

Communique

Meeting No: 2022.01

Date: Wednesday 15 June 2022

The Animal Care and Management (ACM) Industry Reference Committee (IRC) met via video conference on Wednesday 15 June 2022. Present at the meeting were IRC members, guests and representatives from Skills Impact.

2022 Industry Summary and ACM Industry Skills Report

The IRC was updated on the Industry Summary requirements for submission in September 2022. The IRC recommended a review of animal technology qualifications to be considered for updating as a future project.

An ACM Industry Skills Report has been drafted which provides industry-specific detail on skills themes and issues. ACM IRC members have been asked to review the draft skills report and provide feedback, and approve release for public consultation. The IRC requested the inclusion of further information on One Health and emphasis on need for regulation of the animal care industry.

Round Table Discussion

The IRC members discussed issues, trends, emerging opportunities and views on skills and training. Discussions included:

- The veterinary sector is under great pressure due to the shortage and attrition of veterinarians, highlighting the need for support workers. New skills required in veterinary nursing are social work and grief counselling.
- All areas of the ACM industries are experiencing staff shortages. The aggressive recruitment of the mining industry in WA and Hunter regions is adding pressure to attracting workers to other industries.
- Concerns over recent closures of government colleges in NSW is impacting delivery of thin market qualifications. A large influx of animals to be rehomed will create need and pressure for ACM training.
- Recent floods are having an impact on animals, in particular different hoof conditions being seen because of water-saturated soils. Investigation is required of current training and usage of hoof trimming for non-equine species including goats, sheep, alpacas and livestock.
- Concerns for the quality of delivery of VET in companion sector due in part to shortages of qualified trainers.
- A high demand for assistance animals is resulting in inadequately trained animals by unaccredited trainers.
- The 'puppy pandemic' has created a need for more groomers resulting in under skilled people being employed to fill the demand.

VET Reform

IRC members were provided with an update on VET reform, confirming that Skills Impact has submitted an application for the Agribusiness, Food and Fibre Cluster.

Next Meeting

The next Animal Care and Management IRC meeting will be held in Melbourne as a hybrid face to face/video meeting early September. Dates to be confirmed.