



Jaclyn Symes MP

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Professor Edward Whitem
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Dear Professor Whitem

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 to 30 June 2021, 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 for 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 thus reducing its cost impact on business and the community.

This SOE replaces the SOE for the Board issued on 1 January 2018.

Improvements and targets

Based on consultation between the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions and the Board, I have identified key elements of governance and operational performance 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 has the necessary capabilities and processes in place to reduce regulatory burden in its interaction with its regulated parties. I expect that timeframes that are communicated to regulated parties in relation to enquiries, applications or complaints, are achieved, and reasons are clearly provided where they are not.

I expect the Board to continue to develop its software capabilities for case management and routine interaction with regulated parties, for example registration of practitioners. This includes automation of processes, improved data capture and reporting with a view to reducing administrative burden.

Risk-based strategies

A risk-based approach to regulatory practice will assist outcomes by strategically focusing compliance activities and resources on areas of greatest risk. As part of this, I expect the Board to review its practices with regard to its regulatory and compliance responsibilities, and clearly identify regulatory risks. I also expect the Board to set out risk-based objectives and strategies for compliance management, and to publish these so they are readily available to regulated parties.

Compliance related assistance and advice

Regulators can reduce the risk of non-compliance by ensuring that advice relating to regulatory requirements is easily accessible and effectively communicated to regulated parties.

I expect the Board to report performance against its recently developed service charter, and that it will continue to improve communications with the community and regulated parties. For example, the Board should undertake continuous review of guidelines and other advice provided to regulated parties and consult widely on those documents in their development and review.

Accountability and transparency

The Board is expected to be transparent in its operation through reporting that allows stakeholders to clearly understand its practices and processes and how it administers regulation.

I expect that the Board will consistently and effectively communicate key discussions and decisions about regulatory issues significant to its stakeholders and the community.

I expect that the Board will publish the high-level findings of its review into stakeholder communications and engagement and develop a corresponding protocol that will improve the Board's clarity of communication and its accessibility and transparency. I also expect that the Board will publish its high-level responses to the stakeholder communications review on the Board's website.

I expect the Board to publish a summary of the findings from its external review conducted in December 2017 and its high-level responses to those on the Board's website. I expect the Board to evaluate its response to the external review, and to undertake a further review towards the end of the period of this SOE. I also expect the Board to run an internal strategic planning workshop annually to guide its workplan.

In developing actions to achieve these improvements and targets, the Board is expected to consult with the Office of the Commissioner for Better Regulation, business 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 your 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 that these SOE performance targets will be incorporated into the Board's Corporate Plan, and that this SOE be published on the Board's website upon receipt.

I expect that by 30 August 2019, 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 relating to Victorian veterinary practitioners.

Yours sincerely



Jaclyn Symes MP
Minister for Agriculture

Date: 21 / 7 / 2019