



Wildlife Health Australia Inc Annual General Meeting

Date 20th November, 2014

Place Sydney Institute of Marine Science, Mosman, NSW

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robyn Martin (**RM** – Chair of the IMC) Hume Field (**HF** -IMC), Ian Roth (**IR** - IMC), Chris Bunn (**CB** - IMC), Chris Hibbard (**CH** -IMC), Hugh Millar (**HM** – IMC), Keren Cox-Witton, Emma Homes (EH), Rodney Vile, Mark Hill, Edla Arzey, George Arzey, Andrew Peters, Robert Johnson, Pam Whiteley, Chris Niebuhr, Andrea Reiss.

OBSERVERS - Rupert Woods (**RW**) (*Chief Executive Officer*), Karen Magee (**KM**) (*Public Officer/Minutes*), Tiggy Grillo, David Phalen, Graham Wilson, Greg Curran, Bill Matley (BM)

APOLOGIES: Lee Skerratt (**LS** - IMC), Sam Gilchrist, Phil Hansbro, Rebecca Williams, Simon Robinson, Jasmin Hufschmid, Kristin Warren, Deborah Pergolotti, Rod Andrewartha, Wayne Boardman, Cass Wittwer, Amy Amato, Kevin de Witte, Kathleen Plowman, David Blyde, Mark Schipp, Clive McMahon, Celia Dickason, Richard Irvine, Peter Irwin, Brendan Cowled, Richard Jakob-Hoff, Silvia Ban, Justin Clarke, Larry Vogelnest, Lyndel Post, Katrina Daniels, Tania Bishop, Marg Peachey, Nick Clemann, Petra Hanke, James Harris, Lance Sanders, Karrie Rose, Renate Velzeboer, Ian Temby, Rebecca Williams, Rosemary McFarlane, Frank Doughty, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (TAS), Animal Health Australia

MINUTES

Agenda Item:	Issue/Topic	Background/Points of Discussion	Resolution / Actions	Name
1	Welcome and Apologies	<p>Robyn welcomed the Interim Management Committee (IMC), members and observers, and thanked everyone for attending the annual general meeting. The aim of holding this annual general meeting is to bring together the Wildlife Health Australia Inc (WHA) stakeholders, and use this meeting as a forum for engagement.</p> <p>Robyn noted the apologies, including Lee Skerratt who is a member of the IMC.</p> <p>The Public Officer confirmed that a quorum was present and no proxies</p>		RM

		<p>were received.</p> <p>Members of the IMC introduced themselves.</p>		
2	CEO Report	<p>RW recognised the Australian Government and the Department of Agriculture (DA), including the Caring for our Country program that has supplied the funding for setting up of WHA. He thanked RM for her support and guidance as chair of the IMC during the transition.</p> <p>A brief verbal report was provided on WHA activities for 2013/14.</p> <p>Most of the past year was spent working on the transition from the Australian Wildlife Health Network (AWHN) to WHA, and developing the necessary operating frameworks. WHA has now moved from Taronga Zoo to Georges Heights in Mosman, Sydney, and formally started operations on 1st July, 2014. Membership has been established, with AWHN subscribers formally accepted as Associate Members of WHA. Strategic and draft business plans have been developed by the IMC and will be considered by the first elected Management Committee. A hard copy of the draft strategic plan was tabled.</p> <p>Priority activities for WHA for 2014/15 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of the transition of AWHN to WHA, including the election of WHA's first elected independent management committee (this meeting). • Implementation of the marketing and communications strategy. • Continuing to assist Australian governments further develop Australia's animal health surveillance system by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ providing on-going support for the Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) appointed wildlife coordinators ○ continuing to work towards better alignment of wildlife health information and information on production animal diseases ○ continuing to assist Animal Health Australia (AHA) and the 		RW

		<p>states and territories with integration of wildlife activities into the National Significant Disease Investigation (NSDI) Program and provide support for the National Animal Health Information System (NAHIS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ expanding the zoo and sentinel clinic surveillance programs to ensure more complete capture and flow of wildlife health information to the CVO appointed State/Territory WHA Wildlife Coordinators and incorporate these data into reports prepared for Animal Health Surveillance Quarterly (AHSQ) and Animal Health in Australia (AHIA) ○ examining the feasibility of incorporating universities more formally into Australia’s wildlife health information system. A new WHA Project Officer, Sam Gilchrist, has been engaged to work on this activity. <p>Operational priorities will be reviewed by the new Management Committee when they formally take up their positions on the 1st January, 2015.</p>		
3.	Financial Report	<p>The financial report, including the auditors report, was provided to Members with notice of the annual general meeting.</p> <p>As a tier 1 organisation under the Associations Incorporation Act, WHA accounts are subject to audit each year. The auditor, Bill Matley of Crispin and Jeffery was introduced and made available to answer any questions on the financial report.</p> <p>The Chair invited questions or comments. None was received. The Chair put the motion to the floor to accept the WHA 2013/14 Financial Report. The motion was passed on a show of hands, with none against, and none abstaining.</p> <p>BM commented that it has been pleasure to work with WHA staff, and</p>	<p>The WHA Interim Management Committee, and members present:</p> <p>Endorsed the Financial Report, including the auditors report, which was passed on a show of hands.</p>	RW

		thanked staff for their support during the audit process, which had been made easier by involving the auditor in development of financial controls and other policies.		
4.	Vote of Thanks	<p>On behalf of WHA, the Chair extended gratitude and thanks to everyone, past and present, who contributed and supported the AWHN and development of WHA including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • members of the WHA IMC for their work and involvement during the transition • Taronga Conservation Society Australia, who have been integral to the success of AWHN • NSW Department of Primary Industries for their support from the beginning • the DA, in particular Lyndel Post, Chris Bunn, and Rachel Wicks • staff of WHA for their support and patience during the transition, and to KM for taking on the role of Public Officer. 		
5.	Announcement and Welcome of the first elected Management Committee	<p>Election of Management Committee members was undertaken by a postal vote in November. The new Management Committee was announced by the Chair as follows:</p> <p>DA Representative: Mark Schipp.</p> <p>AHC Representative: Ian Roth</p> <p>Individual Member Representative: Hume Field</p> <p>Organisational Member Positions: Wildlife Diseases Association Australasia (representative Andrew Peters) Zoo and Aquarium Association (representative Chris Hibbard) Wildlife Health Surveillance Victoria (representative Pam</p>	<p>The WHA Interim Management Committee, and members present:</p> <p>Welcomed the new Management Committee.</p>	

		Whiteley) RM, the IMC, and the members and observers present welcomed the members of the new Management Committee.		
6.	Marketing and Communications Strategy	<p>Emma Homes, who has been contracted to provide a Marketing and Communication Strategy, provided a presentation updating the group on progress to date and approach including: information about the plan, key findings from the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis, and provided the following objectives, key recommendations, and first year activities.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet communications needs of WHA members, including potential members • build awareness of the organisation and what it does, within WHA members, and down the track with ‘ally’ organisations and end beneficiaries • advocate for improved wildlife health research, policy and surveillance in Australia on behalf of members • retain funding support from DA beyond 2018 and make a case for funding from other sources prior to 2018. <p>Key Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • utilise the networks of organisational and funding members, along with specialist publications, to promote awareness of the new organisation and its role and value in the first year of operations • implement targeted membership campaigns each year to grow the influence and impact of the organisation. Campaigns to focus on younger demographic, or particular state, or government department where WHA is seen as being under represented • build a small collection of case studies that can illustrate the 		

role of WHA and the importance of wildlife health to livestock health and trade, human health, and biodiversity. Make these available on the website and through presentations.

First year focus:

- engagement with Departments of Health and Environment
- meet the needs of existing members and recruit new members
- media training for staff and develop a media engagement policy.

Discussion followed:

Promotion of Membership

There was a question raised about promotion of membership to individuals, funders and members. EH emphasised that it was important that we could articulate membership benefits.

Branding

WHA branding was raised. It was suggested that a branding workshop would be beneficial. This will be something for the new Management Committee to consider.

Engagement

The importance of engagement with Health and Environment departments was highlighted, and will be part of the strategy for WHA.

Media

A process for engagement with the media and advertising is currently being developed. The new Management Committee will need to consider this.

Media Representation

It was suggested that this was a gap area and there is no single lead organisation providing information to the media and the public on wildlife

		<p>health. It was noted, however, that the AVA does a fair amount of media about wildlife and wildlife diseases because there is no one else to do it. A quick response is usually required in these situations.</p> <p>WHA have kept a low profile over the last 12 years and emphasised the good work of other groups. The message is that the country needs someone to speak for wildlife not just to the media, but also to provide statements through other organisations. From the CEO's perspective, the main area of concern is managing risk, moderation of what is disseminated, being mindful that we serve the members and need to know what their position is. There needs to be consideration if WHA should step into this media lead role.</p> <p>A suggestion was that there could be a role for WHA as the expertise behind the 'talking head'. Positioning WHA alongside AHA and PHA was also considered important, and WHA should be seen as an important part of the system, although WHA shouldn't expect to be more than a niche player in the bigger picture.</p> <p>There is currently a national communication network for Biosecurity. This network works to align media and public statements. There may be opportunities for WHA to engage and contribute to this network for mutual benefit.</p> <p>The main role for the new Management Committee is to set the strategy, and look at the risks. WHA could consider being involved in the good news stories. We need to make sure we can maintain the existing funding, and seek expansion into other areas of funding.</p> <p>WHA could consider riding on the back of the larger member organisations that have more resources. WHA could be the source of analysis and ensure we are credited and our contributors acknowledged. There is the potential for media clauses that will bind organisations together as part of collaborative arrangements such as MoUs.</p>		
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7.	Ebola virus – here and there	<p>Invited speaker, Dr Hume Field, provided a presentation titled <i>Ebola Virus – here and there</i>. HF discussed the current Ebola outbreak from an ecosystem health perspective, and gave an insight into regional Ebola virus surveillance in bats.</p> <p>The presentation was very well received and the chair, members and observers thanked HF for his presentation.</p>		
9.	Close	<p>RM closed the first annual general meeting at 3.30pm and thanked members and observers for participating. RM wished WHA the best of luck moving forward.</p>		
9. Close				