# Minutes of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Farm Animal Welfare Advisory Council

**Venue:** Fitzwilliam Hotel, Dublin

## Date: 10th February 2005

Present: P Fottrell (Chairperson), T Doyle, J Cahill, T O’Donnell, S Foley,

M A Bartlett, B Earley, K Kinsella, S O’Laoide, A McCarthy,

J Stack, A Hanlon, D Sparrow, B Bent, M Blake,

Teresa O’Halloran (Secretary).

**Apologies:** C Connor**,** D Deane**.**

# PRESENTATION ON RITUAL SLAUGHTER WITHOUT STUNNING

Council received a presentation from Mr Ali Saleem, Islamic Cultural Centre, Dublin. A question and answer session followed. The Chairman invited Mr Saleem to submit any further information/documentation which would assist the work of Council in this area, adding that he would welcome the opportunity to further engage with Mr Saleem or any of his colleagues on the matter.

IFA stated that they would be opposed to any recommendation going forward from Council advising a ban on ritual slaughter without stunning. Chairman indicated that Council could form a view aimed at improving animal welfare in this situation and suggested that perhaps some of the scientific aspects mentioned in presentations received so far might be referred to the Scientific Advisory Council on Animal Health and Welfare for an opinion. Opinions would then be attached to any letter submitted to Minister from Council.

It was agreed that the Council would ascertain views of other EU countries regarding this item, including views from advisory bodies equivalent to the Council.

CIWF requested that the Council obtain figures showing the number of animals slaughtered by ritual slaughter without stunning in Ireland.

IFA indicated that they would provide information on ritual slaughter from New Zealand as agreed at the last meeting in the near future.

# MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Agreed.

# MATTERS ARISING

Chairman, on behalf of Council tendered sympathies to B. Earley on the death of her mother.

The Council agreed to the Chair’s suggestion that the letter to the Minister on fish farming should be accompanied by all the submissions so that the Minister gets all views.

# WORK PROGRAMME

**Farm Animal Welfare Education/Guidelines:** The Chair of this group stated that the *Animal Welfare Guidelines for Horses, Ponies and Donkeys* were near completion. Chairman expressed his gratitude to Chair and his committee. It was agreed that an invitation would issue to Minister for Agriculture and Food, to officially launch this publication.

Chair also reported to Council on meeting held on 4th February 2005 of expanded Education Group expanded to include a member of CIWF and IHWT. The meeting had been convened to discuss issues particular to the welfare of horses. Council discussed problems including horse welfare and disposal/export of horses. Chair agreed to draft a letter on behalf of the Council, to be circulated to all Council members, highlighting areas of concern in this area to issue to the Minister for Agriculture and Food.

**Working Group on Co-operation (EWS):**

The Chair of this group reported that no meetings had taken place since November 2004 however it was intended to convene a meeting in early March. Concern was expressed by some members that as far as possible the same criteria be used countrywide in relation to the movement and disposal of animals from farms and on the interpretation and implementation of Protocol document by the individual groups involved at local level. There were also some comments on the usefulness of engaging Private Veterinary Practioners re. early identification of potential problem cases. There is a need to be more pro-active in identifying cases at the very earliest stage. Chairman asked that views and concerns of Council be conveyed at next EWS meeting.

**Working Group on Medicines:**

The Working Group Chair of this group reported that they had now completed their work and a report was ready for presentation to the Minister for Agriculture and Food. A discussion of the report entitled ‘*Report on the availability of veterinay medicines in Ireland*’ took place. Chairman stated that members of Council should take ten days to review and respond to the report and any comments received would be forwarded to the Minister. The report is to remain confidential at all times. The Chairman also expressed his sincere gratitude to the Chair and all members of this working group.

# FUR FARMING/DISCUSSION RE. ENABLING LEGISLATION

It had been suggested at the last meeting that Council could take the view that there is a need for DAF to look at the possibility of registering all premises, including rabbit/fox fur farms, pet shops etc. so as to ensure proper standards of animal welfare. S O’Laoide, through the secretary, circulated a number of documents relevant to this item for consideration by Council. He noted that a lot of areas were not governed by any animal welfare legislation and that as a country Ireland needs an Enabling Act to regulate any area falling outside the scope of present Acts, i.e. petshops/control of dogs/certain fur farming enterprises; an Enabling Act would allow Ministers to act as society demands. He felt that there is a need for an inter-Department group to be established to decide who should take responsibility. CIWF sought clarification with regard to minimum animal welfare standards. The Chair said that enabling legislation would in principle allow the Minister to regulate. After that it would be up to the Minister to engage stakeholders etc. and this was outside the remit of the Council. It was agreed that Council would make recommendations regarding enabling legislation to the Minister for Agriculture and Food.

# TRANSPORT OF ANIMALS – TRAINING

Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport and related operations and amending Directives 64/432/EEC, 93/119/EC, Regulation (EC) No 1255/97, was discussed, particularly with regard to the need for transporters/operators to have a certificate of competence. The Regulation comes into effect in January 2007. The need for the provision of training and the possibility of preparing Animal Welfare Guidelines for farmers engaged in transporting animals was also discussed. DAF pointed out that no formal discussions had taken place re. requirement for certificates of competence and felt that there was no imperative to write to the Minister for Agriculture and Food in this regard, however if Council had a view as to how this should be undertaken then they could put it forward. The Chairman stated that he would welcome views of Council. It was agreed to circulate a copy of Council Regulation (EC) 1/2005 to all members.

# ELECTRO-IMMOBILISATION

Council is awaiting report form the Scientific Committee for Animal Health and Welfare. It was agreed to circulate a CIWF document on this topic.

This procedure was mainly used to de-horn mature cattle. IFA stated that the legal obligation is to carry out disbudding within a 14-day period however some breeds of animal did not manifest horns within that time limit. DAF undertook to review the 14-day requirement and to revert to Council. Vet. Irl. stated that there is a need to raise awareness in this area as vets disliked de-horning mature animals.

# PROGRAMME FOR 2005

A general discussion took place on programme.

# AOB

Disbudding calves

CIWF enquired as to the possibilities of encouraging farmers to disbud calves at a very early stage and the introduction on a possible ban on the practice of de-horning mature animals.

Badgers

ISPCA enquired if DAF still engaged in the practice of ensnaring badgers, and if so, would gas not be more acceptable? DAF replied that previous UK experience was that gassing was a less acceptable method of trapping.

A Hanlon, UCD, to circulate, through Secretary, research re. badgers when she completes two papers.

CIWF Trust International Conference, 17-18 March 2005, London

Chairman asked CIWF to give summary report of event to Council at next meeting

UCD 150 Years – Lecture in Animal Welfare, 15 March 2005

Chairman asked that UCD representative provide summary report of event to Council also at next meeting.

P Fottrell reiterated his appreciation to all those who contributed to the work of the FAWAC Working Groups. Chairpersons of these groups thanked P O’Riordan, DAF, for her assistance.

**10. NEXT MEETING**

12th May 2005.