



New Zealand Wool Classers Association

NZWCA BOARD MEETING

Via Zoom

Tuesday, 17th February 2026 – Started 7.30pm

Present: Marg Forde, Bill Dowle, Tracy Paterson, Cassie Johnston, Don Urquhart, Terry Mulcahy, Pip McConway, Sonya Johansen & Kevin Waldron

Absent:

1. Welcome and Roll Call

2. Apologies: Ratapu Moore, Allan Frazer & Mitchell Young

NOTE: Mitchell has responded to agenda items in writing to Registrar

Moved: Don Urquhart
Second: Pip McConway
CARRIED ALL

3. Minutes from last Board Meeting 10th November 2025 – Circulated and taken as read.

Called that the previous Meeting minutes 10/11/2025 be accepted as true & accurate.

Moved: Bill Dowle
Second: Don Urquhart
CARRIED ALL

New Zealand Wool Classers Association



4. Matters Arising

	Actions from Meeting 10 th November 2025	ASSIGNED TOO
Publish Classer attendance on Professional Development days and in what format and platform should this be displayed A classer is expected to attend a classer professional day every 3 years Develop a secondary list of other acceptable forums to remain compliant	Filming or Industry Day to go onto website. Cost to do this is \$240.00 as we have to set up a You Tube account also – Website provider	Project Lead: Allan For Agenda Item 9
Create a template for an Agreement between classers & growers. Needs to be one page, bullet pointed with simple language.	Unfortunately, did not meet deadline of end of June. Comments in Registrar’s report 29 th July. Marg to speak with Contractors Tracy & Marg to finalise – No rush	Tracy & Marg WIP
Classer winner at Wanaka Show to receive 1 years free NZWCA membership, credit to be issued if Classer has already paid. Presentation of certificate at show.	Create generic certificate for show to be completed by end of year	Annette Certificate needed by March 26
Sponsorships moving forward	A one-page document to be created to support sponsor engagement.	WIP to be completed NOTED: Board members to assist with informal outreach before a formal approach is made. On Agenda Item 9
Store classer inspection documents	Create wording/documents for website	Marg Let Annette know what forms you require in word Marg to update and send back to Annette to change on website WIP

New Zealand Wool Classers Association



	Contd.... Actions from Meeting 10 th November 2025	ASSIGNED TOO
Need to have confirmation of NZWTA & The New Zealand Wool Industry Charitable Trust sponsorships for 2025 by end of this month (November) to be paid in this financial year	<p>For NZWTA</p> <p>For The New Zealand Wool Industry Charitable Trust</p>	<p>Marg – COMPLETED & MONEY RECEIVED</p> <p>Tracy - COMPLETED & MONEY RECEIVED</p>
The Board discussed the Investment Portfolio and noted its continued low performance since its inception in 2021. It was acknowledged that the majority of funds are invested in a balanced fund, which offers lower returns but greater security.	<p>Make contact Hayden at Canterbury Finance in early 2026 to discuss alternative investment options.</p>	<p>Tracy has not yet contacted Canterbury Finance. The Secretary provided the end-of-year summary of the NZWCA investment portfolio. The Board discussed whether to change the risk profile and agreed to maintain the current strategy.</p>
Publish its Board Meeting Minutes on the Association’s website.	<p>Draft minutes are to be distributed by the Secretary to all Board Members. A 7-day stand-down period will apply to allow Board Members to provide any amendments or corrections.</p> <p>Following the stand-down period, the Chair will review and approve the minutes, advising the Secretary of any sensitive material to be redacted prior to publication.</p> <p>Once approved and finalized, the Secretary will publish the minutes on the Association’s website</p>	<p>Annette COMPLETED</p>

New Zealand Wool Classers Association



5. Financial report & Investment Reports (Appendages A, B & C) - all circulated, taken as read

Classer recent Resignation / Stencil Compliance

Tracy queried Amber's resignation, noting she understands Amber may still be classing. The Board reiterated the ongoing issue of enforcing stencil compliance, acknowledging there are currently no real consequences for non-compliance. It was noted that some brokers are not concerned if a classer does not hold a current stencil, particularly with contract wool. Discussion was held around whether NZWCA should take a firmer stance with brokers as an organisation. Marg previously submitted a proposal to the Wool Council, but this did not progress. It was suggested NZWCA approach NZFIAP and NZ Merino ZQ again, along with other relevant industry groups. Tracy agreed to revisit this matter. The inclusion of the Animal Welfare Card requirement was also raised.

Scholarships

Tracy raised questions regarding NZWCA's administration of the WRONZ Scholarships. Marg outlined the current process, as detailed in the letter provided to each scholarship recipient. It was discussed that a specified timeframe for course completion should be considered. This item is to be added to *Matters Arising* for further discussion.

Financial Reporting – Statement of Service Performance

In January, Annette advised that NZWCA is now required to submit a Statement of Service Performance as part of its financial reporting. While the accountant provided a template, it raised further questions, which were referred back for clarification. Wording describing NZWCA's activities was drafted, and Annette subsequently led the completion and submission of the statement. The Registrar acknowledged and thanked Annette for her work on this.

Board members were reminded to review the draft template carefully, as this is the first version and wording can be updated prior to finalising the financials.

Massey Wool Association money

The accountant advised that NZWCA may need to contact SIT regarding the gifted funds, in light of the original wording:

"The Massey Wool Association of New Zealand (Inc) has gifted the proceeds of their final funds, \$11,699.69, to the New Zealand Wool Classers' Association and envisage that these funds be used for Wool Training (Q Course/Level 4 Wool Handling Courses) and cover Administration Expenses."

As the course the funds are intended for is likely to change providers, the Board agreed to hold off on any communication with SIT at this stage pending further clarification.

Moved: the financial report to be true & correct: Tracy Paterson

Second: Bill Dowle

CARRIED ALL

6. Chairman's Report – Verbal

The Chair reported there was little additional business to note. A strong showing was acknowledged at the Central Otago A&P Show (Omakau), with excellent fleece entry numbers and a pleasing number of new exhibitors.

Tracy proposed that NZWCA introduce a trophy for the Highest Scoring Crossbred Fleece at the Central Otago Show. The Board agreed to proceed, following a similar approach to the Wanaka Show, but with the focus on supporting a grader rather than a classer. The proposed prize will be one year's membership to the Association.

Moved: Terry Mulcahy

Second: Don Urquhart

CARRIED ALL

New Zealand Wool Classers Association



7. Registrar's Report - circulated, taken as read

The Registrar noted that activity since the November 2025 Board meeting has been relatively light, reflecting the December/January period.

Classer Prefix Upgrades and Shed Management Inspections:

There continues to be a steady number of classers advancing their registrations, with administrative catch-up typically occurring post pre-lamb. Special acknowledgement was given to Board member Cassie Johnston on achieving her upgrade from H (Mid Micron) to D (Mid Micron and Merino), D2182.

Newsletter:

The end-of-year newsletter was completed and distributed in December. Content was compiled by the Registrar, with layout by Annette. Board members were encouraged to share the newsletter within their networks to strengthen NZWCA's profile and visibility.

NZ Certificate of Wool Technology and Classing – NZQA Review:

Following submission of the qualification review to NZQA, minor amendments ("tweaks") were requested in January to the proposed Level 4 Skills Standard, *Manage Wool Preparation in a Wool Harvesting Operation*. This Level 4 qualification was developed to provide a more viable pathway to help address the grader shortage. At this stage, no further update has been received from NZQA regarding approval of either the Level 4 qualification or the proposed Level 5 Certificate in Wool Technology.

Moved: Bill Dowle
Second: Don Urquhart
CARRIED ALL

8. Board succession and who's up for rotation

Board members due for rotation are Sonya and Terry. Representative positions due for rotation are Mitchell, Kevin, and Ratapu.

Sonya advised she will retire by rotation and will not seek re-election. It was noted that having another North Island classer on the Board would be beneficial.

Terry confirmed he is willing to continue.

Kevin confirmed he is happy to continue in his role as Broker Representative.

Mitchell not present at meeting yet to confirm his intention

Ratapu has advised that, due to family and business commitments, she will step down from the Board and her role as NZ Shearing Contractors Association representative. The Registrar acknowledged Ratapu's passion for the industry and her valuable contribution at Board level, and thanked her for her ongoing support of NZWCA as a member.

In closing, appreciation was expressed to all Board members for their continued commitment to the work and function of NZWCA.

New Zealand Wool Classers Association



9. Discuss future filming of Industry Day

Although Project Lead Alan was not present, the Board agreed to discuss the future filming of Industry Day, noting the significant time and effort required to deliver this last year. It was agreed to check viewing statistics to assess engagement and value.

Annette confirmed that NZWCA now has a complete record of attendees for previous Classer Professional Days dating back to 2014, and that this record will be kept updated going forward.

The Board acknowledged there were advantages to filming the event and discussed whether alternative technology options could be explored. Tracy will investigate what technology is commonly used for similar events and report back with possible options.

10. AGM/Industry Day in Alexandra

Annette confirmed she will be unable to attend this year due to an overseas work trip. Janet Smith has offered to assist. Marg and Annette to discuss planning and coordinating the day's activities.

Board members were reminded that accommodation is expensive, and Marg requested that members advise their travel plans as soon as possible.

Speakers for the event are confirmed. Kevin will manage the wool exercises and samples, with thanks from the Board for his contribution.

11. WRONZ Scholarships referenced in Registrar report - circulated, taken as read

The Registrar reported that a formal request for \$5,000 funding from WRONZ to continue the scholarship for Cert Wool Tech students commencing in 2026 had been made. WRONZ confirmed their Board approved the scholarship funding but deferred a decision on Tracy's request (as NZWCA Chair) to recommence their sponsorship donation to NZWCA.

The Registrar noted that administering the WRONZ scholarship requires significant time from both Annette and Marg, highlighting the value of WRONZ support.

Scholarship details and applications have been provided to SIT via Becks Braddick Tohiariki to ensure circulation to all Cert Wool Tech students beginning Semester 1 and 2, 2026. Last year, Semester 2 students missed initial communication due to the resignation of their wool tutor; a late call was made resulting in two additional recipients, bringing the total number of scholarships awarded in 2025 to five.

12. Sponsorship – General

It was again noted that Board members are to assist with informal outreach prior to any formal approaches for sponsorship or funding. A list of potential contacts will be reviewed and allocated to individual Board members, with preference for face-to-face engagement where possible.

Marg reiterated that, apart from awards, it can be awkward to approach sponsors when some of the funds support her wages.

Tracy will follow up with NZ Merino regarding sponsorship for the award.

It was acknowledged that not all Board members are in a position to undertake this outreach.

Annette will re-circulate the contact list to the Board for reference.

New Zealand Wool Classers Association



6. Wool Alliance details in Agenda appendage, referenced in Registrar report - circulated, taken as read

In December 2025, Tracy and Marg participated in a Teams call with Ross McIsaac of Wool Impact to discuss the newly created Wool Alliance. At the time, Beef+Lamb had recently joined the initiative and was providing network and administrative support, but no financial contribution. The meeting provided valuable insight into the Alliance's structure and strategy.

An update from Ross in February 2026 noted:

- The Wool Alliance had engaged stakeholders across the wool sector during late 2025.
- Overall support for the Alliance model was positive, with the sector recognizing the need for a collaborative, enduring structure to grow the wool industry.
- Key challenges identified included:
 - Defining clear scope boundaries for the Alliance.
 - Ensuring certification is supplementary to existing commercial certifications, avoiding duplication.
 - Maintaining B2B focus for market enablement and communications.
 - Addressing gaps in education and capability development, particularly pre-harvest wool training.
 - Ensuring fair, multi-sourced funding.
 - Maintaining transparency and visibility to rebuild trust in the sector.

The Alliance will hold a strategic session to refine its strategy, goals, activities, and funding mechanics, with updates to follow.

Marg's response to Ross highlighted NZWCA priorities:

- Incorporating verification of NZWCA classer and grader registrations into certification processes, allowing growers to easily confirm valid stencils.
- Emphasizing that wool harvesting training should occur before crews arrive on-farm, reinforcing the importance of pre-harvest education and capability development.

The Board noted this correspondence and the ongoing development of the Wool Alliance.

13. SIT Wool Tutor details in Agenda appendage, referenced in Registrar report - circulated, taken as read

The Registrar reported that following the departure of Emma O'Sullivan, the only current wool tutor at SIT is Becks Braddick Tohiariki. No formal communication on the vacancy had been received from SIT prior to outreach.

On 15 February 2026, Marg Forde emailed Iain Winslade, SIT Wool Programme Manager (cc'ing the NZWCA Chair and Secretary), requesting any updates on the wool tutor vacancy for the Board and offering NZWCA support in ensuring quality wool education. Marg also offered for SIT to join the Board meeting via Zoom if preferred.

Iain responded that the vacancy for a Wool Technology Tutor has been increased from 0.4 FTE to 0.5 FTE, and interviews will be held shortly, but details of applicants could not be shared.

Marg replied, acknowledging the update and confirmed she would convey the information to the NZWCA Board only. She reiterated that NZWCA's offer of support for SIT in relation to wool education remains open.

New Zealand Wool Classers Association



7. Rural Athlete programme details in Agenda appendage, referenced in Registrar report - circulated, taken as read

The Registrar reported on a proposal from Segard Masurel to include a short “Rural Athlete” session in NZWCA Industry Days. The session, developed by Laura Hancock, an educator, mobility specialist, Cert Wool Tech student, and WRONZ scholarship recipient, aims to support rural communities to feel well, move well, and perform well. It includes practical techniques using a spiky ball to improve mobility and reduce stiffness.

The Board noted Laura’s previous involvement in the WOMO Life shearer and woolhandling training programme, but agreed that the benefits of the initiative outweigh any past considerations.

The Board supported the inclusion of the Rural Athlete session in future Industry Days, welcoming the opportunity to have a knowledgeable speaker provide practical guidance to participants.

8. Proposal, funding key IWTO activities details in Agenda appendage, referenced in Registrar report - circulated, taken as read

The Registrar reported that in December 2025, NZWCA Board members were invited to provide feedback on a proposal from Wool Impact regarding co-funding for IWTO activities in 2025. The proposal outlined up to \$50,000 in funding to support:

- \$26,000 for ongoing work on biogenic carbon modelling; and
- \$24,000 for data collection and evaluation from four New Zealand farms using the model.

The work aims to address inaccuracies in lifecycle analysis (LCA) for wool, ensuring wool’s carbon footprint is more accurately represented and enhancing wool’s global competitiveness versus synthetics. Support would contribute to a globally endorsed methodology and strengthen NZ wool’s position in sustainable product claims.

The Board members were in favour of endorsing the proposal. However, the 16 January 2026 deadline was missed due to the summer break. The Board agreed that NZWCA should still respond and endorse the proposal, acknowledging the missed deadline.

MOTION:

- Tracy and Marg to draft and send the endorsement letter.
- Mitchell to review and approve the draft for context.
- The Chair will formally send the response to Wool Impact/National Council.

MOVED: Tracy Paterson
SECOND: Bill Dowle
CARRIED ALL

New Zealand Wool Classers Association



9. General

Special Consideration – Classer Registrations

For transparency, the Registrar noted two Provisional Classer registrations granted under special consideration, following discussion with Tracy and Don, and review of precedents and supporting evidence. Both registrations are acknowledged as exceptions to standard NZWCA criteria, with justification provided for each.

Ryan Cosgrove – Chair of Campaign for Wool NZ and Head of Sourcing and Material at Mons Royale, also CEO/founder of Fusca.

- Ryan sought registration to formally recognize his wool knowledge in industry roles, without intent to class commercially.
- Provided transcripts showing completion of three of four Certificate in Wool Technology and Classing papers; the final paper, Working in the Wool Industry, was incomplete.
- Feedback from tutor Laurie Boniface confirmed Ryan was an outstanding student, likely to have achieved top student recognition.

Decision: Granted Provisional Classer registration by special consideration, noted in perpetuity on the NZWCA Register, cannot be used on bales.

Craig Smith – General Manager of Devold NZ, former Chair of National Council of New Zealand Wool Interests Inc.

- Craig previously held broker/store classer registration but no longer had a valid shed stencil. Discussion followed an incident where he applied a personal mark to bale labels.
- Following consultation with Don, a compromise was agreed: Provisional Classer registration issued, conditional on completing one shed inspection and clip report (Merino) before issuance of a D stencil.

The Registrar noted that both cases reflect recognition from high-profile wool industry members and support NZWCA's role in maintaining the integrity and value of the registration system.

Ryan has acknowledged and expressed appreciation for NZWCA's work and the registration outcome.

10. Next Board Meeting

Will be held before AGM/Classer Professional Day May 14th

Janet Smith will be attending

Venue & Dinner TBC

MEETING CLOSED 9.10pm



New Zealand Wool Classers Association

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Store classer inspection documents	Create wording/documents for website	Marg Let Annette know what forms you require in word Marg to update and send back to Annette to change on website WIP
Classer winner at Wanaka Show to receive 1 years free NZWCA membership, credit to be issued if Classer has already paid. Presentation of certificate at show.	Create generic certificate for show to be completed by end of year	Annette Certificate needed by March 26
Sponsorships moving forward	Re distribute list of sponsors	Annette
WRONZ Scholarships	Discuss current requirements around administration of scholarship. Main point should we have a timeframe on completion of certificate	Tracy & Marg
You Tube Industry Day Videos	Ask website provider if they can see how many times the videos have been viewed	Annette
AGM/Industry Day	Discuss what needs to happen to ensure everything is prepared for the day in Annette's absence	Annette & Marg
The Registrar reported that in December 2025, NZWCA Board members were invited to provide feedback on a proposal from Wool Impact regarding co-funding for IWTO activities in 2025	Board agreed we will still send feedback even though date has passed	Tracy and Marg to draft and send the endorsement letter. Mitchell to review and approve the draft for context. The Chair will formally send the response to Wool Impact/National Council.