



The Hon Jaala Pulford MP

Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Regional Development



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Associate Professor Peter Mansell
President
Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria
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Dear Associate Professor Mansell

STATEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS FOR THE VETERINARY PRACTITIONERS REGISTRATION BOARD OF VICTORIA

I am pleased to provide you with this Statement of Expectations (SOE) for the Veterinary Practitioners Registration Board of Victoria (the Board). This SOE applies for the period of 1 January 2018 to 30 June 2019, or until otherwise amended.

Improving the administration and enforcement of regulation

This SOE sets out my expectations of the Board's contribution to the Government's program to reduce red tape affecting businesses, not for profit organisations, government service providers and households, by promoting greater efficiency and effectiveness in the administration and enforcement of regulation. It also outlines my expectations on broader improvements for the Board's performance.

As Minister for Agriculture, I am responsible for administering the Veterinary Practice Act 1997 (the Act) that affects businesses and the broader Victorian community. This SOE should be read within the context of the objectives, obligations and functions outlined in the Act and associated regulations as amended.

This SOE outlines key governance and performance objectives and targets aimed at improving the administration and enforcement of regulation and reducing its cost impact on business and the community.

This SOE replaces the SOE for the Board issued on 30 June 2017.

Improvements and targets

Based on consultation between the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) and the Board, I have identified key elements of governance and operations where there are opportunities for the Board to make improvements that would reduce cost impacts on business. The Board is expected to identify activities it will undertake to achieve the following performance improvements and targets:

Timeliness

The Board must ensure that it avoids unnecessary delays for its regulated parties. I expect the Board to clearly communicate timeframes associated with applications, registration, and decision making processes to applicants. I also expect that the Board will make most decisions within these timeframes (after applicants provide all required information), and provide reasons where it does not.

I expect the Board to measure the time taken by regulated parties and the community during applications, and to implement methods to reduce this time through revisions to forms and improvements in its capability and capacity to interact with stakeholders electronically.

Risk-based strategies

Applying a risk-based approach to regulatory practice can improve the outcomes of management and compliance activities. I expect the Board to establish a clear approach to risk-assessment and risk-based regulation, and to publish these objectives to ensure they are available to all regulated parties. I also expect the Board to undertake a review of current practices and develop risk-based compliance strategies where appropriate.

Compliance related assistance and advice

The risk of non-compliance with regulatory requirements is significantly reduced by regulators providing clear advice and assistance to stakeholders seeking to understand their obligations. I expect the Board to improve the clarity and currency of advice provided to regulated parties to ensure it is both comprehensive and easy to understand. The Board must ensure that 100% of advice provided to its members and the community is reviewed and updated at an appropriate frequency to ensure currency and relevance. Advice must be clear, concise, and written in plain English.

In dealing with stakeholders, I expect all of your regulatory staff to be:

- helpful
- respectful
- impartial
- proportionate
- predictable
- transparent

I also expect that the Board will engage with stakeholders to seek feedback on your progression against these principles and report this to me as part of your annual reporting arrangements.

Accountability and transparency

Transparency is a key component of good regulatory practice. All Victorian regulators are expected to operate in a transparent manner, with particular regard to management decision making, cost recovery, and expenditure processes.

I expect the Board to be transparent in its operation with all stakeholders and regulated parties, by clearly documenting the rationale for its statutory decision making and communicating these regularly and effectively to affected parties. I also expect that the Board will provide information to stakeholders about trends and topical issues affecting the industry within appropriate timeframes.

I have previously requested that the Board conduct an external audit and review of functioning of the Board by the end of 2017. I expect a summary of the findings and recommendations of this review to be made publicly available on the Board's website to provide impartial feedback on the Board's business functions and stakeholder expectations. I also expect the Board to report its responses to these recommendations, release a plan to address them and report progress against these recommendations on the Board's website and as part of its annual reporting arrangements. In developing actions to achieve these recommendations, the Board is expected to consult with the Red Tape Commissioner, veterinary practitioners, industry stakeholders, and the broader community as appropriate.

Evaluation

I expect that the Board will evaluate the performance improvements contained in this SOE during the period of its validity to ensure progress is made against these expectations.

Reporting

Reporting on the Board's progress to achieve these SOE performance targets should be undertaken in the context of annual financial reporting to avoid dual reporting streams. As part of annual reporting, regulators are expected to report on:

- current baseline levels for performance targets set in this SOE; and
- activities to be undertaken to reach the performance targets and improvements set out in this SOE.

I also expect these SOE performance targets will be incorporated into the Board's Corporate Plan and that this SOE should be published on the Board's website upon receipt.

I expect that by 31 December 2017, the Board will respond to this SOE, outlining how it intends to achieve the performance improvements and targets set in this SOE. This response should include details of the specific activities that will be undertaken by the Board.

I look forward to seeing the Board continuously working towards achieving best practice in the administration and enforcement of regulation.

Yours sincerely



Hon Jaala Pulford MP
Minister for Agriculture

Date: 21/11/2017