



## ACGC AGM: Allan Bullen continues as Chair

The ACGC Annual General Meeting took place on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February, with Victoria's Allan Bullen (pictured) once more re-elected as Chair, unopposed and unanimously. Similarly, Tasmanian ACGC Director Gerard Mus was unanimously re-elected to the position of Vice Chair. ACGC congratulates Allan and Gerard and thanks them for their ongoing efforts on behalf of Australian chicken growers.



## Don't mince words: definitions of meat and other animal products

The Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee has completed its inquiry into the current state of meat category branding in Australia, focusing on the labelling of plant-based and synthetic products with terminology traditionally associated with meat. While supportive of such products developing their markets in Australia, the Committee was firm in its support for traditional animal-based protein industries, as made clear in Recommendation 6:

### **Recommendation 6**

*The committee recommends the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission develops a National Information Standard that defines and restricts the use of meat category brands to animal protein products. This standard should include guidance on the use of livestock imagery for labelling and marketing of plant-based protein products.*

Whether the Commonwealth Government accepts any or all of the Committee's recommendations is yet to be seen, but in the meantime the full report and recommendations can be found [here](#).

## Emerging threat – global avian influenza situation

***Please note the following advice from Australian Chicken Meat Federation's Dr Kylie Hewson, together with the accompanying Technical Issue Update:***

In the past two months, there have been over 1050 new high path avian influenza outbreaks reported in domestic and wild birds across Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America - this is a considerable presence of virus. Please refer below to the notice distributed by Australia's Chief Veterinary Officer, Mark Schipp, and the attached updated technical notice from Wildlife Health Australia (WHA). WHA coordinates the Australian Wild Bird Avian Influenza surveillance program, and I sit on the committee that oversees the programme.

**Note that while the increased presence of high path AI overseas does increase the risk of an exotic AI being introduced into Australia, the overall risk of this occurring is still considered to be low**, because waterfowl appear to be largely responsible for long-distance movement of high path AI, and there are no waterfowl that migrate between Asia and Australia.

However, migratory shorebirds can also carry high path AI, and do travel between Australia and Asia. They are currently in Australia, having travelled here during our spring as part of their regular migratory cycle. During the next migration event (March – June) most of these birds will move north, i.e. away from Australia. Hence, the risk of viral introduction via birds migrating to Australia is low between the Australian summer and autumn. **The period posing an increased risk of introducing these avian influenza strains will be when these migratory birds return to Australia from the northern hemisphere between September and November 2022.**

That said, **avian influenza outbreaks in poultry in Australia (including the Victorian outbreak in 2020) have been due to strains of avian influenza which are closely related to low path strains already circulating in Australian wild bird species**, and have not been caused by an imported strain from Asia or elsewhere. A reminder that high levels of biosecurity are needed on poultry farms to reduce the immediate risks posed by Australian waterfowl.

For more information, please visit the WHA website:

<https://www.wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au/AboutUs/News.aspx#GlobalHPAIupdate>