



**AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY ADVISORY GROUP (AIAC)  
LIVESTOCK WORKING GROUP  
NOTES of 1<sup>st</sup> MEETING**

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| <b>Date</b> | 26 June 2009  | <b>Location</b> | Drayton Experimental Farm,<br>Stratford | <b>Taken by</b> | Alan Plom<br>Tony Mitchell |
|             | <b>Present</b>  |                 |   |                 |                            |
|             | <p>Tony Mitchell (Chair, HSE Agriculture &amp; Food Sector)<br/>           Alan Plom (Head of Safety Section, HSE Agriculture &amp; Food Sector )<br/>           David Knowles (Chair IOSH Rural Industries Committee; ADAS Group Safety Manager; AIAC member)<br/>           David Owens (Lantra Awards)<br/>           Ian Beeby (Unite; AIAC member)<br/>           John Royle (NFU Snr Policy Advisor, Livestock)<br/>           Michael Britten (NFU Policy Advisor, Health, Safety, Skills &amp; Education)<br/>           Nigel Penlington (BPEX)<br/>           Philip Canning ( ADAS Livestock Team)<br/>           Rob Jones (Defra, Animal Health Div)<br/>           Tony Makin (HSE Inspector, Field Operations Division, South West)</p>  |                 |   |                 |                            |
|             | <b>Apologies</b>  |                 |   |                 |                            |
|             | <p>Andrew Praill (BCVA)<br/>           Amelia Findon (BCVA – To be represented by Andrew Praill)<br/>           Kim Hayward (National Beef Association)<br/>           Pat Stanley (NFU/Livestock farmer)<br/>           Serena Cooke (Defra – papers only)<br/>           Tess Howe (BPEX, represented by N Pennington)</p>  |                 |   |                 |                            |
| <b>Item</b> | <b>Key Points and Actions</b>   |                 |   |                 |                            |
| 1           | <p><b>Introduction – Agriculture Revisited</b></p> <p>1.1 Tony Mitchell welcomed everyone to this first meeting of the Working Group and thanked David Knowles/ADAS for hosting the meeting at Drayton Experimental Farm. This venue was chosen as it gave an opportunity to tour the animal handling facilities at the Farm. Pat Johnson (Site Manager) described the Farm and nature of the work undertaken there. Members then introduced themselves and outlined their own interests and involvement in this sector of the industry. The agenda was re-ordered to provide an overview of the challenge faced by the Group, by reviewing the injury statistics and discussing causes of incidents before deciding scope, terms of reference and constitution.</p> <p>1.2 Alan Plom explained the context of this 'task and finish' group, set up by the AIAC in response to the significant number of reported incidents involving livestock (particularly related to cattle handling) and concerns within the industry. These are very relevant to HSE's new 'Agriculture Revisited' initiative which is intended to reduce the number of fatalities in farming. Farmers have been described as 'unwise risk takers' and this initiative is based around the new 'Make The Promise – Come Home Safe' (MTP) advertising and direct mailing communications campaign. This is designed to change the 'hearts and minds' of people working in the industry.</p> |                 |   |                 |                            |

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|   | <p>1.3 Other means of communicating with farmers were also discussed, including production of guidance, publicity and HSE's 'Safety and Health Awareness Days (SHADs) involving practical demonstrations by Lantra Awards instructors. HSE also attends a limited number of shows and technical events (including Grassland).</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM</b> – Presentation slides to be made available on a new 'AIAC Livestock Group' page, to be set up on HSE's AIAC website at:<br/> <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/aiac/index.htm#subcommittee">http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/aiac/index.htm#subcommittee</a></p>  |
| 2 | <p><b>Reported Accident Data</b></p> <p>2.1 TM summarised the current position and history of incidents involving livestock, analysing 2002/03 – 2007/08. Most fatalities directly related to livestock involved cattle handling. Injury statistics are more difficult to determine, as these can only be based on injuries reported under RIDDOR and there is significant under-reporting. The minimal information often provided and coding anomalies make it difficult to retrieve all relevant incidents or to identify the animal involved or what the person was doing at the time.</p> <p>2.2 Tagging was often claimed to be a major factor, but was not identified as a major cause and only 1 fatality was directly linked to this activity. The most common factor was general movement and handling of animals. Incidents involving vet medicines or transmissible diseases are rare. However, the role and direct involvement of vets was highlighted – including fatalities.</p> <p>2.3 Incidents related to other livestock sectors were discussed. These are mostly 'incidental', eg transport –related incidents or falls, at poultry or pig farms. It was agreed that these should not be a focus of this Group.</p> <p>David Knowles described previous research he had carried out for HSE and he is convening a new AIAC working Group 'Gathering Intelligence about Behaviours, Attitudes and Cultures'. The problem is often related to farmers' attitude and widespread acceptance (of a high level) of risk, caused by factors such as pressures of reduced workforce, time and weather, over-familiarity with their stock, etc. He suggested, and volunteered to carry out, an analysis of the RIDDOR reports and HSE investigation reports to help identify trends and causal factors in livestock accidents.</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM to provide relevant disclosable information on reported and investigated incidents to DK, for review and analysis.</b></p> |
| 3 | <p><b>The South West Project</b></p> <p>3.1 Tony Makin (HSE Inspector based in Plymouth) described the project aimed at improving safety in cattle handling carried out by HSE Field Operations Directorate in the South West. This was devised in response to the number of incidents involving visitors to farms, eg vets and members of the public. A steering group was set up involving key stakeholders, including Andy Praill and Rob Jones .</p> <p>3.2 A survey was carried out targeting vets in the SWest. This was not statistical, but was intended to elicit relevant facts and their own accident experience, as well as their opinions on issues such as training, provision/use and standard of cattle handling facilities on farms and their recommendations for improvements. A good response was received (40 out of 50 questionnaires sent out), indicating strong feelings about this issue.</p> <p>3.3 A key concern was the lack of formal training at vet schools – many employers rely on their new employees observing others and previous work experience. 'High risk' activities identified included TB and pregnancy testing, castration, dealing with lameness, calving and bulls. Handling facilities were</p>   |

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|   | <p>often described as 'poor', with poorly maintained/inadequate or no crush or race available. Lack of help/labour was also a major concern. A common recommendation for improvement concerned design and provision of facilities for handling and securing animals.</p> <p>3.4 Two workshops were then organised for vets and others in the region. Delegates included visiting staff from RPA and Trading Standards, as well as farmers (although only 1 attended!). Speakers included several members of the Group, and Miriam Parker, a specialist in animal behaviour, who advocates designing handling facilities from the animal's perspective. This can aid efficiency and reduce stress on animals (and handlers) by enabling smoother, safer movement and handling.</p> <p>3.5 Recommendations from the study include improving training of vets, farmers and others in handling cattle, provision of adequate facilities (including enforcement of minimum standards), and exploring the possibility of hiring-in mobile facilities. The role and legal duties of vets from practices and government agencies were also highlighted. A copy of Tony's report was provided to those attending the meeting.</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM - Report to be copied to all Group members.</b></p> <p><i>[Secs Note: Posted on AIAC Livestock Group page on HSE website, available via <a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/aiac/index.htm#subcommittee">http://www.hse.gov.uk/aboutus/meetings/iacs/aiac/index.htm#subcommittee</a> ]</i></p> |
| 4 | <p><b>Scope/Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>4.1 The Group discussed its terms of reference and scope. A more detailed list of objectives to be produced and circulated, but the broad 'Terms of Reference' suggested are:</p> <p><i>"To involve all key stakeholders to identify and share information, guidance and good practice, and make recommendations to the AIAC, aiming to reduce fatalities, injuries and ill health related to the keeping of livestock on farms."</i></p> <p><b>ACTION: Members to consider whether this statement is suitable and comment on the aims and objectives of the Group.</b></p> <p><i>[Secs Note: The proposed scope was endorsed by AIAC Members on 29 July. The AIAC minutes record: The (Livestock) Group initially propose to identify and review relevant guidance and accident reports. AIAC Members agreed it was appropriate to focus on incidents directly related to cattle handling (in line with the MTP campaign's focus on reducing fatalities) rather than the wide range of incidents which occur 'incidentally' on livestock farms.]</i></p>   |
| 5 | <p><b>Group Feedback and Discussion – Key Concerns / Issues</b></p> <p>5.1 TM showed examples of existing guidance from HSE and others that could form the basis of a bibliography. He had also produced a Farmers Weekly 'Academy' article highlighting the risk and key features, ["Manage Risks to Lower Injury Rate". published 30 May 2008, pp68-69].</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM to circulate FW article and draft bibliography. Members to comment and add additional examples of relevant guidance or training materials (published or unpublished) to TM.</b></p> <p>5.2 TM issued a copy of a paper provided by Andre Prail on behalf of the BCVA summarising key factors which increase the risks during handling and transporting cattle, and proposed some solutions. These include the need for training and improving information available. The benefit of saving time vets spend on farms etc was also highlighted.</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM to send a copy of the BCVA paper to all members.</b></p>   |

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|  | <p>5.3 Members agreed that this should be considered to be a 'whole business' issue, which can only be improved in partnership with all parties involved in the meeting. All members recognised the major role vets play. AP pointed out that this was consistent with HSE Board Champion's view, following her discussions with the industry and attendance at the seminars in the SWest.</p> <p>5.4 TM mentioned that he had previously approached the RPA to hand out the cattle handling leaflet to farmers, but this had not been initiated due to other issues. It was agreed that he should follow this up again with the RPA and also approach the Vet Societies to target private practice vets, etc. .</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM to approach RPA again and raise awareness of the leaflet and other guidance through vet associations.</b></p> <p>5.5 It is accepted that some activities have to be carried out by vets and others in an emergency and the standard of facilities required depends on the nature of the operation. However, members agreed that suitable (safe) facilities should be expected as the norm for all routine (ie planned or reasonably anticipated) animal handling.</p> <p>5.6 The industry itself therefore needs to agree what is acceptable, and establish 'sensible' practicable standards. The business benefits need to be identified and promoted, eg through the use of case studies. The "How Lives are Lost" leaflet HSE produced to support the MTP campaign featured a summary of a range of fatal incidents. This is to be followed up with new leaflet, "How Lives Are Saved". This will include simple, practical messages, preferably with examples provided by farmers. Examples are needed.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Members to find suitable case studies, individuals who are willing to 'share their story', as part of the wider MTP campaign.</b></p> <p>5.7 Ways to improve awareness of good practice and design were discussed. Farmers need simple advice on design and location of handling facilities. Members also agreed that more could be done to drive up standards by vets and others visiting farms, if they refused to use unsuitable/inadequate facilities. MB stressed that adequate warning should be given.</p> <p>5.8 DK recalled the 'induction' training given by ADAS to vets involved in the Foot and Mouth outbreak. They were advised to avoid putting themselves at risk and were instructed to walk away from farms where handling facilities were inadequate.</p> <p>5.9 MB referred to the NFU Skills Forum, set up to inform and influence Defra. The NFU are developing a Strategy document and liaising with the Sec of State, seeking to improve and recognise increasing professionalism within the industry. Uptake of training would be encouraged by providing shorter cost effective, better-timed, bite-sized courses. Establishing a system to record training and competence could be used to reduce the admin burdens on farmers, from regulators, farm assurance schemes, etc.</p> <p>5.10 AP outlined HSE's work with Lantra Awards and City &amp; Guilds NPTC to develop the suite of 'H&amp;S management VQs (accredited at levels 2, 3 and 4). Ag Colleges are being encouraged to incorporate Level 2 in their courses, and other organisations are being encouraged to use all levels to demonstrate competence within their business. HSE are also working with the insurance sector to improve management of h&amp;s and to recognise and reward farmers who can demonstrate the ability to identify and reduce h&amp;s risks.</p> |
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| 6 | <p><b>Key Messages, Priorities and Outputs</b></p> <p>6.1 Three main issues were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responsibilities,</li> <li>• competence (of farmers and all visiting staff) and</li> <li>• design/suitability of handling facilities.</li> </ul> <p>6.2 Key message proposed : <i>“Suitable handling facilities save time, money and reduce harm to you and your animals”</i></p> <p>6.3 Simple messages are needed to encourage improved design of facilities. A simple diagram illustrating good design features and a floor-plan grid to aid design on site would be useful. Posters were considered to be an effective long-lasting medium on farms – HSE’s old pesticide/ppe poster and BMPA’s lairage poster were cited as good examples). Guidance on design etc could/should be teased out of the reports into animal behavioural studies by Miriam Parker and others.</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM to discuss with HSE Communications and Creative Teams, etc.</b></p> <p>6.4 It was agreed that a bibliography of current guidance (published and unpublished) should be compiled, asap.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Members to review and identify/nominate any other relevant guidance/training materials, and send to TM.</b></p> <p>6.6 Examples of good practice, and significant improvements achieved for minimal cost are also needed, preferably demonstrating economic and/or animal welfare as well as safety benefits.</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM to circulate template to prompt recording/provision of relevant information for case studies.</b></p> <p>6.7 Information leaflets, posters etc could be mailed out direct to all livestock farmers through the main organisations involved in the Group.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Members to raise awareness of this project and disseminate information when available.</b></p> <p>6.8 HSE’s Agriculture website and occasional e-Bulletin can be used to raise awareness of the issues and work of the Group, promote the existing guidance and seek examples of good practice and case studies including the economic/animal welfare benefits of improving facilities.</p> <p><b>ACTION: TM to develop and post information on HSE website.</b></p> |
| 7 | <p><b>Future meetings/Consultation arrangements</b></p> <p>7.1 Members found the meeting interesting and helpful and could see that they could contribute to the Agriculture Revisited initiative and MTP campaign. No other organisations were identified, but others would be welcome if they could contribute in any way. AP would inform the AIAC on 29 July of the main points raised and the Group’s initial recommendations. These would be summarised as draft terms of reference and objectives for the Group.</p> <p><b>ACTION: Members to comment on draft objectives and inform TM of any other nominations.</b></p>  |

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|   | <p><i>[Secs Note – James Brown (farmer In Scotland and AIAC member) has asked to be included.]</i></p> <p>7.2 Drayton was convenient for the majority of members, so it is intended to hold the next meeting there again, on 3 December 2009.</p> |
| 8 | <p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>None raised.</p>  |