

Veterinary Board of Tasmania

Annual Report
2016-2017



The Annual Report of the Veterinary Board of Tasmania is submitted to the Minister for Primary Industries and Water in accordance with section 6 of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987*.



Dr N L Leighton BVSc MACVSc

Chairman

Date: 4 September 2017

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Veterinary Board of Tasmania

ABN: 55 607 484 153

Address: PO Box 909 Sandy Bay TAS 7006

Phone: 03 6294 6961

Email: vbt@netspace.net.au

<http://dpiwwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/veterinary-board-of-tasmania>

Veterinary Board of Tasmania

Annual Report 2016-2017

Preamble

The *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1987* provides for the registration of veterinary surgeons, the regulation of the practice of veterinary surgery and incidental matters.

The Veterinary Board of Tasmania consists of five members appointed by the Minister for Primary Industries and Water. They are:

- three registered veterinary surgeons who have their primary place of business in Tasmania;
- a registered veterinary surgeon employed in the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) and nominated by the Secretary; and
- a consumer of veterinary services.

Primary functions of the Board are:

- to maintain and review standards for registration of veterinary surgeons, veterinary specialists, and veterinary service companies;
- to ensure that registered veterinary surgeons and registered veterinary specialists provide veterinary services in a competent manner;
- to arrange, where it thinks necessary and in such manner as it thinks appropriate, for the examination of persons seeking to become registered;
- to arrange, where it thinks necessary, for the inspection of veterinary establishments; and
- to hear and determine any inquiry under Part VI (Disciplinary Proceedings) of the Act.

The Board may also approve qualifications for persons seeking to become registered (s5A); and, by notice, may declare veterinary service standards (s5B).

The Board

On 30 June 2016, following a new selection process for members, the Minister appointed the following members for a period of three years.

Dr Neil Leighton (Chair)	Practitioner member
Dr Jane Dunnett (Deputy Chair)	Practitioner member
Dr Tering Davies	Practitioner member
Dr Andrew Davis	Nominee of the Secretary DPIPWE
Ms Bernadette Ulbrich-Hooper	Consumer of veterinary services

The positions of Chair and Deputy Chair were elected by members at the first meeting of the Board on 28 July 2016.

Meetings

During the year the Board met on the following occasions:

Meeting	Date	Location	Attendance
114	28 July 2016	Launceston	4
115	22 September 2016	Launceston	5
116	9 November 2016	Launceston	5
117	2 March 2017	Hobart	5
113	18 May 2017	Launceston	5

The Board is fortunate to be able to use DPIPWE offices for its meetings.

Dr Neale Ward, former Board member, agreed to continue as the AVBC delegate during 2016-17, a position he had held since 2005. Dr Ward attended each Board meeting, either in person or by telephone link in relation to AVBC items on the meeting agenda. The Board thanks Dr Ward for his longstanding commitment and contributions at a national level to the ongoing assurance of the quality of veterinary professional standards.

Registrar

The Registrar, Mrs Anne Horner, is appointed to a part time contract position in accordance with s7(1)(a) of the Act.

There were no changes to the *Veterinary Surgeons Act* or *Regulations* during the year.

Registrations

To practise veterinary surgery or provide a veterinary service in Tasmania, a person must be registered as a veterinary surgeon with the Veterinary Board of Tasmania; or, if not permanently resident in Tasmania, must be registered as a veterinarian in another state or territory (see National Recognition of Veterinary Registration (NRVR) p.5). Registration may be renewed for each financial year.

During the year, there were 32 new registrations and as at 30 June 2017 there were 284 registered veterinary surgeons entered on the Veterinary Register of Tasmania.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-2017
New Registrations	25P / 7S*	19	29	26	32
Registered at 30 June	244	252	267	265	284

*P: Primary, S: Secondary (/registered interstate) Secondary registration ceased December 2012.

Cancellations of registrations are made under the following circumstances:

- where the Board becomes aware that the registrant has died; or
- at the request of the registrant due to retirement from practice, departure from the state, or other reason for non-practice in this state; or
- by the Board due to non-payment of the annual registration renewal fee following service of the renewal advice notice.

Twelve registrations were cancelled in July 2016 for non-renewal of registration; and nine vets indicated they would not be renewing for 2017-18. The cancellation of their registration takes effect in July 2017. Of these nine, five moved or returned interstate, three moved or returned overseas and one retired. Two retired vets died during the year.

Recognised qualifications

The Act provides that a person is qualified to be registered as a veterinary surgeon if the person has attained a qualification approved by the Board, and is a fit and proper person to practise as a veterinary surgeon in Tasmania.

The Board has approved the qualifications recognized by the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc. (AVBC) as providing a holder with eligibility to apply for registration as a veterinary surgeon in Australia and New Zealand without further examination. The full list of qualifications is set out on the AVBC website, but in summary, all Australian and New Zealand veterinary degrees are approved:

Accredited faculties:

- University of Sydney
- Murdoch University (WA)
- Charles Sturt University (NSW)
- Massey University (NZ)
- University of Melbourne
- University of Queensland
- James Cook University (Qld)
- University of Adelaide

Overseas trained veterinarians who have been awarded the Australian National Veterinary Examination Certificate (NVE) or the New Zealand National Veterinary Examination Certificate (NZNVE) are also recognized. The NVE is administered by the AVBC. Upon successful completion of the NVE a candidate is issued with a certificate as proof that they have satisfied the examination requirements. All Australian Boards have agreed to accept the certificate as proof of professional competence.

Subject to some requirements, degrees and qualifications recognized by the following accreditation bodies are also recognized:

- Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) United Kingdom
- Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG)
- European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE)
- American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).

Specialist Registration

The Board has the power to register veterinary specialists in an approved speciality. Two veterinary specialists were registered during the 2016-2017 year. One is a specialist in Small Animal Surgery, and the other is a specialist in Cattle Management and Diseases.

A number of interstate registered veterinary specialists provide visiting specialist services in Tasmania under NRVR.

National Recognition of Veterinary Registration (NRVR)

NRVR has been enacted in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. This means that a Tasmanian vet may undertake locum work or short term work in those states without being required to hold registration there.

Under NRVR, Tasmania recognises all other states and territories' "full" or "general" registration, so interstate registered vets may undertake locum or short term work in Tasmania without being registered in Tasmania. (However, some jurisdictions issue limited or specific forms of registration to persons who may not otherwise be eligible for full registration. Such forms of registration are not recognised under NRVR.)

If an interstate registered vet moves to Tasmania, while they may work initially here under NRVR, they need to be registered in Tasmania within a reasonable time of settling here.

Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc.

The Australasian Veterinary Boards Council Inc. (AVBC) is a legal entity which has authority to speak and act on behalf of all veterinary registering authorities in Australia and New Zealand. Although it has no legislative power to impose any decisions made at meetings on any participating Boards, it has a valuable advisory function and makes recommendations to the Boards in the areas of:

- the accreditation of veterinary schools and courses leading to a degree in veterinary science or medicine;
- assessment of suitability for practice in Australia and New Zealand of persons with foreign qualifications, including the running of the NVE;

-
- uniform criteria for recognition of qualifications for registration;
 - provision of advice on matters concerning the occupational regulation of veterinarians, including general and specialist registration; and
 - encouraging harmonisation of the standards, regulations and quality assurance of veterinary services provided to the community in all jurisdictions.

The state and territory Veterinary Boards of Australia, the Veterinary Council of New Zealand and the Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) and the New Zealand Veterinary Association Ltd (NZVA) are members of AVBC.

AVBC members have discussions bimonthly, primarily by teleconference, with a face to face meeting for the AVBC AGM. The AVBC delegate, Dr Neale Ward, and the registrar attended the AGM which was held in Wellington New Zealand in May 2017.

Commencing in 2016, the AVBC hosts a national portal 'Search for Registered Veterinarians in Australia'. This portal provides a list of registered veterinarians in each Australian state and territory, as provided periodically by the registration boards. The Tasmanian list is updated quarterly.

The AVBC is financed by a levy on participating jurisdictions, based on the number of veterinary surgeons holding primary registration in that jurisdiction.

Exemption from Registration

Section 11 of the Act makes it an offence for a person to engage in the practice of veterinary surgery or render a veterinary service unless that person is a registered veterinary surgeon. There are some exceptions to the offence provision, including veterinary students acting under the direct supervision of a registered veterinary surgeon and any other 'prescribed case'. The penalty for breach of section 11 is a fine not exceeding 50 penalty units.

Section 13 exemption

Section 13 provides that an individual may apply to the Board for exemption from the operation of section 11 in relation to a specific veterinary service.

As at 30 June 2017, there are two exemptions in place:

- An exemption under s13 has been granted annually since 1994-95 to an artificial breeding operator to enable him to perform laparoscopic artificial insemination of sheep.
- An exemption under s13 has been granted annually since 2007 to an overseas trained veterinarian employed by an interstate pharmaceutical company. The exemption is limited to the diagnosis of pig and poultry conditions and is conditional upon the person holding limited registration with the NSW Veterinary Practitioners Board.

Regulation 5(2) exemption

Regulation 5 prescribes two categories of persons who are exempted from the provision of s11.

- National Veterinary Exam candidates: reg. 5(2)
An overseas trained vet studying for the final clinical National Veterinary Exam (NVE) is allowed to practise veterinary surgery without being registered, provided he or she is

working under the direct supervision of a registered veterinary surgeon. The person must seek approval from the Board prior to commencing work.

- Research and teaching: reg. 5(4)
Students and scientists at a licensed research institution (for example, the University of Tasmania), may provide a veterinary service for the purposes of teaching or research, if the work is part of a research project approved by an Animal Ethics Committee. The researchers must be either trained and assessed as competent by a registered veterinary surgeon in a particular technique required for a research project and be acting under the authority of that veterinary surgeon; or be supervised by and providing the veterinary service in the presence of a registered veterinary surgeon. In either situation, the vet must be nominated by the licensed institution.

Veterinary Service Standards

Section 5B of the Act provides that the Board may declare veterinary service standards (VSS) which may specify the standards of service, and may specify the rules of conduct of a veterinary surgeon in carrying on the practice of veterinary science.

Following amendments to the Act in 2012, VSS are enforceable and contravention of a VSS may be the basis of a finding that a veterinary surgeon is guilty of misconduct in a professional respect.

To date, the Board has declared three VSS:

- Standard of Professional Conduct (May 2016)
- Standards of Veterinary Premises (July 2014)
- Record Keeping by Veterinary Surgeons (2013)

There are also a number of additional documents listed on the Board website that were produced prior to 2012. These are considered minimum guidelines and conditions for veterinary surgeons. Although not yet declared, these guidelines are taken onto consideration when assessing complaints brought before the Board. The guidelines include:

- Supply of Prescription Animal Remedy Veterinary Drugs (under review as at 30 June 2017)
- Guide of Dispensing and Supply of Drugs and Poisons by Veterinarians
- Code of Practice for the Supply and Use of Veterinary Products (updated 2017)

Veterinary Practice Inspections

The Board inspectors carry out practice inspections on a five yearly cycle or as required. For example, inspections are carried out for new practices, if practices have had major renovations or if practices have changed ownership.

During the year 22 inspections were carried out across the State - South: 9; North: 7; North West 6. The inspection program included visits to both King Island and Flinders Island.

The Board met with inspectors in November 2016 and an inspector attended the regional Meet the Profession- Meet the Board meetings held in Hobart and Launceston.

The inspectors assess the practices against the Standards and in particular look at:

- the physical premises, including vehicles if a mobile practice;
- the equipment including sterilisers, imaging and anaesthesia machines;
- the pharmacy including the recording and storage of drugs;
- record keeping and continuing education.

The inspectors have an educative role as well as an inspectorial role and actively provide feedback to practices as to improvements and best practice. The Board considers the inspection reports and makes recommendations for follow up as necessary.

Communication

Website

The Board maintains a website established within the website of DPIPWE. The site provides information for the members of the profession and the public. The following information is provided:

- Membership of the Veterinary Board
- The Board's *Standards of Veterinary Practice*
- Instructions on making complaints
- The Board's newsletters and news items
- Details of services provided by the Board
- Details regarding Veterinary Service Entities
- Registration application forms
- Fees and charges
- An extract from the Veterinary Register of Tasmania (updated quarterly).

Newsletters

The Board issued Newsletters in July and December 2016 and March 2017.

Meet the Profession Meetings

Following the appointment of a new Board, the practice is for the Board to hold Meet the Profession-Meet the Board meetings in the regional areas. All members of the profession are invited to attend to meet the Board members and the regional Board inspector and discuss matters of interest. The Southern regional meeting was held in March 2017 in Hobart, the Northern regional meeting was held in Launceston in May 2017.

Information Sheets and news items

The Board periodically circulates news items including approved survey requests via email and the website. The email list is updated as part of the annual registration renewal process and emails are sent to most veterinary surgeons as necessary.

Poisons Act 1971

Veterinary Surgeons are subject to the *Poisons Act 1971* and *Poisons Regulations 2008* in relation to their responsibilities for scheduled substances under that Act. The Board has regularly liaised with the Chief Pharmacist, Pharmaceutical Services Branch, Department of Health and Human Services

in relation to matters arising under the Poisons legislation and Therapeutic Goods Administration throughout the year.

Complaints

A function of the Board is to hear and determine any inquiry under Part VI of the Act (Disciplinary Proceedings). A complaint may be made to the Board by any person against a registered veterinary surgeon or a person who was previously registered as a veterinary surgeon. The Board does not deal with complaints relating to veterinary fees or compensation.

Four complaints which had been carried over from the previous year were finalised. One complaint was received during the year and was carried over to 2017-18.

Complaint Outcomes:

S48 Informal proceedings:	
Dismissed with recommendations	1
S44 Inquiry:	
Finding of misconduct in a professional sense:	3
- 2 matters dealt with together: Fine and condition to attend an education course	
- 1 matter: Fine and undertaking to complete an education course	
Carried over to 2017-18	1
TOTAL	5

Financial Report

Approved Fees 2016-17

The Board is responsible for its expenses 'incurred in the administration of the Act' and has the authority to approve the fees under the Act. The Board also has the power to waive or reduce fees.

Section 57 of the Act provides that fees are payable to the Board and are not required to be paid into the Consolidated Fund. Further, to provide for scrutiny of the Board's approval of the fees, s57(4) provides that the relevant provisions of s47 of the *Acts Interpretation Act 1931* apply to an approval by the Board of fees payable under the Act. This means that the approved fees are published in the *Tasmanian Government Gazette* and tabled in both Houses of Parliament.

The Board reviewed the fees and decided that there would be no increase for the 2017-18 registration period. The current fees (as approved in August 2015) are:

Schedule

Column 1 - Item No.	Column 2 – Description	Column 3 – Fee \$
1.	Application for exemption under section 13 of the Act	590
2.	Application for registration under section 18 of the Act as a veterinary surgeon (plus pro-rata of initial registration fee under s21A)	120
3.	Application for registration under section 18 of the Act as a veterinary specialist (must be registered as a veterinary surgeon)	200
4.	Provisional registration under section 19 of the Act (plus pro-rata of initial registration fee under s21A)	120
5.	Temporary registration under section 20 of the Act (out of session fast track fee only payable if registration required within 10 business days of receipt of application)	80
6.	Initial registration fee under section 21A of the Act – (a) Full year (b) Three quarters of year (c) Second half of year (d) Final quarter of year	384 288 192 96
7.	Annual registration fee under section 22 of the Act (renewal)	384
8.	Application for approval under reg. 5(2) NVE candidate exemption	120
9.	Late fee (in addition to renewal fee) section 22(1A)	70

Auditors' Report 2016-17

Max Peck and Associates

ABN 40 322 767 816

Principal: Rendell W Ridge B.Ec Registered Company Auditor #161503

Independent auditor's report to members of Veterinary Board of Tasmania

I have audited the special purpose financial report of Veterinary Board of Tasmania for the year ended 30 June 2017.

Management Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Management Committee is responsible for preparation and fair presentation of the special purpose financial report and information contained therein. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. I have conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the accounts are free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting amounts and other disclosures in the accounts, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Concepts and Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements (Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views) (where applicable), and statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Board's financial position and the results of its operations and cash flows.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

To the best of my knowledge and belief, there has been no contravention of auditor independence and any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Limitation of Scope

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable to establish complete accounting control over cash received from all of its activities. Verification therefore has been limited to the receipt of funds recorded in the Board's financial records.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the special purpose financial report of Veterinary Board of Tasmania presents fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia the financial position of the Board as at 30 June 2017 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended.

MAX PECK & ASSOCIATES



Rendell W. RIDGE
4 September 2017

Office 5 Meath Avenue, Tarooma 7053
Telephone 03 6234 9267 Mobile 0419 588 575

Postal address P.O. Box 680, Sandy Bay, Tasmania 7006
Fax 03 6231 4967 Email rwidge@maxpeckassoc.com

Special Purpose Financial Report

Income and expenditure statement for the year ended 30 June 2017

REVENUE		
Registration renewal fees	\$101,960.00	1
New registrations, exemptions	\$12,246.00	
Services	\$500.00	2
GST on services	\$0.00	
GST refunded by ATO	\$1,059.00	
Interest Bus Online A/C	\$252.79	
Interest Term Deposits	\$3,716.74	
Miscellaneous	\$3,099.63	
From Term Deposit 05/04/2017	\$15,000.00	
	<hr/>	
Total revenue	\$137,834.16	
	<hr/>	
EXPENDITURE		
Registrar contract	\$55,992.00	
Registrar/Board admin expenses	\$2,258.47	3
Board sitting fees / travel expenses	\$13,296.67	4
Bank fees	\$120.00	
Inspections	\$8,551.33	
GST on Purchases	\$1,484.64	
GST on Services to ATO	\$0.00	
PAYG	\$4,977.00	
AVBC levy	\$6,890.00	5
Workers comp	\$1,232.37	
Audit fee	\$520.00	
Meeting expenses	\$1,671.08	6
Miscellaneous	\$3,718.63	7
	<hr/>	
Total expenditure	\$100,712.19	
	<hr/>	
I-Y: Operating profit	\$37,121.97	
Add balances brought forward:		
Operating Accounts 1/7/16	\$66,165.76	
Term Deposits 1/7/16	\$145,600.84	
Less from Term Deposit 05/04/2017	<hr/> -\$15,000.00	
Balance carried forward	<hr/> \$233,888.57	
	<hr/>	
Balance represented by:		
Operating accounts balance 30/06/2017	\$99,570.99	
Term deposit balances 30/06/2017	\$134,317.58	
	<hr/>	
Net position 30/06/2017	\$233,888.57	

Notes:

1. 2016-17 was the first full year that the annual registration year aligned to the financial year. The Board approved annual renewal fee for 2016-17 was \$384.
2. The Board charges an administrative fee for services (Letters of Good Standing, copies of the Register and for follow-up practice inspections).
3. Administration expenses incurred by the registrar in carrying out the Board's functions– for example: telephone, internet, stationery, postage costs.
4. The Board is responsible for Board members' sitting fees and expenses and members' ATO PAYG. The amount shown reflects the sitting fees and travel costs for five Board meetings (five double sessions) and two Meet the Profession meetings. The remuneration per meeting as approved by the Minister was \$439 (chair) and \$333 (members). Travel expenses are paid at the government rate. The DPIPWE member does not receive a sitting fee.
5. The Board pays an annual levy (plus GST) to the AVBC in January each year based on the number of registered vets as at 30 June of the preceding year.
6. Meeting expenses include the Meet the Profession meeting room hire and members' meals and accommodation expenses.
7. Miscellaneous expenses included inquiry costs, overpayment refunds and the registrar's expenses for attendance at the annual registrars' meeting and AVBC AGM (which were reimbursed by the AVBC.) The Board delegate's expenses for attendance at the AVBC AGM are reimbursed directly by the AVBC.

Other Statutory requirements

One request was made to the Board under the *Right to Information Act 2009* and no requests were made under *Personal Information Protection Act 2004* during 2016-17.

Demographics of the Profession

As part of the registration renewal process, registered vets are requested to provide information on their practice for the preceding year. The figures from 2013 onwards relate to Tasmanian vets only, as there is no longer a category of secondary registration for visiting interstate vets.

The information headed '2017' in the table relates to the 2016-17 year. The figures are quoted as a percentage (%) of survey respondents.

Survey forms distributed	280
Survey forms completed	191

Year of Renewal	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Work Status										
Full time	67	67	65	63.3	63.0	54.9	54.5	57.1	52.2	52.4
Part time	23	21	23	25.8	28.0	35.1	35.0	34.2	37.4	41.3
Retired	10	12	12	10.9	8.9	9.9	10.5	8.7	10.4	6.3
Work Location										
Tasmania	67	67	68	70.6	68.4	93.1	95.2	95.7	97.0	92.0
Tasmania & Interstate/overseas	23	26	24	21.3	24.6	5.2	3.6	3.7	1.8	7.5
Interstate/Overseas	10	7	8	8.1	6.9	1.7	1.2	0.6	1.2	0.5
Type of Employment										
Private Practice	82	80	83	80.2	83.1	83.1	85.1	86.1	83.4	81.7
University	1	2	1	.09	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	1.2	2.2
Government Service	10	9	8	8.1	7.1	11.5	8.9	9.1	9.9	11.1
Industry	2	4	3	4.1	3.1	1.1	1.8	0.6	1.2	1.1
Other	5	5	5	6.8	6.7	3.8	3.6	3.6	4.3	3.9
Type of Practice/Work (Major Activity)										
Large Animal	7	9	7	9.6	6.8	2.2	3.6	4.5	2.4	5.5
Small Animal	37	40	41	40.2	37.4	46.2	48.6	48.3	50.9	53.2
Mixed Practice	27	27	25	27.4	28.1	34.2	31.5	28.4	27.9	24.4
Equine	7	6	9	6.8	6.8	4.9	4.0	4.5	3.0	3.3
Aquaculture	3	3	3	3.7	2.1	1.6	2.4	1.1	1.8	1.6
Regulatory/Advisory	5	4	4	3.2	3.8	3.8	4.1	6.3	6.7	5.0
Consultancy	2	2	1	1.8	3.4	1.1	0	0.6	1.2	1.6
Research/Laboratory	3	3	3	2.3	2.1	1.6	1.7	1.1	1.2	1.6
Industry	1	2	2	0.9	0.8	0	0	0	0	0
Avian/Poultry	2	1	1	0.9	0.8	0	0	0	0	0
Other/Specialist	4	2	3	1.8	4.3	0	0	0.6	0	0.5
Non-Veterinary	2	1	1	1.4	0.8	1.1	1.7	1.7	1.2	0
Wildlife					2.1	3.3	2.4	2.8	3.0	3.3
Teaching					0.4	0	0	0	0.6	0
Average weekly hours worked *	37.9	37.5	38.2	34.8	30.9	43.4 18.6	41.9 19.2	44.0 20.0	44.0 20.7	41.9 18.4

Note * Only 80% of 2017 respondents provided an hours worked / week estimation for 2016-17. Full time and part time hours are shown separately for 2013 onwards.