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Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee Comataidh Eaconomaidh Dùthchail is Co- cheangailteachd

Subordinate Legislation considered by the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee on 22 May 2019



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Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee

To consider and report on matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and the matters falling within the responsibility of the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.



<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/rural-committee.aspx>



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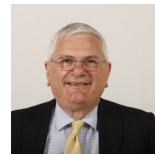
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Executive summary

1. This report details the Committee's consideration of the draft Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 (which is a draft affirmative instrument) and the Code for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens (Revocation) (Scotland) Notice 2019 (which is subject to approval by resolution and follows the same procedure as for an affirmative instrument).

The Committee agreed to recommend to the Parliament that it approves the draft affirmative instrument and the Notice.

Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 [draft] and Code for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens (Revocation) (Scotland) Notice 2019

The Committee reports to the Parliament as follows—

2. On 1 May 2019:
 - the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 [draft] was laid before the Parliament and was subject to the affirmative resolution procedure. This report refers to these as the 'draft regulations';
 - the Code for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens (Revocation) (Scotland) Notice 2019 was laid before the Parliament and was subject to the affirmative resolution procedure. This report refers to this as the 'Notice'.

Purpose of the draft regulations and the Notice

3. The draft regulations provide that any person responsible for a farmed animal must not attend to that animal unless they are acquainted with, and have access to, the Guidance for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Meat Breeding Chickens, if such guidance is relevant to that animal. The person must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that anyone they employ does not attend to the animal unless they are acquainted with, have access to and have received instruction on how to comply with the Guidance for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Meat Breeding Chickens, if relevant to the animal.
4. The Notice revokes the code entitled “Codes of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens”, which was published by the Scottish Ministers on 18 July 2005. This follows the publication by the Scottish Ministers of “Guidance for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Meat Breeding Chickens” on 1 April 2019. This Guidance provides updated recommendations in relation to the welfare of chickens to persons responsible for meat chickens and meat breeding chickens.

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee consideration

5. The Delegated Powers and Law Reform (DPLR) Committee considered the draft regulations and the Notice at its meeting on [14 April 2019](#) and agreed not to draw the Parliament's attention to them on any grounds within its remit.

Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee consideration

6. At its meeting on 22 May the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee took evidence on the draft regulations and the Notice from Mairi Gougeon, the Minister for Rural Affairs and the Natural Environment, and Scottish Government officials.
7. In discussions, the Minister explained that the combined effect of the draft regulations and the Notice will be that the old code of practice on meat chickens will no longer be in force and the requirements that were in force in relation to the code will now apply in relation to the new meat chickens guidance.
8. The Committee raised concerns that some of the guidance on chickens was “vague”, in particular, its reference to culling training being provided by a stockperson “with appropriate experience”. In response to questions about how ‘appropriate experience’ could be quantified, the Scottish Government said that it could not be very prescriptive in some elements of guidance. The Minister added that animal welfare organisations and industry had been consulted on, and were “generally content” with, the guidance.
9. The Minister subsequently moved the following motions—
 - S5M-17291—That the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee recommends that the Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 [draft] be approved.
 - S5M-17290—That the Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee recommends that the Code for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens (Revocation) (Scotland) Notice 2019 be approved.
10. The Committee agreed both motions without division.
11. The [Official Report](#) of the meeting is a full transcript of the discussion.

Recommendation

12. The Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee recommends to the Parliament that it approves the:
 - draft Welfare of Farmed Animals (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2019 and
 - Code for the Welfare of Meat Chickens and Breeding Chickens (Revocation) (Scotland) Notice 2019.

