

presented in annexes to the text and there are various appendices, one of which gives worked examples of domestic and overseas journeys.

The Order is not completely free of ambiguities and there are some with which even these guidance notes cannot help. For example, the Order covers the transport of all vertebrate animals (other than man) and other cold-blooded animals. However, the Order does not define 'other cold blooded animals' and the guidance notes are unable to help. It seems quite ridiculous that the internationally accepted taxonomic conventions are still frequently ignored in the drafting of laws concerning animals and that vague, undefined or poorly defined terms such as 'cold-blooded animals' remain prevalent in modern legislation. However, this is not the fault of those who prepared these guidance notes, who have done a good job. These notes will be helpful to transporters and to those responsible for enforcing the law. Ministers are committed to a review of the *Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997* later in 1998, and it is possible that these guidance notes may have to be subsequently revised.

Guidance on the Welfare of Animals (Transport) Order 1997. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Scottish Office Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Department and Welsh Office Agriculture Department (1998). 93pp. Paperback. Obtainable from Animal Welfare Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Government Buildings (Toby Jug Site), Hook Rise South, Tolworth, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 7NF, UK. Free.

Ethics of genetic engineering

The Ethics of Genetic Engineering is the latest volume in a series whose aim is to offer up-to-date information about important issues in the world. This volume looks at the cloning debate, genetically modified foods and genetic testing. It is assembled almost entirely of articles reprinted from newspapers, scientific journals and special interest groups. A list of organizations from which further information can be obtained is included and the whole booklet is indexed.

This booklet could be a useful teaching resource, for example, to contribute to project work up to sixth form level and as an introduction to the subject for non-scientists. Being based largely on newspaper articles, inevitably the focus is mostly on the more sensational aspects of genetic engineering. This makes for somewhat patchy coverage but there is, nevertheless, a reasonable overall balance and in the brief introduction the reader is encouraged to critically evaluate the material presented, to judge whether the articles included represent facts or opinions, and to look for biases.

Surprisingly, there is little mention of animal welfare issues – and what small, scattered contributions there are on the subject, do not contribute substantially to the debate. This is a regrettable shortcoming. However, the book is intended as a starting point only, and could no doubt be used effectively in this context by good teachers.

The Ethics of Genetic Engineering. Volume 12 of *Issues for the Nineties*. Edited by Donellan C (1998). Independence Educational Publishers: Cambridge. 44pp. Paperback. Obtainable from the publishers, PO Box 295, Cambridge CB1 3XP, UK (ISBN 1861680430). Price £6.45 (plus post and packing).

Recommendations and minimum standards for the welfare of dogs

This document is about the welfare of dogs kept as pets. In publishing the code, the New Zealand Animal Welfare Advisory Committee has indicated that it hopes to promote better dog welfare by providing assistance for Inspectors under the *Animal Protection Act 1960* and through the education of dog owners. The aim is to provide owners and handlers with principles for the care and use of dogs. Following a brief review of the laws relevant to dog welfare in New

Zealand and on the legal powers of Inspectors under the Act, there are sections on nutrition, water, housing, exercise, health and disease, transport, training, breeding, mutilations, and euthanasia.

This is a useful review and short summary of welfare standards for dogs. However, it is very brief and the attention given to various aspects of husbandry and welfare appears to be somewhat uneven. The sections on nutrition and housing are, for example, rather limited. Relatively more attention is given to aspects of training, from emphasizing the need for careful choice of an appropriate dog as a pet, to obedience classes, discipline and training aids – including the use of electric collars designed to give small shocks. The section on genetics recognizes that selective breeding has resulted in increased risks of a variety of disorders, some of which are very likely to cause discomfort or pain. However, it is only a recommendation, rather than a minimum standard or requirement, that breeders should not perpetuate disorders that adversely affect welfare. Surely a stronger line should be taken on this point (and not just in New Zealand). The code states that, as a minimum standard, all reasonable steps must be taken to safeguard dogs involved in sporting activities from injury or distress, and so it seems inconsistent that the same level of care should not have to be exercised in selective breeding.

Such overviews of welfare measures and minimum standards, for species other than farm and laboratory animals, are rather scarce. This is a pity, because establishing minimum standards is an important exercise. Apart from the immediate value of clarifying what is and is not legal or acceptable, the process of drawing up standards reveals any gaps in knowledge and inconsistencies in approach. Furthermore, a clearly drawn baseline provides a platform for raising minimum standards in the future. For all these reasons, this is a useful booklet and there is a good case for the production of similar texts covering other species kept as pets. Dog owners and handlers in New Zealand will need to be familiar with these standards, but they are also likely to be useful in promoting dog welfare in many other countries.

Code of Recommendations and Minimum Standards for the Welfare of Dogs. New Zealand Code of Animal Welfare No 20. Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (1998). 33pp. Paperback. Obtainable from Animal Welfare and Environment Section, MAF Regulatory Authority, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, PO Box 2526, Wellington, New Zealand (ISBN 047807459X, ISSN 1171-090X). Free.

Changes to legislation affecting wild birds

Birdcrime '97 is a summary of offences reported to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Investigations Section during 1997. It lists and describes cases of illegal poisonings, shootings, egg collection, and taking of live birds from the wild. The report also draws attention to changes in legislation affecting wild birds.

Under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981*, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, issues general licences allowing authorized persons to kill or take 13 species of wild birds for the purpose of protecting agriculture (eg preventing the spread of disease, damage to livestock, foodstuffs for livestock, crops, timber, or fisheries), providing there is no other satisfactory alternative. The species that may be killed or taken are: carrion crow (*Corvus corone*), rook (*C. frugilegus*), jackdaw (*C. monedula*), jay (*Garrulus glandarius*), magpie (*Pica pica*), feral pigeon (*Columba* spp), woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*), collared dove (*Streptopelia decaocto*), great and lesser black-backed gulls (*Larus marinus* and *L. fuscus*), herring gull (*L. argentatus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) and house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).

From 1 January 1998, these licences have had new conditions. Cage traps must be checked daily when in use. At each inspection birds caught in the trap must be removed, and when traps