

Minutes of the 20th Lead Ammunition Group meeting/teleconference 3rd November 2016

2pm-3.15pm

Attendees

Mr John Swift (JS)(Chair)
Prof. Rhys Green (RG) (RSPB)
Dr. James Kirkwood (JK) (Universities Federation for Animal Welfare)(retired)
Prof. Ian Newton (IN) OBE FRS FRSE DPhil DSc

Secretariat

Dr Ruth Cromie (RC) (WWT)

1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair thanked the members for their participation, welcoming Prof. Newton to the LAG. There were apologies from Prof. Len Levy (LL) (Institute of Environment and Health) and Dr Debbie Pain (DP) (WWT).

2. Minutes of the 19th meeting on 15th August 2016

2.1 There were no comments made on the published minutes of the 19th meeting/teleconference.

2.2 Matters arising from those minutes:

- a. **Action Point 19.1** RG would provide LAG members with an updated PowerPoint presentation on pheasant tomography work and keep FSA informed of findings and publication intentions.

Work is on-going.

- b. **Action Point 19.2** JS to follow up with FSA, inform them that LAG members are still happy to continue in communication, and indicate that, in the existing spirit of LAG openness, there is an intention to post its submitted revisions for the FSA advice to consumers on the LAG website.

LL had said that he was happy to act as the contact point for FSA communications and, noting Liz Truss's letter from July 13th, to enquire, as appropriate, as to whether the current FSA advice was effective in reducing risk to vulnerable groups.

New Action Point 20.1 LL to make further inquiries with FSA concerning FSA advice to consumers.

- c. **Action Point 19.3** Once published, RC to circulate Ibis population paper to interested parties – as determined by LAG members.

Completed although if additional persons were identified, RC could forward the paper.

- d. **Action 19.4** All to give careful thought to redesigning the Group's Terms of Reference as well as appropriate experts who may wish to join a revised Group (*see Agenda Item 3.5 below*).
- e. **Action Point 19.5** JS to review the comments received and redraft a response to the Secretary of State's letter.

Completed.

- f. **Action Point 19.6** JS to inform ECHA that the evidence submitted to it was no longer confidential (copied to Defra)

Completed.

- g. **Action Point 19.7** RC to post new research and evidence on website as it becomes available.

On-going and noting that papers would be circulated around the Group and then posted, with the home page being suitably updated. It was stressed that all relevant papers of suitable standards would be published.

- h. **Action Point 19.8** RC to find suitable meeting date in second half of October.

Completed.

3. To receive Chairman's report

The Chair reported as follows:

3.1 It was noted that the letter from JS on behalf of the LAG to the new Secretary of State had been sent and no response had yet been received. [Post meeting note: Dr Therese Coffey MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at Defra responded by letter dated 7 November.]

Action point 20.2: Post correspondence to new Secretary of State on LAG website (in keeping with previous disclosure of all ministerial correspondence).

3.2 An update of the ECHA workshop on the restriction dossier for use of lead shot in wetlands was provided noting specifically that they have a difficult task to disentangle the human health risks from eating wildfowl from the current information on game eating in Europe.

3.3 JS had circulated a report from the French national hunting association which constituted a lead ammunition risk assessment undertaken in 2015. The report highlighted knowledge gaps for France for some taxa and some of the approaches taken (a full translation was not available).

3.4 Following an editorial and news piece referring to LAG and the Secretary of State's response to its final report, in the May edition of Deer magazine, JS had written to the author (who is Chair of the British Deer Society) and the magazine's editor pointing out its shortcomings.

3.5 JS would circulate a simplified LAG Terms of Reference document which would then be posted on the LAG website.

Action point 20.3: JS to circulate terms of reference for discussion at next meeting and posting on LAG website.

4. To review new evidence in relation to the LAG report conclusions

4.1 RG asked if the shooting organisations' research on game consumption was ever to be published (noting that the only data he has seen to date was from some information given at a LAG meeting and captured in the minutes). The Chair remarked that Dr Ellis had circulated a BASC Research Department report dated 18 February 2014 "BASC & CA Game Meat Consumption Survey" following the 11th LAG meeting in April 2014 (Action point 11.3).

4.2 See 3.3 above.

4.3 For information, WWT was continuing work on writing up various aspects of lead ammunition impacts (surveillance findings etc.).

5. To discuss other developments and processes addressing risks from lead ammunition

5.1 REACH and ECHA:

Described above in 3.2.

5.2 IUCN motion on lead ammunition:

At the IUCN World Conservation Congress in September, a motion was adopted calling for all governments to reduce lead poisoning from ammunition sources – the CMS signatories were reminded of their obligations to phase out all lead ammunition in all habitats, and non-CMS signatory governments plus all ~1300 global IUCN members (NGOs and government agencies etc.) plus the IUCN Commissions should phase out use of lead ammunition in wetlands and where scavengers were at risk. This was portrayed in the British shooting media as good news for lead ammunition.

5.3 UK agencies and organisations:

Scottish Natural Heritage have produced a position document on Use of Lead Ammunition to Kill Deer: both they and Forestry Enterprise Scotland currently use non-lead ammunition when controlling deer on public land where the calibre and species are appropriate.

6. LAG website: to receive visitor data

Following an increase of visits to the site following the submission of the LAG report, visits to the site had continued at a relatively low but steady level.

7. Any other business

7.1 Membership of LAG

JK, informed the meeting that with regret he wished to stand down from LAG following the next meeting, thus giving the Group time to find a successor with expertise in animal welfare, reflecting on the fact that he had retired from UFAW some time ago during his tenure on LAG. He felt the LAG had done a good job and was disappointed that its recommendations had not been better heeded. He wishes LAG good luck in its future work.

JS expressed the Group's considerable gratitude to JK for all his work and sound advice over the past six years.

There were discussions on who might be best placed to take up the animal welfare aspects of the LAG's work.

[Post meeting note: Since the meeting we are delighted that JK's successor at UFAW, Dr Robert Hubrecht OBE, has agreed to join the Group and represent the animal welfare stakeholder interest. Dr Hubrecht's professional and scientific CV will be published on the LAG website.]

8. Date of next meeting

Action Point 20.4: RC to find date for next meeting in e.g. last week of February 2017.

Action points carried forward

Action point 20.1: LL to make further inquiries with FSA concerning FSA advice to consumers.

Action Point 20.2: Post letter to new Secretary of State on LAG website (in keeping with previous disclosure of all ministerial correspondence).

Action point 20.3: JS to circulate terms of reference for discussion and posting on LAG website.

Action Point 20.4: RC to find date for next meeting in e.g. last week of February 2017.