

South Australian Pig Industry Advisory Group

Meeting Summary

Friday 10 February 2006

NOTE: At the time of distribution, the Minister has not approved the outcomes listed in this document. Any misuse of information by individuals or associations will cause this service to be withdrawn.

The meeting commenced at 10:03 am.

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed all PIAG members and guests.

2. Attendance

<i>Robert Berlin (Chair)</i>	<i>Commercial Pig Producer Representative</i>
<i>Christine Sapwell</i>	<i>SAFF Commercial Pig Section Representative</i>
<i>Rod Hamann</i>	<i>Commercial Pig Producer Representative</i>
<i>Peter Brechin</i>	<i>SA PPPI Representative</i>
<i>Alan Fyfe</i>	<i>SABOR Ltd Representative</i>
<i>Jenny McMahon</i>	<i>Commercial Pig Producer Representative</i>
<i>Robert McLean</i>	<i>Commercial Pig Producer Representative</i>
<i>Barry Lloyd</i>	<i>SAFF Commercial Pig Section Representative</i>
<i>Bill Giles</i>	<i>proxy Ministerial Representative (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Trudi Goodwin</i>	<i>Executive Officer, Livestock Advisory Groups (PIRSA)</i>

Guests:

<i>Elena Petrenas</i>	<i>Manager, Livestock Advisory Groups (PIRSA)</i>
<i>Jack Reddin</i>	<i>Veterinary Officer (PIRSA)</i>
<i>David Hamilton</i>	<i>Research Veterinarian, SARDI Livestock Systems</i>
<i>Chris van Dissel</i>	<i>Animal Health Officer (PIRSA)</i>
<i>W. Van Wettre</i>	<i>PHD Student, Roseworthy</i>

3. Apologies

<i>Brian Bartsch</i>	<i>Ministerial Representative (PIRSA)</i>
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4. Confirmation of 27th Meeting Minutes – 19th October 2005

The minutes from the PIAG meeting held on 19th October 2005 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

5. Matters Arising from 27th Meeting Minutes/Actions – 19th October 2005

Minutes

Item 7.1 (Project Updates) - Concern was raised that PIAG should be aware of projects being funded by the Pork Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) in order to minimise duplication in funded projects. In addition, it was requested that the project application be amended to include a statement about how the described project meets the objectives of the Pork Industry Strategic Plan and whether funding has been sourced from any other funding providers.

Meeting Summaries – Members were advised that the Director for Agriculture and Wine, Dr Don Plowman, has approved the distribution of meeting summaries on the understanding that the information is provided for consultative purposes only. To emphasise this, the summary must clearly state that the Minister has not approved the information or recommendations contained in the document.

Members supported the release of the meeting summary based on the joint approval of the Chair and the Minister's Representative.

Action Items (refer to section 7.3)

The action items from the 19th October 2005 meeting were reviewed. Of keynote were the outcomes from the 9 December 2005 PIAG/PIRSA meeting concerning the "Communication and Networking" project, namely:

- Pig Industry News (PIN) will continue and incorporate more promotion of PIAG, advertising and editorial relating to the Pork CRC. Income generated (\$15,000) will be credited to PIRSA's Livestock Industries Group to offset a comparable reduction in PIAG funding.
- Group facilitation and ad-hoc seminars will continue;
- Fax stream will continue, and will be funded by PIRSA Livestock.
- APIQ and "pigs and People" will no longer be funded;
- Education and training will be supported where no alternate source of funding is available;
- Funding to the University of Adelaide for training packages will be re-examined;
- Where ever Pig Industry Fund (PIF) monies are used, this needs to be acknowledged; and
- An article will be published in PIN on the financial support provided by PIAG.

6. Business

6.1 Financial Statement

As at the end of December 2005 producer contributions for the period, was \$90,800, which is \$16,300 above the year to date budget and 55% of the total revenue budget. Other income included interest (\$44,519) and revenue from the sale of SABOR in September 2005. Total income for the period (excluding SABOR) was \$135,319, which is 58% of budgeted total annual revenue.

The only expenditure against the PIF to date is for PIAG incurred expenses (\$2,457.53) and the PPPI Research Leadership project (\$50,000). This latter figure represents the retrospective payment for 2004/2005 as well as the 2005/2006 payment. Total expenditure for the period was \$52,458 – which is \$15,542 less than budgeted year to date figure (\$70,000)

6.2 Risk Management of Feed Grain Purchasing

A key priority within the Pork Industry's Strategic Plan for 2010 is enhancing access to feed grain risk management strategies to provide producers with cost/supply certainty. The "Risk Management of Feed Grain Purchasing" project will consolidate a number of possible approaches raised in a recent paper titled "Feed Grain Demand and Availability for Intensive Livestock In SA" and develop an appropriate training package.

It is expected that the project will improve the efficiency of feed grain access by:

- developing a decision tree to assist in evaluating the benefits of growing various feed grains and agronomic practices;
- investigating the benefits of on-farm grain storage;
- developing farmer to farmer grain marketing/purchase contracts, including prices based on quality; and
- developing a training package and running a pilot program.

With feed constituting 70% of the cost of production, this project will provide pig producers with better tools to access their grain more competitively, which in turn will lead to improved cost competitiveness.

It was requested that this project be left on the table until he had an opportunity to clarify with the Pork CRC their direction and involvement in this area. This was agreed to by PIAG members. They were also advised that no co-funding (such as from the chicken meat, egg or grain industries) had been sought to date, as the project's focus was on the pig industry – it was felt that the project's outcomes might have minimal indirect benefit for the poultry sector. It was suggested that in future, any projects that may benefit the national pig industry or involve multiple livestock industries should demonstrate that they have sought funding from these other sectors before approaching PIAG - members supported this suggestion.

Recommendation

Amend the PIF project application to remind applicants that projects benefiting the wider pig industry, or involving multiple livestock industries, must demonstrate that co-funding from appropriate sources has also been sourced.

6.3 Communication and Networking Strategies Project

The PIAG funded three year project "Communication and Networking Strategies for the SA Pig Industry" is due to cease in June 2006. In response to concerns about services that would disappear under the reduced funding for this project (the total recommended at the 19 August 2005 meeting was \$10,000 – 15,000), a PIAG sub-committee was formed to review industry's communication and training requirements. The sub-committee met at Roseworthy on the 9 December 2005. A description of meeting recommendations is outlined in section 5 of these minutes.

It was agreed that a new three-year funding application for this project would be drafted and submitted for consideration by PIAG as part of the 2006/2007 project cycle. In addition, at the review of the PPPI's Research Leader project application, the applicant will be advised that if G. Pope and/or M. Moore are delivering training modules (including the development of course material), that PIAG will fund RSSA directly for this activity. In the event that this occurs, funding for the PPPI Research Leaders project (currently \$25,000) would be reduced by \$10,000.

6.4 Carcase Trim Variance and Dressing Percentage Project Update

A national teleconference was held two days ago with APL and Aus-Meat to review industry's issue about the dressing percentage formula. It was agreed that as only five Australian abattoirs are accredited to use the Aus-meat language (pigs), an alternate solution is required. APL is looking to convene a national working group (consisting of producers and processors) to progress the review. Currently industry believes that the most equitable solution would be to move the scales to the beginning of the process – though processors believe that could result in higher operational costs. It was suggested that R. Hamann should represent South Australia on this working group.

In light of the calculation issue being reviewed nationally, clarification was sought from PIAG about whether it still wanted SARDI to continue with the calculation study or whether PIAG was happy to liaise with Primo directly about the scale issue. After due consideration, members supported the latter option.

Members considered that the Primo issue could be resolved more rapidly by providing financial assistance to the company. Therefore it was suggested that a project application be sought for further consideration.

Trim Audit Project

Members were advised that AQIS had commissioned Roger Kelly (a pathologist and independent consultant) to undertake an audit of pathology trim practices across several abattoirs. It was originally intended that the audit might be extended depending on the outcome observed. Preliminary feedback however is that no significant differences exist in the plants investigated. Therefore AQIS is not considering expanding the audit. A degree of concern was raised about the audit, as the data collected could be considered subjective.

6.5 Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Legislation Update

The Animal Welfare Legislation meeting was held in Adelaide on 27 January 2006, to discuss issues affecting livestock production in Australia. The list of invitees included South Australian livestock producers, Livestock Advisory Group representatives and other industry stakeholders such as SAFF, the Department of Environment and Heritage and the Australian Veterinary Association.

Presentations provided attendees with an update on what is happening on the international scene in relation to animal welfare and how Australia is responding to ensure that our livestock industries are protected and market access is maintained. On this latter issue, participants were made aware of the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (AAWS) and working group and the importance of working with the livestock sectors to review, and where necessary, update the model welfare codes of practice, as well as standardise legislation across states.

The Department for Environment and Heritage is currently responsible for welfare legislation. Dr Deb Kelly (Manager, Animal Welfare) provided an overview about the process undertaken to review the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (POCTA) 1985*. Minimal discussion occurred about the possibility of PIRSA Animal Health taking on a welfare auditing role for production livestock industries.

Concern was raised within PIAG about whether the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries would support PIRSA Animal Health administering the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* for production livestock.

Initially there was some support for the administration of the POCTA move to PIRSA Animal Health, as dealings with the RSPCA and production livestock enterprises has allegedly demonstrated a lack of expertise in this area. It was acknowledged that the pig industry nationally has invested heavily in QA programs (such as APIQ) partly in response to criticism about perceived industry welfare issues. There are about 460 national pig producers (who produce over 80% of the national pigs) on the APIQ program, though this number is decreasing because of cost (particularly amongst small operators).

Concern was raised about the apparent lack of industry consultation by the AAWS, and that the Pig Welfare Committee does not include any producers.

PIAG members supported the inclusion of a mandatory welfare module in the APIQ program rather than PIRSA Animal Health administering the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* for production livestock.

6.6 Pig Industry Fund Projects

PIAG members considered the priority areas for project funding in 2006/2007. It was agreed that the advertisement would target projects with an emphasis on:

- improving animal welfare; or
- improving labour efficiencies; or
- improving community awareness of our industry and its local benefits;

and that could demonstrate how their project aligned with the Pig Industry Strategic Plan objectives.

7. Other Business

7.1 Industry Liaison Officer Training

The most recent Industry Liaison Officer (ILO) training day was held on Monday 6 February 2006. Attendees representing the pig industry were R. Berlin, G. Pope (Rural Solutions SA) and M. Moore (Rural Solutions SA).

In total, 12 – 13 livestock industry representatives attended and members were advised that Animal Health Australia (AHA) is seeking to train a total of 1,000 ILOs nationally, across all livestock production industries. In an Emergency Animal Disease Response (EADR), the role of an ILO is to:

- provide advice about the local industry (ie location, size, management practices etc);
- assist in the development of plans for disease eradication/control;
- provide advice on the economic and other consequences of proposed actions; and
- act as a focus for consultation and advice to the local industry.

ILO trained representatives may be placed in either the:

- State Disease Control Headquarters (SDCHQ) to assist with strategic planning, surveillance and industry liaison outside of the local disease control area; or the
- Local Disease Control Centre (LDCC) where they undertake a similar role in the affected region(s).

In the event of an outbreak, ILOs are remunerated from funds approved under the national cost-sharing arrangement.

Two additional ILO workshops will be held in Naracoorte and Mount Gambier during June 2006. Members were advised that each industry requires a pool of trained ILOs as responses invariably take weeks (or possibly months).

It was argued that the funds provided by AHA to successful ILO participants (\$120) were insufficient to cover incurred out of pocket expenses, let alone lost income. In order to increase industry participation in ILO training, it was suggested that the Pig Industry Fund (PIF) could be used to provide additional financial support to attendees.

OUTCOME

PIAG supports the concept of using the Pig Industry Fund to reimburse pig industry representatives for out of pocket expenses incurred when attending ILO training courses. Therefore PIAG will request SAFF assistance in identifying an targeting pig producers and allied industry support from key regions to be trained as ILOs.

7.2 Project Proposals

R. Hamman sought clarification as to why the “Reproductive Maturity of Eco Shelter Reared Gilts” and “Effect of Mixing Gilts in Early Pregnancy on Litter Size” projects were approved as two-year projects. W. Van Wettre advised that this position was taken in recognition of the limited number of pigs (and farrowing room) available at Roseworthy campus and the fact that he wanted to do the replicates over the same season in order to reduce the impact of this variable. In response to being questioned about why a larger piggery was not approached (thereby minimising costs), W. Van Wettre argued that the consistent management at Roseworthy outweighed the other costs.

B. Lloyd indicated that he would provide W. Van Wettre with serology data for Roseworthy eco-shelter reared pigs.

7.3 Peri-Urban Pig Surveillance – Enhanced Disease Surveillance program

Chris van Dissel (PIRSA Animal Health Officer, Lower North) presented information on the ‘Peri-Urban Pig Surveillance’ program (refer to attachment). This program is part of a national study assessing the risk of peri-urban pig (PUP) producers to the pig industry and other livestock production industries within Australia.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Friday 19th May 2006** in the JS Davies Building, Roseworthy Campus, Roseworthy.

The meeting closed at 2:20 pm