vealer calves” and “Circus animals”. If you would like to be involved in working on these policies, please let me know.