

clarity in the roles and responsibilities of individuals and organisations across all sectors that work with animals, consistency across Government and State legislation, and widespread community understanding of the importance of good animal welfare. The Strategy seeks to encompass all sentient animals, captive and wild, and emphasises the value placed on good welfare in Australia. A desire for excellent practices to be researched and employed, and for these to be recognised worldwide, is clearly evident. The Strategy is to form a national foundation on which future policies and improvements can be made, and 25 'areas of activity' are outlined, under three main goals.

Goal 1 is to "achieve an enhanced national approach and commitment to ensure high standards of animal welfare based on a concise outline of current processes". This includes the implementation of standard codes of practice which are to be employed by animal welfare units in each jurisdiction. Emphasis on consultative processes in policy development demonstrates the commitment of the NCCAW to the idea that stakeholders should have 'ownership' of the AAWS.

Goal 2 is to "achieve sustainable improvements in animal welfare based on national and international benchmarks, scientific evaluation and research, taking into account changes in the whole of community standards" and this focuses on strengthening what is already in place in terms of legislation. Scientific research is of utmost importance, and the identification of research opportunities and the funding and investment required to support them is a further area of activity. Other areas look at assessing Australia's animal welfare in terms of national statistics, and contributing to international debate on animal welfare by promoting their current standards to international bodies, as well as continuing involvement with the World Organisation for Animal Health.

Goal 3 is to "achieve effective communication, education and training across the whole community to promote an improved understanding of animal welfare" and here emphasis is placed on the education of all those involved directly with animals through their work, as well as throughout the general community, through effective distribution of animal welfare information, and the inclusion of animal welfare education in appropriate curricula.

The Strategy looks at animal welfare in a holistic way, placing it in the context of both science and ethics, and recognising that cultural and societal values and economics also play major roles in defining what makes good animal welfare practicable. The value of animal life in Australia is described with reference not only to livestock, research and companionship, but also to the history and heritage of the country, the value of particular animals to some indigenous groups, and the growing value of wildlife in tourism. One of the first areas that PISC is going to provide guidance on is how implementation of the Strategy may have economic impacts, and how any issues such as these can be addressed. Having outlined its vision, goals and objectives, benefits and implementation, the last section of the Strategy describes the existing animal welfare legislation in Australia.

Australian Animal Welfare Strategy. Published by the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, 2005. Available online at <http://www.daff.gov.au/content/output.cfm?ObjectID=3C9C4ACE-B85B-465C-9C508C771F08C87E>

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Australian Model Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cattle

The first edition of the Australian Model Code of Practice for Cattle was published in 1992. The aims of the second edition, which incorporates the latest knowledge in this field, are stated to be:

- "to promote humane and considerate treatment of cattle, and the use of good husbandry practices to improve the welfare of cattle in all types of farming enterprises";
- "to inform all people responsible for the care and management of cattle about their responsibilities";
- and "to set a minimum industry standard by defining acceptable cattle management practices".

The book is set out clearly, with aspects of cattle care in many farming environments dealt with comprehensively and methodically. There is some unavoidable repetition, ensuring that by referring to just one section one would be given full information about the topic. In many cases only general guidance is given, and details about where specific information can be obtained for particular age, size or breed classes of cattle is provided. Occasions where a veterinarian's advice or expertise must be sought, and where legislation varies between States, are also highlighted. In all cases unacceptable treatment or levels of care are made clear. For example acceptable and unacceptable use of goads and appropriate and inappropriate tethering practices are outlined.

The book begins with 'Basic Welfare Needs', with adequate conditions regarding food and water, space and social contact, and protection from disease and predation being outlined. It is stated that 'the importance of competent stockmanship in animal welfare cannot be over-emphasised', and this sentiment is reiterated throughout the book in a number of sections where it is underlined that good welfare relies to a great extent on the capabilities of those responsible. This can take the form of early diagnosis of health problems, good practice in transportation, or methods of humane destruction, for example.

The second section looks at 'Intensive Cattle Systems', providing extensive guidance on the 'Australian Code of Practice for the Welfare of Cattle in Beef Feedlots'. Management issues such as personnel responsibilities and training, cattle handling procedures, and transportation are described. Health inspection and management is looked at next, with details of which aspects of a feedlot should be under regular surveillance. Feed levels, feeding frequency, and diet are detailed in the 'feed management' subsection. The next, on yard management, concerns the size and physical design of the cattle pens, including flooring and bedding, water troughs, and drainage. The final subsection relates to climatic conditions and protection from climatic extremes.

Good welfare for the 'Artificial Rearing of Calves' describes how they need contact with other calves, and how much space they require, as well as instructions on feeding from birth.

The next section on 'Cattle Handling Facilities, Mustering and Yarding' provides details on how the physical environment should be designed and maintained to minimise the chance of distress or injury. It also looks at how best to move and handle cattle.

A lengthy section on 'Management Practices' provides guidelines on acceptable treatment of cattle with regards to milking, castration, identification, dehorning, tail docking, mating, calving and weaning, and the marketing of bobby calves. The 'Health' section discusses vaccinations and culling in order to maintain a healthy herd, and outlines treatment protocols to follow if a sick individual is identified. The 'Feral Cattle' section looks at a number of reasons why these cattle need to be controlled, with regards to the welfare of a herd, and methods to minimise distress if feral cattle are to be incorporated into a herd. Lastly, the 'Humane Destruction' section describes the two main methods — firearms and the captive-bolt pistol — and how care can be taken to minimise distress. Two appendices provide further information about water quantity and quality, and also look at feeding more closely, but guidelines are generalised as the provision of suitable food and water will be context-specific.

Model Code of Practice For the Welfare of Animals. Cattle, Second Edition. Primary Industries Standing Committee Report — No. 85 (2005). Published by CSIRO Publishing. 36 pp paperback (ISBN 0 643 09116 5) Available to order from the CSIRO Publishing website at a cost of AU\$20.00; <http://www.publish.csiro.au/pid/4831.htm>

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The UK Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate publishes first Annual Report

The 2004 Annual Report of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate is the first of its kind, providing extensive and detailed information on the work carried out by the Inspectors who ensure that all scientific and medical research involving animals in the UK is carried out in accordance with the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. Until now less information has been available on how welfare standards are maintained, but to demonstrate a 'commitment to openness' this has now been made public. A high level of detail is given regarding how Inspectors spend their time, in what areas they give advice, and how visits are carried out, as well as additional activities.

Details about the twenty-nine Inspectors themselves reveal a wealth of expertise with 110 academic degrees and specialist qualifications between them. Despite disparate backgrounds in all fields of medical and veterinary science, both academic and commercial, all assessments are based on the same guiding principles to ensure consistency is maintained.

The Inspectorate's primary areas of work are advising on license applications (for both personal and project licenses) and visiting licensed establishments. It is noted in the Report that projects seeking licenses are becoming increasingly complex, requiring increased research and consideration. With thousands of personal licence applications, and even higher numbers of amendment requests and reviews, Inspectors have on average 35 hours per year per establishment in which to assess the validity of the proposed program of work. Only a minority of applications were approved in 2004 without further information being requested. The Report outlines how applications are scrutinised and all aspects of the work questioned, with alternative methods constantly being explored to uphold the principle of the 'Three Rs'. Where non-animal alternatives are not an option, the level of sentience of the proposed animal is questioned, and the potential benefits, experimental procedures, and the abilities and experience of those applying for the licence must be judged by the Inspector.

The importance of building good relationships with the people involved is emphasised in the Report, as the Inspectors can have a direct influence on how licensees carry out their work. Persuading licensees to adopt better welfare practices is one of the benefits of these good relationships, and examples are given of instances where improvements over and above the terms of a license were implemented in this context. A complementary role of the Inspectors is to educate and disseminate information with a view to improving welfare standards generally, and one aspect of this is the reporting of failed methods — which are often absent from the scientific literature — so as to inform licensees of potentially wasteful research approaches, and thus help to avoid unnecessary suffering of the animals in question.

Visits and their preparation are meant to take up about 40% of an Inspector's time, and their purpose is to ensure that licensees are abiding by the terms of their license. Infringements of these terms are generally rare, but where infringements do occur these are reported to the Secretary of State and suitable action is then taken. This always takes into consideration the extent of the infringement and how much suffering was caused as a result, and in a number of cases administrative error with no harm to the animals involved was identified as the cause.

In addition to the above, the Report describes various other events and initiatives that the Inspectorate has been involved in during 2004. These include participation in the Home Office Primate Stakeholders Forum; a Parliamentary Seminar on Animal Experimentation; and providing technical input to the work of the Animal Procedures Committee which advises government ministers, among many others. At the end of the Report details of non-statutory activities of the Inspectors illustrate the extent to which they have been active in representing the Inspectorate, or the Home Office, at numerous national and international conferences, and providing advice to external groups.