

# MINUTES

Version DRAFT



## Wildlife Health Australia Inc Annual General Meeting

Date 13<sup>th</sup> November, 2019

Place Rydges on Swanston, Carlton, Victoria

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ian Thompson (IT - Chair of the MC), Andrew Peters (Deputy Chair), Kevin de Witte, Rodney Vile, Michael Banyard, Anna Meredith, Pam Whiteley, Hugh Millar, Michelle Power, Jemma Bergfeld, Hamish McCallum, Nicholas White, David Blyde, Lisa Adams, Mark Hill,

**OBSERVERS:** Rupert Woods (RW) (Chief Executive Officer) Karen Magee (KM) (Public Officer and minutes), Tiggy Grillo (TG),

**APOLOGIES:** David Phalen (Management Committee), Wayne Boardman, Robert Johnson (Management Committee), Mark Schipp, Annie Philips, Shahan Azeem, Codie Wooster-Raven, Richard Irvine, Meredith Ryan (NSW Wildlife Council), Chris Bunn, Patricia Ellis, Shan Siah, Tania Bishop, Phil Tucak, Celia Dickason, Sarah Frith, Michael Lynch, Richard Rubira, Keren Cox-Witton, Nina Kung, Raymond Chia, Kylie Hewson, Scott Jennings, Leanne Wicker.

MINUTES				
Agenda Item:	Issue/Topic	Background/Points of Discussion	Resolution / Actions	Name
1	Welcome and Apologies	Ian Thompson (IT) welcomed members and observers to the annual general meeting (AGM) and thanked everyone for attending. Apologies were received and noted by the Chair.  A quorum was confirmed.		IT
2.	Confirm Minutes of 2017/2018 AGM	The draft minutes from the 2017/18 AGM were submitted to members. There were no outstanding actions, and no amendments received.	<b>The WHA Management Committee (MC) and members present:</b>  <b>ACCEPTED</b> the 2017/18 annual general meeting minutes as a true and correct record of the meeting.	IT/All
3.	Chairman's Address	IT delivered the chairman's address, and highlighted some of the key updates, activities and achievements for WHA for the year. IT thanked the		IT

		membership, WHA employees, and the Management Committee (MC) for their support and commitment during the year.		
4.	<b>CEO Report</b>	<p>The CEO provided a presentation outlining some of the planning work that the MC has underway including a proposed strategic enquiry into the future needs for the wildlife health area in Australia. A new mission has been developed, as well as an updated strategic plan, which will be made available for comment by members on the WHA website.</p> <p>A member asked whether consideration had been given to employing an epidemiologist to model disease outbreak activity? There are many things that are worthy of consideration for funding but WHA has only limited resources, currently relying on information from the 47 member organisations to provide information and intelligence from the field. Predictive models and programs for disease emergence and spread are available, well recognised and appear to have value in identifying potential wildlife health issues and disease hotspots. However, how these resources could be applied to the differing ecology in Australia is still to be determined and would be dependent upon WHA securing additional funding. The strategic plan has an information technology component to help prioritise areas for investment in future.</p> <p>Another member asked how secure the funding for WHA was going forward? Funding is currently secure, with the Australian Government committed to funding through until mid 2022, and the jurisdictional support from the states and territories being renewed annually. WHA must be mindful of the need to continue to service the needs of core funders. Corporate pitches have been developed as part of the WHA marketing and communications strategy but cannot be relied upon to provide a reliable source of long term and ongoing core funding. The need to find more investors is an ongoing challenge for WHA.</p>		<b>RW</b>
5.	<b>Financial Report</b>	The audited 2018/19 WHA financial report, including the auditor's report, was circulated to members with notice of the AGM. The WHA accountant, Bill Matley (BM) from Crispin & Jeffery was joined to the AGM by phone, and provided a verbal summary. WHA finished the financial year with a	The financial statements of WHA Inc., as audited by Crispin and Jeffery for the year ending 30 June, 2019 were presented to members.	<b>RW/BM</b>

		<p>total comprehensive income of \$37,887, a very good result. BM thanked WHA for their assistance and support in preparing the financial reports.</p> <p>No questions were raised regarding the financial statements.</p>	<p><b>The WHA MC, and members present:</b>  <b>NOTED</b> the audited 2018/19 WHA financial statements including the auditor's report.</p>	
6.1	<b>Climate Change and the Role of WHA</b>	<p>The role of WHA in climate change was discussed. It is accepted knowledge that climate change is already impacting wildlife health and is an important determinant of disease expression and population health. Other organisations, such as the Australian Society of Parasitologists, have declared a Climate Emergency, and there was discussion about the possibility of WHA doing the same. It was recognised that declaration of a climate emergency needed careful consideration, particularly regarding WHA's role in advocacy or the political arena, and in particular whether this would be a move supported by members, funders, and what the implications and risks could be.</p> <p>A member in the room, Hamish McCallum, offered to assist with the development of a fact sheet outlining the current situation, impacts and what is known.</p>	<p>It was <b>AGREED</b> that climate change is a significant and immediate issue for wildlife health and that WHA should be drawing attention to the scientific impacts of climate change on wildlife health through the development of an evidence-based fact sheet and making this available to the public and others through its website. An informative statement relating to climate change should be included and further consideration be given to this issue by the MC.</p>	<b>RW</b>
6.2	<b>Exotic Environmental Pest and Diseases Priority List</b>	<p>The Exotic Environmental Pest and Diseases Priority List (Priority List) was discussed, and whether there was a place for WHA to be involved in targeting education, ensuring that the Priority List can be recognised by veterinary surgeons in practice and other people in front line positions.</p> <p>This is not an area requiring financial contribution by WHA, but something where partnerships could be built if opportunity arises. WHA has provided or facilitated emergency animal disease training in the states and territories, and if this is undertaken in the future could be a useful avenue to educate audiences about the list.</p>		<b>MB</b>

		<p>Veterinary schools, relevant teaching material, and deans compiling and sharing information were identified as key avenues for dissemination of information regarding the list.</p> <p>One member reminded the group of the risk of lists diverting attention away from a broader focus on identifying new and emerging diseases and issues.</p>		
<b>6.3</b>	<b>The Australian Wildlife Health Institute</b>	<p>Members were briefed on the proposed Australian Wildlife Health Institute initiative. Following identification of gap areas in research and outreach, a working group of members of the wildlife health universities communities have been working towards developing a framework and structure to build capacity in these areas. A meeting is being held on the 14<sup>th</sup> November, with high level strategic representation from government and the research community. The main purpose of the meeting is to seek feedback on the initiative, identify what it might do, how and discuss governance options.</p> <p>WHA is supportive, however there was concern from one member that the initiative could draw funding away from WHA. WHA's current priority is to find out more about the initiative, how it might help and what the future relationship with the Institute might be.</p> <p>Another member commented that the initiative should be careful that it doesn't dilute the broader funding for wildlife health. AP responded that that was not the intention and that the goals of the institutes will be to identify and fill gap areas in the country's framework rather than compete or create additional redundancy. Members would be kept informed of developments through the usual WHA communication channels.</p>		<b>AP</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Close</b>	IT closed the AGM of WHA at 4.00pm and thanked members, staff and observers for participating.		<b>IT</b>
<b>Close</b>				