

Tactical Research Fund

Investigating the establishment of a national aquatic animal health industry reference group

Justin Fromm



**National
Aquaculture
Council**



Australian Government

**Fisheries Research and
Development Corporation**

Project No. 2008/354

Copyright, Fisheries Research and Development Corporation and the National Aquaculture Council, 2009.

This work is copyright. Except as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), no part of this publication may be reproduced by any process, electronic or otherwise, without the specific written permission of the copyright owners. Information may not be stored electronically in any form whatsoever without such acknowledgement of source.

Disclaimer

The authors do not warrant that the information in this document is free from errors or omissions. The authors do not accept any form of liability, be it contractual, tortious, or otherwise, for the contents of this document or for any consequences arising from its use or any reliance placed upon it. The information, opinions and advice contained in this document may not relate, or be relevant, to a readers particular circumstances. Opinions expressed by the authors are the individual opinions expressed by those persons and are not necessarily those of the publisher, research provider or the FRDC.

The Fisheries Research and Development Corporation plans, invests in and manages fisheries research and development throughout Australia. It is a statutory authority within the portfolio of the federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, jointly funded by the Australian Government and the fishing industry.

Table of Contents

Non Technical Summary	4
Acknowledgments	5
Acronyms.....	5
Background	5
Need	6
Objectives	6
Methods.....	6
Results/Discussion	6
Benefits and adoption	7
Further Development.....	7
Planned outcomes	7
Conclusion	8
References	8
Appendices.....	9

Non Technical Summary

2008/354 Tactical Research Fund: Investigating the establishment of a national aquatic animal health industry reference group

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Justin Fromm
ADDRESS: National Aquaculture Council
PO Box 59
Deakin West ACT 2600

OBJECTIVES:

1. To facilitate the formation of a National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED TO DATE

The industry representatives from the aquaculture, wild capture and ornamental sectors have resolved to form the National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group to provide input into the development of national aquatic animal policy.

Due to changes in the policy development framework of the Australian governments, those industries with an interest aquatic animal health found themselves without any direct input into the policy development process. To overcome this, the industries decided to gauge the level of interest amongst themselves in forming a national industry group that would be able to provide this input.

A meeting was held between industry representatives from the aquaculture, wild capture and ornamental sectors in Melbourne on Wednesday 25 March.

The result was the formation of the National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group.

KEYWORDS: Aquatic Animal Health

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The National Aquaculture Council would like to acknowledge all the stakeholders who attended the meeting.

- Pheroze Jungalwalla, Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association (NAAHIRG Chair)
- Brett McCallum, Pearl Producers Association (for harvest fisheries sector)
- Jared Patrick, Bay Group (for ornamental fish sector)
- Len Olyott, CEO Recfish Australia (for recreational fisheries sector)
- Craig Foster, Chair National Aquaculture Council (for aquaculture sector)
- Ron Glanville, AAHC Chair
- Rob Rahaley, AHC Chair
- Mark Crane, FRDC Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram
- Bill Scanlan DAFF, (AHC Secretariat)
- Ingo Ernst, DAFF-OCVO (AAHC Secretariat)
- Sridevi Embar-Gopinath, DAFF-OCVO (AAHC Secretariat)

ACRONYMS

AHA – Animal Health Australia

AAHC – Aquatic Animal Health Committee

AHC – Animal Health Committee

DAFF – Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

FRDC – Fisheries Research and Development Corporation

NAAHIRG – National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group

NAAH-TWG – National Aquatic Animal Health-Technical Working Group

NBC – National Biosecurity Committee

NRMMC – Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council

NRMSC – Natural Resource Management Standing Committee

PIMC – Primary Industries Ministerial Council

PISC – Primary Industries Standing Committee

BACKGROUND

On 1 July 2008 the National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) became the new advisory committee to the Primary Industries Standing Committee (PISC) and the Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) and the Natural Resource Management Standing Committee (NRMSC) and Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council (NRMMC).

All biosecurity issues, including environmental and animal and plant biosecurity issues, will be considered by the NBC, with a view to resolution or for the development of advice to PISC/NRMSC and PIMC/NRMMC as appropriate. Given that the membership of the NRMSC and NRMMC represents both primary production and environmental, most issues will be directed to the NRMSC/NRMMC.

The National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) decided at a meeting on 30 July 2008 to disband Aquatic Animal Health Committee (AAHC) and transfer

aquatic animal health public policy and government decision making to the AHC from 1 July 2009.

Industry members of AAHC met with Animal Health Australia (AHA) on 22 October 2008 to explore the possibility of aquatic animal industries joining AHA; however, this was not considered feasible at the time.

AAHC held an extraordinary meeting on 5 December 2008 to consider transitional arrangements. At this meeting, it was proposed that the first meeting of an industry reference group be held in March 2009. This final report is the record of this meeting.

AHC had a strategic planning meeting in February 2009. At the meeting, AHC discussed how to manage its new aquatic animal health responsibilities; for example, the division of responsibilities between its existing sub-committees (e.g. Subcommittee on Animal Health Laboratory Standards and the Subcommittee on Emergency Animal Diseases) and the National Aquatic Animal Health-Technical Working Group (NAAH-TWG).

NEED

AAHC was unique amongst the committees within the Primary Industries Ministerial Council structure in that it includes industry representation. Under the new institutional arrangements, aquatic industries will no longer have direct engagement on the development and implementation of aquatic animal health policies and programs.

Therefore the need for this project is the very real threat of having no representation in the development of aquatic animal health and biosecurity policy. Industry input in to terrestrial animal health and biosecurity policy development is provided by AHA. No such organisation exists for aquatic animals.

OBJECTIVES

1. To facilitate the formation of a National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group

METHODS

A meeting was held in Melbourne on Wednesday 25 March. The agenda for the meeting is at Appendix 1.

RESULTS/DISCUSSION

Participants acknowledged the diverse nature of aquatic animal industries. An industry reference group would assist AHC to maintain engagement with aquatic animal industries. Industry representatives could also maintain interaction with AHC by liaising with their local Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), as all state/territory CVO's are AHC members.

Participants sought clarification on how an industry reference group will interface with AHC on issues affecting aquatic industries. For terrestrial animal industries, engagement is largely through AHA, which has broad industry membership. AHC does welcome direct industry representation at AHC meetings on specific issues of particular interest to industry groups. In addition to these existing vehicles, for aquatic animal issues a link could be made through a member of AHC who acts as a champion for aquatic animal health issues and attends NAAHIRG meetings. Ron Glanville offered to take on such a role if required.

For Recfish Australia, a diverse range of issues are of importance including aspects of aquatic animal health. Recfish priority issues include bait and berley; Didymo; and water pollution caused by pesticides and chemicals. Resources for Recfish are limited so engagement would only be possible for priority issues.

Members queried NAAH-TWG's role and decision making responsibility under the new arrangements. NAAH-TWG's role would be to provide advice to AHC - it would not have a decision-making role. Depending on the nature and scope of any issue, NAAH-TWG may need to consult with an industry reference group before it puts issues forward to AHC.

In the absence of an AHA-type body for aquatic animal health a range of programs have been delivered through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) - Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram. The subprogram was established through a federal government budget initiative. The subprogram made funds available to build arrangements for the aquatic animal sector (e.g. diagnostics, AQUAVETPLAN) in order to bring it more into line with the terrestrial animal sector.

With the proposed institutional changes, industries need to decide if they want to progress issues collectively through an industry reference group or individually by other means.

BENEFITS AND ADOPTION

All participating industry members agreed to form NAAHIRG to collectively deal with the aquatic animal health issues.

The formation of this group will provide a mechanism for the aquatic industries to have input into animal health policy.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Unfortunately the newly formed NAAHIRG has limited resources to meet regularly. However there is considerable good will amongst the members to meet on an ad hoc basis to deal with aquatic animal health issues.

Since the meeting the National Aquaculture Council on behalf of the NAAHIRG has begun discussions with Animal Health Australia to investigate the aquatic industries becoming members.

PLANNED OUTCOMES

The planned outcomes as stated in the application were

The formation of the National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group will enable the aquatic animal sectors to provide input into the consultation and policy development processes for aquatic animal health. The beneficiaries will be each of the sectors and their members who, if the NAAHIRG is operating and functioning well, will feel little impact or will be able to adapt to the impacts of policy in a timely manner.

This process is on-going and the NAAHIRG will be an essential component in the development of national aquatic animal health policy.

CONCLUSION

The result of the meeting was the formation of the National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group to meet on ad hoc basis to deal with aquatic animal health issues.

APPENDICES

Meeting Agenda

Meeting to discuss possible formation of:-

National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group (NAAHIRG)

Melbourne airport – Wednesday 25th March 2009

Venue: Qantas meeting rooms (opposite Gate 1 of Domestic terminal)

Time: 9:00 am to 1:00pm (latest)

Invited attendees:

Craig Foster	Chair National Aquaculture Council (for Aquaculture sector)
Neil Stump	CEO Tas Aquaculture Council (for Harvest Fisheries sector)
Brett McCallum	EO Pearl Producers Assn. (By ☎ for Harvest Fisheries sector)
Len Olyott	CEO Recfish Australia (for Recreational Fisheries sector)
Jared Patrick	CEO Bay Group (for Ornamental Fish sector)
Mark Crane	AAHL CSIRO LI (Leader FRDC AAH Sub-prog)
Ron Glanville	Chair AAHC (and Biosecurity, QDPI)
Rob Rahaley	Chair Animal Health Committee (and CVO SA)
Bill Scanlan	AHC Secretariat (DAFF PIAPH)
Ingo Ernst	AAHC Secretariat (DAFF OCVO)
Sridevi Embar-Gopinath	AAHC Secretariat (DAFF OCVO)
Pheroze Jungalwalla	EO Tas Salmonid Growers Assn. (NAC, AAHC, & AAHSp)

Agenda:

1. Welcome & introduction	Pheroze Jungalwalla
2. Background to changes to AAHC	Ron Glanville / Rob Rahaley
3. Industry perspective	Industry representatives
4. Discussion and Action plan	All
5. Any Other Business	TBA
6. Wrap-up	Pheroze Jungalwalla

Meeting Minutes

National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group NAAHIRG - 1 Melbourne, 25 March 2009 Draft Minutes

Participants

Pheroze Jungalwalla, Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association (NAAHIRG Chair)
Brett McCallum, Pearl Producers Association (for harvest fisheries sector)
Jared Patrick, Bay Group (for ornamental fish sector)
Len Olyott, CEO Recfish Australia (for recreational fisheries sector)
Craig Foster, Chair National Aquaculture Council (for aquaculture sector)
Ron Glanville, AAHC Chair
Rob Rahaley, AHC Chair
Mark Crane, FRDC Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram
Bill Scanlan DAFF, (AHC Secretariat)
Ingo Ernst, DAFF-OCVO (AAHC Secretariat)
Sridevi Embar-Gopinath, DAFF-OCVO (AAHC Secretariat)

Apologies

Neil Stump, CEO Tasmanian Seafood Industries Council
--

Agenda

Item no.	Topic
1	Introductory remarks
2	Background on changes to institutional arrangements for aquatic animal health
3	Industry perspective
4	Discussion and action plan
5	Other business

AGENDA ITEMS

Item 1. Introductory remarks

Meeting opened at 9.00 am.

Pheroze Jungalwalla (NAAHIRG Chair) opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

Pheroze advised participants that Brett McCallum, would join the meeting from WA through teleconference for item 4.

Apologies:

Neil Stump, CEO Tasmanian Seafood Industries Council

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss:

- Given the disbanding of Aquatic Animal Health Committee (AAHC), how the aquatic animal industry (namely the Aquaculture, Harvest fishery, Recreational fishery, and Ornamental fish sectors) could interface with the Animal Health Committee (AHC) on aquatic animal health policy issues in the future.
- Whether forming an industry reference group would be the best option for the aquatic animal industry under the circumstances.

Item 2. Background on changes to institutional arrangements for aquatic animal health

Ron Glanville (AAHC Chair) provided a brief background on changes to institutional arrangements for aquatic animal health.

The National Biosecurity Committee (NBC) has decided (30 July 2008 meeting) to disband Aquatic Animal Health Committee (AAHC) and transfer aquatic animal health public policy and government decision making to the AHC from 1 July 2009.

AAHC is unique among the committees within the Primary Industries Ministerial Council structure in that it includes industry representation. Under the new institutional arrangements, aquatic industries will no longer have direct engagement on the development and implementation of aquatic animal health policies and programs.

Industry members of AAHC met with Animal Health Australia (AHA) on 22 October 2008 to explore the possibility of aquatic animal industries joining AHA; however, this was not considered feasible at the time.

AAHC held an extraordinary meeting on 5 December 2008 to consider transitional arrangements. At this meeting, it was proposed that the first meeting of an industry reference group be held in March 2009.

AHC had a strategic planning meeting in February 2009. At the meeting, AHC discussed how to manage its new aquatic animal health responsibilities; for example, the division of responsibilities between its existing sub-committees (e.g. Subcommittee on Animal Health Laboratory Standards and the

Subcommittee on Emergency Animal Diseases) and the National Aquatic Animal Health-Technical Working Group (NAAH-TWG).

Item 3. Industry perspective

Pheroze Jungalwalla asked participants to share their expectations of an industry reference group.

Participants acknowledged the diverse nature of aquatic animal industries. An industry reference group would assist AHC to maintain engagement with aquatic animal industries. Industry representatives could also maintain interaction with AHC by liaising with their local Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), as all state/territory CVO's are AHC members.

Participants sought clarification on how an industry reference group will interface with AHC on issues affecting aquatic industries. For terrestrial animal industries, engagement is largely through AHA, which has broad industry membership. AHC does welcome direct industry representation at AHC meetings on specific issues of particular interest to industry groups. In addition to these existing vehicles, for aquatic animal issues a link could be made through a member of AHC who acts as a champion for aquatic animal health issues and attends NAAHIRG meetings. Ron Glanville offered to take on such a role if required.

For Recfish Australia, a diverse range of issues are of importance including aspects of aquatic animal health. Recfish priority issues include bait and berley; Didymo; and water pollution caused by pesticides and chemicals. Resources for Recfish are limited so engagement would only be possible for priority issues.

Members queried NAAH-TWG's role and decision making responsibility under the new arrangements. NAAH-TWG's role would be to provide advice to AHC - it would not have a decision-making role. Depending on the nature and scope of any issue, NAAH-TWG may need to consult with an industry reference group before it puts issues forward to AHC.

In the absence of an AHA-type body for aquatic animal health a range of programs have been delivered through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) - Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram. The subprogram was established through a federal government budget initiative. The subprogram made funds available to build arrangements for the aquatic animal sector (e.g. diagnostics, AQUAVETPLAN) in order to bring it more into line with the terrestrial animal sector.

With the proposed institutional changes, industries need to decide if they want to progress issues collectively through an industry reference group or individually by other means.

All participating industry members agreed to form NAAHIRG to collectively deal with the aquatic animal health issues.

Item 4. Discussion and action plan

Members discussed the following issues under this item:

Consultation and representation of NAAHIRG to AHC

NAAHIRG issues

AHA membership

Consultation and representation of NAAHIRG to AHC:

Participants discussed how the industry reference group might engage with AHC. There would be no opportunity for membership of AHC; however, industry representatives could attend specific items on the AHC agenda or AHC industry forums. Rob Rahaley invited the aquatic industry members to attend the next AHC meeting to be held on 11-13 May 2009 in Ballina, NSW. It was suggested that NAAHIRG could submit a paper during this meeting describing the NAAHIRG, its terms of reference and mode of operation.

Action 1. Bill Scanlan to send meeting details to NAAHIRG chair, Pheroze Jungalwalla

Action 2. AAHC secretariat to draft NAAHIRG minutes and circulate to meeting participants.

Action 3. AAHC secretariat to assist NAAHIRG Chair to develop a report including its terms of reference and mode of operation for submission to the May 2009 meeting of AHC.

NAAHIRG issues

Participants further discussed NAAHIRG priority issues, terms of reference and its membership that were identified by industry members during the AAHC#16 meeting on 5 December 2008.

Brett McCallum joined the meeting through teleconference for this item.

Priority issues

Participants discussed priority issues that could be addressed by an IRG. These included:

AHA membership

future consultation with AHC

aquatic EADRA including compensation issues

bait and berley

translocation

Terms of Reference (TORs)

Participants considered the NAAHIRG TORs that was suggested during the AAHC#16 meeting. These included:

identify aquatic animal health and biosecurity issues affecting the national aquatic animal sectors

provide policy advice to AHC as appropriate

provide the key pathway for communication between industry sectors and government at the national level.

A fourth item, "undertake advocacy for members on aquatic animal health issues" was added to the terms of reference.

Membership

Industry participants agreed to NAAHIRG membership, which included:

Pheroze Jungalwalla (for Aquaculture & as Interim Chair)

Brett McCallum (for Harvest fisheries sector)

Jared Patrick (for Ornamental fish sector)

Len Olyott (for Recreational fisheries sector)

Craig Foster (for National Aquaculture Council)

The possible membership by other sectors (e.g. abalone and mussels) was raised. NAC does not represent mussel fisheries.

Participants agreed to nominate Pheroze Jungalwalla as NAAHIRG Interim Chair.

It was agreed that the following government members be requested to attend future NAAHIRG meetings as observers:

Mark Crane (FRDC Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram)

Ron Glanville: to provide a link between AHC and NAAHIRG.

Mode of operation

Participants discussed the following issues:

Reference group formal name: Industry members agreed on 'National Aquatic Animal Health Industry Reference Group' as the formal name for the reference group. The agreed abbreviation is NAAHIRG.

Secretariat support for NAAHIRG: Ingo Ernst informed participants that DAFF could provide secretariat support for the initial meeting; however, a commitment to ongoing support could not be made at this time.

Future NAAHIRG meetings and travel funding: AHC holds two face to face meetings each year. Future NAAHIRG meetings should be arranged in accordance with the schedule for AHC, NBC and PISC meetings. Industry members agreed to self fund their travel to attend the NAAHIRG face-to-face meetings, where possible. Business would also be conducted by teleconference and out-of-session.

AHA membership:

Participants agreed that for any discussion of the relative merits of joining AHA, it would be beneficial to have Mike Bond (CEO of AHA) join by teleconference. Mike Bond joined the meeting by teleconference at 11.15am.

Mike Bond provided some background information on AHA:

AHA is a not-for-profit public company established by the Australian, state and territory governments and major national livestock industry organisations.

The board of directors of AHA is skills based.

AHA has about 20 staff members and approximately 50 programs through partnerships with stakeholders including the Australian, state and territory governments, CSIRO and education sectors.

AHA manages a number of national programs related to the national animal health system including maintaining the emergency animal disease response

agreement (EADRA), managing AUSVETPLAN, and organising training programs.

AHA is represented on AHC (as a non-voting participant) and is a co-partner on the Australian Biosecurity CRC.

AHA has a range of options in its membership. The associate membership of AHA is a non-voting membership.

Some advantages of joining AHA were discussed including:

representation on a range of committees

the possibility of working on a deed arrangement, as AHA is the host institution for the EADRA

the possibility of a project officer being placed within AHA

synergy with terrestrial animal health programs

facilities available through AHA such as administrative services.

Associate membership was considered an appropriate level of engagement in the first instance and, although entitlements would be limited, this would provide a mechanism to formalise a relationship.

In the longer-term increased allocation of resources to aquatic animal health would require elevating aquatic animal health issues into the AHA work program and securing funds for those projects.

Mike Bond proposed that he is willing to provide a briefing on these discussions to the AHA board at its board meeting to be held on 8 April 2009.

Industry members agreed that joining AHA is worth considering, as AHA already has a well defined and accepted structure. There may be resources available from some aquatic sectors to fund AHA associate membership, if this type of membership is considered suitable.

Action 4. NAAHIRG agreed to examine the various avenues involved in joining AHA.

Actions arising from NAAHIRG#1 Meeting			
Action No.	Description	Who	Progress
	Bill Scanlan to send meeting details to NAAHIRG chair, Pheroze Jungalwalla.	Bill Scanlan	
	AAHC secretariat to draft NAAHIRG minutes and circulate to meeting participants.	AAHC secretariat / NAAHIRG Chair	
	AAHC secretariat to assist NAAHIRG Chair to develop a report including its terms of reference and mode of operation for submission to the May 2009 meeting of AHC.	AAHC secretariat / NAAHIRG Chair	
	NAAHIRG agreed to examine the various avenues involved in joining AHA .	NAAHIRG	

Participants contact details

Constituency	Participant	Agency	Phone	Fax	Email
NAAHIRG Chair, Aquaculture finfish	Pheroze Jungalwalla	Tasmanian Salmonid Growers Association	03 6214 0550	03 6224 6255	jungalwalla@tsga.com.au
harvest fisheries	Brett McCallum	Pearl Producers Association	08 9244 2933	08 9244 2934	Brett.McCallum@pearlproducersaustralia.com
ornamental fish	Jared Patrick	Bay Group	07 3203 2000	07 3203 2100	jared@bayfish.com.au
recreational fisheries	Len Olyott	Recfish Australia	For teleconference 02 9850 6191 0418 499 322	07 3356 1111 (Office Phone & Fax)	ceo@recfish.com.au
Aquaculture finfish	Craig Foster	National Aquaculture Council	02 6281 0383 0407 776439	02 6281 0438	nac@aquaculture.org.au
	Neil Stump	Tasmanian Seafood Industries Council	03 6224 2332	03 6224 2321	neilstump@tsic.org.au
AAHC Chair	Ron Glanville	Biosecurity Queensland, Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries	07 3239 3525	07 3239 6994	ron.glanville@dpi.qld.gov.au
AHC Chair	Rob Rahaley	Primary Industries and Resources SA	08 8207 7970	08 8207 7852	rahaley.rob@saugov.sa.gov.au
FRDC Aquatic Animal Health Subprogram	Mark Crane	CSIRO Australian Animal Health Laboratory	03 5227 5118	03 5227 5555	mark.crane@csiro.au
AHC Secretariat	Bill Scanlan	Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health, DAFF	02 6272 5103	02 6272 5593	Bill.Scanlan@daff.gov.au
AAHC Secretariat	Ingo Ernst	Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health, DAFF	02 6272 5615	02 6272 3150	ingo.ernst@daff.gov.au
AAHC Secretariat	Sridevi Embar-Gopinath	Product Integrity, Animal and Plant Health, DAFF	02 6272 2490	02 6272 3150	sridevi.embargopinath@daff.gov.au