

**RSPCA Chicken Standards Technical Advisory Group meeting
on Tuesday 18th October 2022**

Meeting Summary Notes

360 degree nipple drinkers

The group further discussed the use of high flow rate 360 degree nipple drinkers. Discussion focussed on recommendations from drinker manufacturers and breeding companies. The next version of the standards will include detailed requirements in relation to these drinkers, including for different bird weight categories.

Contingency planning

Contingency planning in the event of a Government housing order in relation to an Avian Influenza outbreak was discussed for free-range production. Discussion focused on key points for producers to consider, such as how to prevent wild birds entering the house, measures to be taken to safely store enrichment items (e.g. straw bales), and the provision of additional enrichment to encourage foraging behaviour.

Contingency planning relating to potential delays in the slaughter/killing of birds at the abattoir was also discussed, such as in the event of a mechanical breakdown of equipment or, in the gas of gas killing systems, a disruption to the supply of gas.

Brood and move systems

A number of issues related to brood and move systems were discussed including the indoor stocking rate and feeder space requirements for the brood phase, as well as transport crate requirements when transporting from the brooding to rearing shed. The next version of the standards will be updated to reflect these discussions.

Proposed changes to the standards

The group discussed minor proposed amendments and areas for upcoming development were highlighted, such as reserve slaughter equipment in abattoirs, more detailed standards relating to the use of antibiotics, and information on the potential benefits of verandas for free-range production.