

24 June 2024

Carolina Diaz
Program Manager, Animal Wellbeing and Industry Resilience
Australian Wool Innovation Limited
Level 3
24 York Street
Sydney NSW

Dear Carolina,

RE: AVA REPORT ON PROGRESS OF AWI RD&E FLYSTRIKE PREVENTION PROGRAM

On 31st May 2024 AVA-appointed auditors Dr Graham Lean and Professor Bruce Allworth, joined you, Geoff Lindon and Rielly Cobley as representatives of Australian Wool Innovation Limited (AWI) to conduct a review of progress of AWI's Flystrike Prevention program against Research, Development and Extension milestones.

The report detailing the AVA-appointed auditors findings is attached.

If you require further details or clarification of any points raised, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Sally Colgan
National President

Cc	Mr John Roberts CEO Australian Wool Innovation Level 3 24 York Street Sydney NSW 2000
----	--

The Australian Veterinary Association Ltd

Unit 40, 6 Herbert Street, St Leonards NSW 2065

Phone: 1300 137 309 / +61 2 9431 5000

Fax: +61 2 9437 9068

www.ava.com.au

ABN 63 008 522 852

REPORT BY AVA-APPOINTED AUDITORS AFTER REVIEWING THE PROGRESS OF AUSTRALIAN WOOL INNOVATION'S FLYSTRIKE PREVENTION RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION, EXTENSION AND COMMUNICATION (RDEEC) PROGRAM AGAINST THEIR OBJECTIVES.

May 2024

Scope of Review:

This review is intended to provide an independent assessment and review of the progress that Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) has made in its Flystrike RDEEC program against the published milestones and objectives since the last report in May 2023. The report is primarily aimed at informing wool growers and overseas retailers utilising Australian wool of progress and developments in the area of flystrike prevention and is a consequence of an undertaking in 2005 to overseas manufacturers and retailers of clothing incorporating Australian wool by the Australian wool industry.

Approach:

A review of the AWI research program was held between independent auditors appointed by the Australian Veterinary Association (Dr Graham Lean and Professor Bruce Allworth) and AWI (Ms Carolina Diaz, Mr Geoff Lindon and Ms Rielly Cobley) by meeting on 31st May 2024 online. Written reports from AWI together with relevant verbal reports were provided across a range of areas. Drs Peter James and Forbes Brien also attended to complete their separate Genetic Review.

Findings:

AWI continues to invest in research aimed at decreasing breech strike and specifically to decrease the reliance of wool producers on mulesing. The planned AWI Sheep Health and Welfare program budget for 2023/24 was \$A1.4 m (down from \$2.2 m in the previous year) of which over 80% is directed at activities to better manage flystrike. It should also be noted that while the original thrust of the AWI flystrike research program was aimed at managing breech strike only, a number of current research programs are now aimed at managing flystrike in general. There is an ongoing focus on extension of control methodologies. A number of the projects have resulted in the production of papers for publication in scientific journals and extension articles for sheep producers. Over the past year, AWI managed a total of 17 projects, including 12 ongoing projects and 5 projects completed during the reporting period. This work, while still focussed on delivering strategies to avoid the need for mulesing, continues to support much broader sheep welfare outcomes. In this reporting period there is continuing emphasis specifically on blowfly chemical resistance and modelling, as well as a strong emphasis on flystrike prevention extension activities. The growing emergence of blowfly chemical resistance over recent years has made this work more of an imperative. It was noted that budget constraints are affecting project development.

Non-Invasive Management Practices (6 projects - 3 completed, 3 ongoing (2 further bridging projects in plan)) is an important area of current research activity, with emphasis on better understanding and dealing with chemical resistance, and developing an effective vaccine against flystrike, although findings to date on vaccine have not been as encouraging as initially hoped.

Breeding and selection (5 projects, all ongoing) research work is now focussing on acquiring and utilising genomic data. Work to date looks promising, with genomics likely to provide an increase in the rate of genetic improvement, particularly around hard-to-measure traits associated with breech strike. It would be beneficial to see work enumerating the specific gains producers can make using this technology.

Analgesia and Anaesthesia remains a focus for the Program but there are currently no research projects being undertaken.

Education, Extension and Promotion (6 projects – 4 ongoing, 2 completed) continues to focus on the support of the successful ParaBoss website and extension activities with advisers and producer groups. Twelve (12) extension / training events have been held in the past 12 months (35 previously) to support producer decision-making in the managing of flystrike, including moving to a non-mulesed

The Australian Veterinary Association Ltd

Unit 40, 6 Herbert Street, St Leonards NSW 2065

Phone: 1300 137 309 / +61 2 9431 5000

Fax: +61 2 9437 9068

www.ava.com.au

ABN 63 008 522 852

system. There has been slippage with the delivery of these extension programs and producer reluctance to attend workshops also needs to be managed. AWI continues to support the Sheep Sustainability Framework, which provides some objective data on level of mulesing, availability of non-mulesed wool, and adoption of pain relief.

A description of current projects and some commentary is provided below.

Table 1. Progress for AWI's Flystrike Prevention Program, May 2024

	Current Projects	Current work / Progress	Comments
Breeding and selection (5 projects)	Genomics Projects (3) Update of visual Scores. Resilience Project.	Three (3) projects on genomics well underway to better collect and use data.	Use of genomic data to better identify flystrike resistant genotypes. Looks promising for increasing industry genetic progress.
Non-invasive Management Practices (6 projects)	Vaccine development. Chemical Resistance Project. Fly biology / genomics (3). Sterile fly release – Kangaroo Island.	Main vaccine project completed. Chemical resistance project includes 3 subprojects - resistance widespread. Sterile fly project underway on KI.	No clear pathway established for vaccine development. Main focus of projects on better understanding of fly biology.
Analgesia and Anaesthesia	No current projects		Remains a high priority.
Education, Extension and Promotion (6 projects)	Lamb marking course. Producer/advisor webinars /workshops ParaBoss support Sheep Sustainability Framework support	3 Train the Trainer Workshop- ClassiFly (1), SimpliFly (2) 9 Woolgrower workshops- SimpliFly (5), StrateFly Pilot (4)	On-going commitment for research outcomes to be applied on-farm.

The Australian Veterinary Association Ltd

Unit 40, 6 Herbert Street, St Leonards NSW 2065

Phone: 1300 137 309 / +61 2 9431 5000

Fax: +61 2 9437 9068

www.ava.com.au

ABN 63 008 522 852