Annual Report for the WSAVA Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee

Name of the Committee
Animal Wellness and Welfare Committee

Name of the Committee (Co-)Chair(s)
Melinda Merck and Tess Kommedal

Name of the Committee Members
Karyl Hurley, Rod Jouppi, Natasha Lee, Abdul Rahman, Sheilah Robertson and Shane Ryan

Mission/Tagline of the Committee
To make welfare issues an everyday consideration for small animal practitioners and to ensure that WSAVA becomes a proactive and respected partner within international welfare circles by combining advocacy with mutual respect and consensus-building amongst partners.

Committee Activities of 2018

A brief history
The AWWC was formed in 2009 thanks primarily to the efforts of Drs Roger Clarke of Australia and Ray Butcher, a UK-based veterinarian, who dedicated their careers to advancing animal welfare and had the foresight to ensure that animal welfare was enshrined as one of the WSAVA’s four key ‘pillars’.

Opportunities and challenges
The AWWC faces a series of changes over the next 2 years as members retire from the committee. An action plan was developed to ensure a smooth transition from existing members to new members. This has provided an opportunity to broaden the geographical representation of the committee and ensure appropriate onboarding for new members.

We are often asked to comment on specific welfare issues raised by WSAVA members. Rather than comment on specific cases we have decided that, where possible, we will develop and maintain a generic position on a welfare issue that can be applied more generally. Often other veterinary associations have taken a position and where this is consistent with our views we may endorse that position.

Key activities this year
Committee membership: Nienke Endenberg stepped down from the committee following two 3-year terms of service. Abdul Rahman (India) and Natasha Lee (Malaysia) were welcomed to the committee in 2018.

At the Singapore meeting in 2018 two new nominations were recommended to EB to come onboard the AWWC in Toronto 2019:
1. Dr. Julio Ceasar Aguirre from Colombia
2. Dr. Katherine C. Polak from USA based in Thailand

**Brachycephalic breed position statement:** AWWC has collaborated with the Hereditary committee to support a position statement on the health and welfare issues experienced by brachycephalic breeds.

**Animal Welfare Guidelines:** Animal Welfare Guidelines written by a group consisting of members and consultants of the AWWC was published at the Singapore WSAVA congress in 2018: [https://www.wsava.org/Guidelines/Animal-Welfare-Guidelines](https://www.wsava.org/Guidelines/Animal-Welfare-Guidelines)


**Outreach Programme:** An Outreach programme in Sri Lanka was successfully completed, we were able to offer one opportunity before the Singapore world congress, and another one after the congress. This program was run in cooperation with the Blue Paw Trust and our volunteers were able to provide vaccinations, parasite prevention treatment, spay-neuter surgeries and education on responsible pet ownership and animal welfare to local school children.

**Shelter Medicine Workshop** was successfully completed in Singapore with 35 participants from both government and private animal shelters, veterinary clinics and animal welfare NGOs. Participants came from Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia, India and Malaysia

**Priorities/Calendar for next year**

- Disseminate and promote the WSAVA Animal Welfare Guidelines (Animal Welfare Guidelines group incl. Natasha Lee and Shane Ryan) including translation to Polish, Spanish and French, and other languages. Create CE opportunities both online and offline. Create quizzes for Clinicians’ Brief and social media platforms to raise awareness.
- Collect feedback from member associations and practitioners so that we can develop useful tools for practitioners – e.g. charts, diagrams, easy references
- Domestic Violence and Pets initiative (in cooperation with One Health Committee) – develop position statement and start mapping existing programs and needs in member countries. Launch of project planned for pre-congress workshop in Poland 2020
- Lecture tracks at the VMX in January 2019 and WSAVA world Congress in July 2019
- Shelter Medicine Workshop in Toronto 2019 - In cooperation with the Toronto Humane Society. Including one day of forensic medicine and one day on anesthesia/analgesia. Melinda Merck and Sheilah Robertson will lecture. Already a lot of interest in program.
- Prepare an Animal Welfare Charter for WSAVA
- Developing position statements on relevant animal welfare issues
Priorities for 2019

1. Animal Welfare Guidelines  
   a. Print – hardcopy printed copies to be disseminated at important events for publicity  
   b. Translate – Polish, Chinese, Spanish, French, etc  
   c. Publicise at relevant events/channels  
      i. OIE Focal Points – disseminate to the animal welfare focal points via OIE meetings  
      ii. Pan-commonwealth Conference, Bangalore  
      iii. VMX  
      iv. Other conferences  
   d. Continuing education  
      i. Create CE for both online and offline opportunities  
      ii. Create suitable articles/quizzes for Clinicians’ Brief  
   e. Collect feedback from member associations and practitioners  
   f. Develop useful tools for practitioners – e.g. charts, diagrams, easy references  
   g. Publicise at WSAVA Poland 2020  

2. Planning for Outreach projects: Canada? Poland?  

3. Shelter Medicine Workshop  
   a. India 2019 – Pan-Commonwealth Conference, Bangalore  
   b. Toronto 2019 - In cooperation with the Toronto Humane Society. Would like to include a day of forensics and anesthesia/analgesia. Melinda should be able to attend, check with Sheila if she is able to join.  
   c. Poland 2020  
   d. Hyderabad 2021  

4. Prepare an Animal Welfare Charter - for WSAVA, to include something similar to the “love is blind” / brachycephalic dogs in ads, etc.  

5. Domestic Violence (with One Health Committee)  
   a. Develop a position statement  
   b. Conduct workshop in Poland together with One Health committee  
   c. Create survey (to raise awareness)  
   d. Put together a resource ‘basket’  

6. Developing position statements on animal welfare issues (list of possible topics below)  
   a. Mutilations – first priority  
   b. Disaster management  
   c. Domestic violence and pets
7. International partnerships
   a. ICAM
      i. Meeting twice a year in London
      ii. Support for the dog population management conference – Kenya 2019

8. Animal Welfare Guidelines
   a. Print – hardcopy printed copies to be disseminated at important events for publicity
   b. Translate – Polish, Chinese, Spanish, French, etc.
   c. Publicise at relevant events/channels
      i. OIE Focal Points – disseminate to the animal welfare focal points via OIE meetings
      ii. Pan-commonwealth Conference, Bangalore
      iii. VMX
      iv. Other conferences
   d. Continuing education
      i. Create CE for both online and offline opportunities
      ii. Create suitable articles/quizzes for Clinicians’ Brief
   e. Collect feedback from member associations and practitioners
   f. Develop useful tools for practitioners – e.g. charts, diagrams, easy references
   g. Publicise at WSAVA Poland 2020

9. Planning for Outreach projects: Canada? Poland?

10. Shelter Medicine Workshop
    a. India 2019 – Pan-Commonwealth Conference, Bangalore
    b. Toronto 2019 - In cooperation with the Toronto Humane Society. Would like to include a day of forensics and anesthesia/analgesia. Melinda should be able to attend, check with Sheila if she is able to join.
    c. Poland 2020
    d. Hyderabad 2021

11. Prepare an Animal Welfare Charter - for WSAVA, to include something similar to the “love is blind” / brachycephalic dogs in ads, etc.

12. Domestic Violence (with One Health Committee)
    a. Develop a position statement
    b. Conduct workshop in Poland together with One Health committee
    c. Create survey (to raise awareness)
    d. Put together a resource ‘basket’

13. Developing position statements on animal welfare issues (list of possible topics below)
    a. Mutilations – first priority
    b. Disaster management
    c. Domestic violence and pets
    d. Early-age neutering

14. International partnerships
    a. ICAM
       i. Meeting twice a year in London
       ii. Support for the dog population management conference – Kenya 2019