

Minutes of the General meeting of the ECEIM held at Barcelona, Spain 30th January 2009

1. Present

Marianne Sloet, John Pringle, Gunther van Loon, Gerald Schusser, Wolfgang Scheidermann, Bernard Ohnesorge, Jaroslav Hanak, Esco Aguilera-Tejero, José Carlos Estepa, Anne Couroucé-Malblanc, Tamarinde Laan, Cornélie Westermann, Lisa Katz, Youssef Tamzali, Derek Knottenbelt, Caroline Hahn, Conny Herholz, Kerstin Fey, Han van der Kolk, Shaun McKane, Meret Wehrli Eser, Colin Schwarzwald (Associate Diplomat), Inge Wijnberg, Josh Slater, Vince Gerber, René van den Hoven, John Keen, Tim Brazil, E. Jose Cunilleras (Congress Organising Committee member), Kris Hughes, John Abbott, Lluís Monreal, Michael Hewetson.

2. Apologies

Marie-Thérèse Picavet, Mark Hillyer

3. Welcome

The ECEIM President, Josh Slater, welcomed the Diplomates who were present at the meeting. He said that the ECEIM had come a long way since its inception in 2003: it had held three examination rounds, three congresses, two residents' meetings, had a healthy number of Diplomates (73), an increasing number of residents in both standard and alternative training programmes and more residents sitting the examination at each round. Using the analogy that the College was growing out of childhood into a young adult, he said that it was now time to review some of the procedures and organisational structures that have served the College very well through its developmental phase but require modification now the College is established looking to the future. The College currently has provisional recognition from EBVS. The next strategic objective is to achieve full recognition from EBVS. The deadline for this is 2012 but he said that the Board will aim to apply for full recognition in 2010, which will leave time for reapplication, if required, before the 2012 deadline. Looking ahead, he said that the Diplomates of ECEIM are nicely spread across Europe and the College must continue to engage with the challenge of facilitating training in regions of Europe with few veterinary schools or less well developed higher education sectors and small numbers of Diplomates to supervise residents, especially in ancillary training rotations like anaesthesia and clinical pathology.

There are three new *de facto* members, Heidi Nollet, Catherine McGowan and Emmanuelle van Erck.

The introduction of the Forum has had some technical problems but Tamarinde Laan will try to get it running. There is a residents' List serv, where all residents can be reached by email.

Diplomates are informed that name and contact details of them will be on the EBVS website unless actively denied.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last General Meeting, held in Liege on 07.02.08, were accepted as a true record of that meeting.

5. Matter arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 07.02.08

5.1 Call for volunteers to serve on ECEIM committees

The President reminded Diplomates that there would be several vacancies on ECEIM committees during 2009 due to current committee members reaching the end of their terms. He asked all Diplomates who would like to volunteer for committee work, either now or in the future, to contact the Secretary Dr Cornélie Westermann

Action: All Diplomates

5.2 Case log progress

An action point at that meeting was to find out if the case log of 600 supervised cases is realistic by reviewing the progress of residents submitting cases logs for review by the Education Committee in 2002. Shaun McKane (Education Committee chair) said that there did not seem to be a problem for residents following standard programmes and that all residents submitting case logs in 2008 seemed to be on track to reach the 600 target. However, there were problems for residents following Alternative Programmes, especially for CR1 cases, and that this might be one of the reasons that some Alternative Programme residents had withdrawn in 2008. There was clarification that whilst a case cannot be logged in more than one category, if it is a complex case the most appropriate category can be selected. There was discussion, and agreement, that all efforts should be made by the Education and Credentials Committees to support and facilitate the alternative route while keeping the requirements the same as the standard route. The meeting accepted that it could be difficult for alternative route residents to gain the required clinical experience in all case log categories and to undertake all the training rotation requirements, especially since some institutions charge residents to visit and gain experience. There was discussion, and agreement, that the Education and Credentials Committees should discuss with the Board how to implement 'telemedicine'-like supervision arrangements (distance supervision via the internet coupled with planned face-to-face meetings between resident and supervising Diplomate) to facilitate training and to decide which training topics/categories would be suitable for this approach. It was agreed that the Secretary should work with the Chair of the Education Committee to survey all ECEIM training institutions and produce a spreadsheet listing which training rotations are available at which institutions, whether visiting residents are allowed and whether charges are made. The spreadsheet will be posted on the ECEIM website and updated by the Education Committee whenever a new training institution is approved or whenever changes of provision for existing training institutions are notified to the Education Committee

Action: The Secretary and Education Committee Chair to survey approved training institutions

5.3 Defacto applications 2009

Following the EBVS ruling that ECEIM should invite applications from individuals who did not apply during the original *defacto* process because they were conducting a clinical PhD, the President confirmed that the process had taken place as laid out at the Liege meeting. The result was that three new *defacto* Diplomates had been appointed (Dr Heidi Nollet, Dr Catherine McGowan and Dr Emmanuelle van Erck). The President and Diplomates welcomed the new members to the college.

5.4 ECEIM Forum and Residents' Listserv

At the Liege meeting it had been agreed that the College should establish a Forum on its website for exchange of ideas and questions etc. This had been set up by Dr van Loon but the site had experienced problems with spam and unwanted external traffic and so had

been shut down. Dr Laan had volunteered to take this project on and act as curator of the forum and hoped to have the forum running again soon.

Action: Dr Laan

5.5 Publication requirements

Following the discussion at Liege, and subsequent feedback from Diplomates, the President proposed a simplification and clarification to the guidance note '*Publications required to become an ECEIM Diplomate*' that provides additional information about the College's by-laws relating to publication requirements (Article 5.1). The President explained that the proposed changes related to the definition of a case series where a case series is submitted as an original research paper. The current wording in the guidance notes '*Publications required to become an ECEIM Diplomate*' is:

For the purposes of credentials assessment, the term "original research paper relating to equine internal medicine" is defined as a manuscript published or "in press" in a journal that either has an Impact factor > 0.5 or is listed on our approved journal list that describes:

- *A hypothesis driven experimental study utilizing in vivo, ex vivo or in vitro techniques to address an objective relevant to equine medicine or its underpinning sciences.*
- *A prospective clinical study addressing a question relevant to equine internal medicine provided that it includes more than 20 cases.*
- *A retrospective case series addressing a problem relevant to equine internal medicine provided that it includes more than 20 cases.*

Proposed amended wording:

For the purposes of credentials assessment, the term "original research paper relating to equine internal medicine" is defined as a manuscript published or "in press" in a journal that either has an Impact factor > 0.5 or is listed on our approved journal list that describes:

- *A hypothesis driven experimental study utilizing in vivo, ex vivo or in vitro techniques to address an objective relevant to equine medicine or its underpinning sciences.*
- *A prospective or retrospective clinical study addressing a question relevant to equine internal medicine that would normally include 20 or more cases; smaller case series should be approved by the Credentials Committee in advance*

Following discussion, it was agreed that this revised wording should be adopted.

Action: The Secretary to supply the agreed revised wording for this document to the Treasurer for posting on the ECEIM website

6. Examination Committee Report

Dr Vincent Gerber told the meeting that the 2009 examination had gone very smoothly thanks to a huge effort from the examination committee and the excellent logistical support provided by Marianne Sloet, Derek Knottenbelt and the local organisers. A storm had caused some disruption on the first day of the exam which had necessitated a change of venue part way through the first paper of the General Examination. The numbers of candidates sitting the different sections of the examination were: 21 (including 2 re-sit candidates) for the General Examination, 17 (including 2 re-sit) for the Certifying

Examination, 23 for the Essay Paper and 24 (including 6 re-sit) for the Objective Case Management examination. Dr Gerber thanked the Diplomates for their work in rating the various sections of the examination and explained how the rating results are used to help set the pass marks for the different sections of the examination. He confirmed that the official results will be given to candidates before March 10th 2009.

7. Education committee

The chair of the committee Shaun McKane asked supervisors and residents to read the training brochure carefully. He said that the Residents' and Supervisors' Forum that had been held earlier in the Congress had been very useful and had identified several areas of confusion and also procedural matters of the committee that could be improved. It was agreed that an appropriately completed case log will be put on the website as an example to assist candidates in their dealings with the Education and Credentials Committees. He reported that the committee had received requests from Associate Diplomates working in South Africa and Australia to be granted approval to run ECEIM residencies. Up until now ECEIM policy had been to approve only training programmes within Europe but, following discussion, there was agreement at the meeting that training programmes could be approved in any country provided the programme was suitable, that ECEIM training standards were met, that the institute had adequate infrastructure and facilities and that the programme was supervised by a Diplomate or Associate Diplomate. It was agreed that this item should be referred to the ECEIM Board for discussion and action.

Action: ECEIM Board

Dr McKane summarised the current training provision within the ECEIM.

- At present the College has 22 registered training institutions for Standard Residency Programmes. Six institutions were newly approved or reapproved this year: Clinic de Bosdreef, Glasgow, Leipzig, Barcelona, Munich and Zurich
- At present the College has 57 registered residents, 51 in the Standard Programme and 6 in the Alternate Programme
- Two new alternative registrations were received and approved this year
- Nine new standard registrations were received and approved this year
- Three registrations were withdrawn: two alternative and one standard
- In 2010 15 more of the registered residents will potentially have completed their training programmes and be eligible to submit to the Credentials Committee to sit the 2011 examination.

19 case log submissions were reviewed in 2009:

- Three of these were complete log submissions with detailed information for each case logged.
- Of the 19 submissions all 19 were acceptable as submitted; however warnings were given to 5 first case log submissions by new residents, as to their case balance or low number of training weeks and the need to improve their training record by their next submission date.
- Some resident contact details are not correct or complete, particularly with respect to email addresses. Exam year meant that there were a number of emergency log appraisals.
- Submission dates are not adhered to by all residents.

Dr McKane flagged to the meeting that not all institutions have paperwork regarding their registration and that some residents are not registered with, or are not know to, the

Education Committee. He urged all residents and supervisors to make contact with the Education Committee to verify that their registration. He explained that one problem might be that some residents and supervisors had sent case logs and other documents to the wrong address and as a result these had never reached the Education Committee

Action: All residents and their supervisors

Overall, the ECEIM training programme continues to attract candidates, with 11 new registrations last year and a similar number expected this year. This represents a healthy growth of residents in training by about 15%, ensuring that the College will continue to grow in member numbers for the foreseeable future.

8. Credentials Committee Report

Professor Schusser said that as he had made a presentation to the Residents' and Supervisors' Forum earlier in the Congress, he would not be making a presentation at the General Meeting. He went on to explain he would be supporting a proposal from the Board later in the General Meeting to amalgamate the Education and Credentials Committees to simplify and streamline operations for the committees and also residents/supervisors.

9. Changes to ECEIM Committee Structure

The President outlined a proposal to make changes to the structures of the Education, Credentials and Examination Committees.

- a. **Education and Credentials Committees.** It was clear from feedback from both committees, both current and past, as well as residents and supervisors, that the current ECEIM structure with separate Education and Credentials Committees presented operational difficulties and inefficiencies for the committees and also residents/supervisors. In particular, the work of the Credentials Committee was complicated by not being fully involved in guidance given to candidates by the Education Committee and it was difficult for the Education Committee to properly advise candidates without detailed prior knowledge of Credentials Committee policies. The ECEIM Board therefore wished to make a proposal, for consideration and voting by the Diplomates, that the two committees be dissolved and a new, combined Education and Credentials Committee be formed that would oversee a resident's progression from first registration with the College through to receiving approval to sit the examination. Dr McKane and Professor Schusser both added their support to this proposal. After a discussion among the Diplomates it was agreed that this proposal would improve the operations of the two committees for all and should be supported. There was also agreement that the overall size of the committee should be five people (both committees are currently composed of 3 people). It was agreed that the Secretary would prepare a revision to the ECEIM Constitution to allow this reorganisation of the Education and Credentials Committees and circulate this to all Diplomates for a decision to be taken by electronic voting.

Action: Secretary

- b. **Examination Committee.** The President explained that the Chair of the Examination Committee (Dr Gerber) felt very strongly that the size of the examination committee should be increase by two people. This was because the examination was a huge logistical effort, both in the run up and during the

examination, and that it was extremely difficult to meet the demands of the examination with the current committee size. It was agreed that the Secretary would prepare a revision to the ECEIM Constitution to allow this increase in size of the Examination Committee and circulate this to all Diplomates for a decision to be taken by electronic voting.

Action: Secretary

10. ECEIM Congress 2009

Professor Lluís Monreal, the organiser of the excellent 2009 ECEIM Congress in Barcelona, summarized the congress on behalf of the organising committee: there were 129 delegates comprising 42 Diplomates, 6 associate Diplomates, 52 residents/students and 29 others. Two plenary speakers were ECEIM Diplomates and two were ACVIM Diplomates. There were 60 accepted abstracts (41 oral, 19 posters). He encouraged Diplomates to have a more active participation in the abstracts next congress.

The congress had done extremely well financially and had come in almost on budget (it was predicted to make a very small loss of 900 Euro) which was very pleasing given the comprehensive entertainment and social package (including a day for socialising and sight-seeing in Barcelona) that had been included in the registration fee.

The advanced interactive courses were rated extremely well. Suggested subjects for next time are clinical pathology/cytology, cardiology and dermatology.

Reactions from the meeting were enthusiastic, the social day in Barcelona was terrific and Lluís was congratulated by everyone at the meeting about the fantastic organisation.

11. Resident meeting 2010 and ECEIM Congress 2011

The next resident meeting will be the first week of February at the Veterinary Faculty in Vienna, Austria. Professor René van den Hoven, who will lead the organisation, gave a presentation about what to expect.

The 2011 exam and congress will be held in Toulouse, France. Dr Youssef Tamzali, who will lead the organization, promises that details will follow in Vienna, but that good food is guaranteed.

12. Treasurer's report

Gunther van Loon gave an overview of the College's finances. The final balance of the College is in a comfortable zone that we have to maintain. He explained that the ECEIM had achieved its financial reserves target and that its financial reserves policy, which would allow the College to discharge its commitments in the event that it ceased operating, was in line with other similar organisations. Exam fees for re-sit candidates have been lowered, and in 2011 a reduction on the examination application fee will take place.

He strongly advised everybody to inform him of changes in email or postal addresses.

13. Nominations Committee

This committee had no business to report as there have been no nominations to consider.

14. Any other business

- 14.1 The President proposed that it would be sensible for the ECEIM to invest in part time (4-6 hours per week) professional secretarial support. This was agreed by the meeting and all felt this would improve communication and operations, since this person could act as the main administrative point of contact for the College

Action: President.

- 14.2 There was discussion about changing the OCM examination into a written format following a question from the floor about whether non-native English speakers were disadvantaged by the OCM oral format. The Examination Committee agreed to review the relative performance of native and non-native English speakers in the OCM and report back. Dr Marianne Sloet offered to be the point of contact for this information from the Board.

Action: Examination Committee and Dr Marianne Sloet

- 14.3 Inge Wijnberg suggested that large institutions with multiple residents and supervisors could help improve their dealings with the ECEIM by adopting a coordinated approach and appointing a training coordinator (or similar role) in their organisation.

Action: larger institutions to note

- 14.4 Inge Wijnberg asked the meeting how everybody deals with the demand of 5 specialist interaction hours per week. There were mixed answers, varying from professional-only to mixed hours with students. There was agreement that the interaction hours did not have to be exclusively specialist-resident interactions and that all formats where the resident had contact with the supervisor for discussion were acceptable. This included student rounds.
- 14.5 Dr Han van der Kolk regrets that the three new Diplomats have not been welcomed officially (see Agenda Item 5.3). This was acknowledged by the President who apologised for this omission and hoped that mention of the new Diplomates at this meeting would be considered acceptable to all concerned. Dr van der Kolk also had some remarks about the constitution like the calendar year (art. 2.2), auditors (bylaws art 4.7), number of publications (bylaws art. 5) and Amendments of the bylaws (bylaws art.8). Regarding the calendar year the President explained that several different deadlines and critical dates exist within the meaning of 'calendar year'. Regarding auditors the President explained that the ECEIM now employs a professional accountancy firm to deal with all account auditing and submission to the regulatory authorities: there was thus no need for internal auditing. He reminded the Diplomates that the College is legally registered in the UK and is bound by UK company law and UK taxation law. The President did suggest that a copy of the ECEIM audited accounts could be brought to General Meetings in future for inspection by the Diplomates. Regarding changes to the by-laws, the president thanked Dr van der Kolk for spotting that an omission had been made when the constitution was last amended to allow electronic voting. It had been intended to add the provision for electronic voting into both the Constitution and the By Laws sections of the document but because of a clerical error, the revised section had only been written into the Constitution.

Action: ECEIM Board to consider how to rectify this mistake

- 14.6 Professor Lluís Monreal asked if a yearly congress is an option. The President answered that that this was an ambition and might be possible once the College is sufficiently large but that for the near future the current arrangement with alternating Resident Meetings and Congresses would continue.