

MINUTES

Teleconference

**Thursday 3 December 2009
9.00 AM WADST (Australia)**



1. Present.

Sandy Lloyd (SL) – President
Trevor James (TJ) – Vice President, NZ
Alex Douglas (AD) – Secretary/Treasurer
Rex Stanton (RS) – NSW
Warwick Felton (WF) - NSW
Aaron Maxwell (AM) – WA
Dorean Erhart (DE) – Qld
Michael Widderick (MW) – Qld (proxy for RMcF)
David Hughes (DH) – SA
Rachel Melland (RM) – SA
Kerry Harrington (KH) – NZ
Ian Popay (IP) - NZ
Michael Hansford (MH) –Vic
Jarrah Vercoe (JV) – Tas
Martin Bower (MB) - Tas

2. Apologies.

Rachel McFadyen (RMcF) – Qld
Catherine Borger (CB) - WA

Alice Beilby (AB) – NT

3. Additional agenda items.

7.3 was added to Business arising, Website.

4. Adoption of the minutes from 3 September 2009.

RS pointed out that as Matthew Stevenson, Martin Bower and Jarrah Vercoe did not formally apologise that they should be removed from the list of apologies.

Motion # 12/09 01. DH moved that the minutes be accepted.

Seconded by KH. Unanimously accepted.

5. Presidents Report.

SL apologized for the difficulties caused by the new digital phone system at DAFWA that caused her to be unable to participate in our last teleconference. Also apologized for the confusion shortly after the September meeting over the having a quorum or not. The wording in the constitution is that 10

delegates were required and we had 10 delegates including the S/T who is a non-voting delegate.

Some of the societies have been very active and many have had AGM's since our last meeting. Although there is a contrast between societies with Qld producing a full colour newsletter and at least 2 societies unable to fill newsletter editor positions.

Lots of correspondence since last meeting

Would like to quote from the Strategic Plan which we will be discussing today.

The vision for CAWS:

CAWS is the national, independent, representative voice for weed management in Australia and New Zealand and provides members with national leadership, advocacy, information and support to advance weed management.

Under the CAWS Constitution, the object of CAWS is to encourage and foster the study and promotion of weed science and technology in Australia and New Zealand and in particular to:

- Provide independent, representative leadership for weed management¹ in Australia and New Zealand, including in the weed specific areas of science, policy, planning and operations
- Initiate and support trans-nationally significant weed related activities to meet the interests of Australian and/or New Zealand society members.
- Continue to support the Australian/Australasian Weeds Conference and provide other forums for information exchange, networking and debate
- Provide national and international policy positions, promote weed awareness in the government and the general community and provide a capacity to respond to weed issues
- Support specific national and international weed related publications
- Provide national and international level services, products and communication opportunities to individual members of member societies

Overall we are a pretty proactive group and are probably covering the majority of the points as outlined above.

6. Secretary Treasurer Report.

Correspondence Out

Letter to Steve Adkins APWSS seed funding

Letter to Ros Shepherd 18AWC seed funding (second letter dispatched with cheque on her request).

Letter to Ros Shepherd Support for Poisonous weed book

Completed NAB Cash Manager forms.

Sent Contacts for state societies and CV's to delegates.

Invoices for state society membership

Travel reports from Pippa Michael and Kate McAlpine have been received.

Finances

A reconciliation was circulated with the agenda.

The books have been audited.

An alternate bank (ANZ) was investigated. However the type of account(s) that we would require would incur similar charges as we already have with the NAB, would recommend staying with the NAB.

(Note: No bank will transfer accounts etc to New Zealand. While there are branches of NAB and ANZ in New Zealand they currency is different and they are separate entities. This needs to be considered for the future as internet accounts can be operated from anywhere may need to maintain signatories etc in Australia.)

Finalised signatories for the Cash Manager account.

Motion #12/09 02. DE moved that the financial and secretarial reports be accepted.

Seconded by MH. Unanimously accepted

Query on the letter to Steve Adkins that was sent following the September meeting following approval for CAWS seed funding support for the 13APWSS. NSW had raised several concerns over providing funding for this conference and has not had these concerns resolved.

AD and SL have not been able to contact Steve Adkins as he is currently overseas.

Felt that there was not good governance with the discussion over this topic and also some conflicts of interest (indirect pecuniary interest) between delegates at the meeting.

RS suggested that perhaps a professional independent mediated be involved to resolve this issue.

TJ chaired our previous meeting and failed to perceive a pecuniary interest.

“Indirect – derived as part of a body seeking funding”

TJ is not happy with that definition of pecuniary interest.

RS asked why the letter from himself to SL was circulated with the agenda.

SL was responding to items sent to her by RS.

RS feels that there were inaccuracies in the letter from SL. This may need to be clarified in writing between SL and RS.

7. Business arising from the minutes.

7.1. Draft Guidelines for international visitors.

RS – NSW has a range of different amendments to the document that was circulated.

Specifically items 4 and 5.

Action – RS to send the amended document for consideration by the committee.

Action – DE to add her alterations to the NSW changes (all in ‘track changes’).

Timeline – collate changes and present to next meeting.

7.2. Contacts for state societies.

Following the many AGM's, could those societies send changes to committees to AD.

7.3. Website.

As the new website is now hosted by NZPPS it is appropriate that we write a letter to Rob and Fiona Richardson thanking them for previously hosting of the site for free.

Action – SL to write a letter of thanks to the Richardson's.

7.4. CAWS orator 17AWC

Still looking for a CAWS orator for the 17th AWC. All suggestions to TJ please.

8. Reports from Member Societies.

The reports from member societies are compiled in a separate document circulated with these minutes.

8.1. Report from SA

RM presented the SA report.

8.2. Report from Vic

MH thanked CAWS for the seed funding for the 18AWC.

Matthew Stevenson has pulled out from the CAWS committee due to other commitments and another delegate from Vic will be found.

The Victorian newsletter editor position will be vacant shortly.

8.3. Report from NSW

RS tabled the report from NSW.

There were no changes to the executive following the AGM. The newsletter editor has stood down.

8.4. Report from WA

AM tabled the report from WA.

8.5. Report from NZ

IP tabled the report from NZ.

The 17AWC is progressing well. Abstracts have closed and there are 153 oral papers. Sponsorship is coming in and there are 8 confirmed sponsors.

8.6. Report from Tas

MB tabled the report from Tas.

Tasmania would like to support the idea for a national weed society newsletter.

There is concern that the low profile of weeds in the news and public arena could be enabling a more easy spread of weeds through bush-land and agricultural areas, eg Arum lillies The invasion of northern Australia by Gamba grass is considered a key threatening process but not widely advertised.

AD spoke to Peter Langdon (DAFF) on 29/10/09 regarding the Australian Weed Research Centre and was informed that there was no further progress from the set up of the interim advisory board by Minister Burke (This ran from July 08 – June 09). The matter is currently under consideration with government. CAWS has been added to the list of stakeholders and interested parties and we will be informed when there is something to know.

The website, www.weeds.org.au was taken off the net as there was no one in the position of Australian Weeds Investigator. This has since been filled by John Thorpe and the site is active again.

Action – SL, and all state societies to write letters to Peter Garrett (Min of Environment) and Tony Burke (Min of Agriculture) regarding weed threats (specific to each state) and enquire as to the Australian weed research centre (\$15 Million election promise).

8.7. Report from Qld

DE tabled the report from Qld. DE will correct and resend the report for circulation.

9. General Business.

9.1. Weed Wise Nursery Award (Ian Popay).

Very few nurseries nominate themselves without encouragement from NZPPS. Would like to formalize the process with the Nursery Industry and Weedbusters NZ, jointly organize and present the award. NZPPS would have to oversee this process to ensure that the award is properly organized, the award is appropriate and that the CAWS logo appears on it.

Motion 12/09 03.

1. That the CAWS Executive approve our (NZPPS) asking the NGIA and Weedbusters NZ to jointly administer the NZ WeedWise Nursery Award by:
 - a. Promoting it,
 - b. Collating entries,
 - c. Selecting the winner, and
 - d. Presenting the award.
2. That the CAWS Executive continue to support the WeedWise Nursery Award in New Zealand.

Moved SL, seconded RM, all in favor.

9.2. Engagement with the nursery industry (NSW).

Low participation in WeedWise nursery Award to date. Need to look at other models for the award. Several alternatives are presented in the agenda paper. Difficult to get nominations unless they are actively sort, although do give good publicity to the winners.

Action – SL to explore collaboration with NGIA.

DE rather than going through the alternatives would support forming a subcommittee (working group) potentially made up of DE, SL (could co-opt members from state societies, not necessarily CAWS delegates but with an interest in the nursery industry or past experience, RS to investigate in NSW).

Action - RS to send SL contacts after he approaches them.

Motion 12/09 04.

Working group formed to assess the recommendations of put forward in this agenda paper.

Moved DE, seconded RS, all in favor.

9.3. Review of the role, capacity and governance of CAWS. (NSW)

The delegates from NSW have been questioned by the NSW Executive about how CAWS is governed.

DE has some comments on the agenda paper as submitted prior to the meeting and will forward them on following the meeting.

DE supports issues 1 and 2 as they stand.

We need to keep an eye on the main points in the strategic plan and disseminate educational packages, ideas as they arise. Do not have the ability to make brochures etc. Limited financially and by time.

Nominate someone to check the plan each meeting and make promotions based around this.

Our role is keeping these issues in the spotlight, albeit small.

Issue 3 (in-person meetings).

These meetings are traditionally held during the AWC during an evening. They could be held on an alternate day i.e. during the field day or on the Sunday afternoon prior to registration.

There was discussion regarding the best timing of the meeting. General feeling was that on the day of the field trips may restrict attendance by some delegates, particularly if part of their funding to attend the conference stipulates that the field trip must be attended or if other meetings have been planned on that day.

We are all volunteers on this committee and often rely on funding from other parties.

All states must be represented at these meetings but should delegates not be able to attend then proxies can be sent in their place.

Action – Plan to have an in-person meeting on the Sunday afternoon the day prior to the first day of the conference.

Action – TJ to find out if this change will be possible for the meeting during the 17AWC, and to report to March meeting.

Issue 4 (which deals with the creation of a permanent secretariat position) was discussed.

Increasing salary would also involve tax, super payments and possibly office set up costs.

Secretary serve for longer than 2 years to give more stability to the position, may not be necessary to employ someone.

Altering the secretariat may also mean altering the constitution, (however TJ checked the constitution quickly and determined that the term of the secretary/treasurer is decided by the executive).

WF, a smaller committee is needed to progress this, perhaps one delegate from each society (who has already discussed the issue with their society).

Issues 1, 2 and 4 to be put in the care of a subcommittee to progress.

Motion 12/09 05.

A representative from each state will liaise with RS and AD, as a subcommittee, to move this paper forward for presentation at our March 2010 meeting

Moved WF, seconded SL, all in favor.

9.4. CAWS Strategic Plan (NSW)

Discussion of a national CAWS newsletter, as several societies are unable to fill newsletter editor positions (WA, Vic and Tas).

Pay someone to collate items that are submitted (e.g. CRC Weedwatch).

Distribute electronically to all member societies (e.g. NZ biosecurity institute electronic newsletter with password protected area. 3-4 issues per year).

Cost to compile but savings on distribution.

Many societies have more local focus articles. Although there would be some national cross over from a local focus.

MW - Qld would prefer to keep their newsletter going (currently 50:50 prefer electronic to hard copy).

RM – suggested that CAWS prepares items but each state inserts it into their state newsletters. Good for people to see where their work fits in a National level. CRC used to do this.

Action – AM and Kathryn Batchelor to lead working group on this topic and report back for the March 2010 meeting.

Action – State delegates to ask their societies for their opinions on newsletters and a national approach, and present to the March 2010 meeting.

Discussion of issue 3 in agenda paper.

Many timelines in the strategic plan have expired, these need to be reviewed to be a little more realistic. Is this a job for one person, they could circulate changes back to the other delegates?

Annual CAWS report to member societies.

Action – SL, TJ, RM and AD to review the strategic plan.

9.5. Sending on-ground weed personnel/managers to conferences from each state.

Send those who would not get to go to conferences otherwise. One of the requirements in the original proposal was that the person would present at least a poster, however deadlines had passed for submission at the Cairns conference (this is probably also the case for the NZ conference).

State societies are free to organise their own selection process for awards and receive a full early bird registration to an AWC from CAWS.

NSW runs 2 awards (one for an on-ground operator and one for a weed manager) jointly with the NSW weed officers association (up to \$500 from each association).

For NZ all contributors are entitled to a full paper which needs refereeing. However, if they accept just an abstract there is still time.

May not be enough money available in some states (small councils or smaller bodies).

RM is of the opinion that there are a lot of willing participants in SA.

How much is required from CAWS?

Need to get information out there to the people targeted.

Action – RM to progress a funding paper out of session. RM to draft and SL to make contributions.

10. Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Thursday 4th March 2010, at 9am WA standard time.