



## Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland

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### **PROTECTING PRIMARY PRODUCTION AMENDMENT BILL 2011**

Thank you for providing the Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland with an opportunity to make a submission in relation to the proposal to amend the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936* through the *Protecting Primary Production Amendment Bill 2011*.

The following submissions are made on behalf of and with the full support of the Veterinary Surgeons Board of Queensland.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE BILL**

The objective of the Bill is documented in the Committee call for submissions as 'providing for Queensland veterinarians to be covered by the National Registration of Veterinary Registration'.

The Bill in fact addresses the two (2) principal matters spoken to by the Honourable Tim Mulherin, Minister for Agriculture, Food and Regional Economies in his introduction and referral to the Committee given in the Parliament on 6 September 2011.

Firstly the Minister introduced the amendments being made to meet a commitment by Queensland to legislate for its participation in the National Recognition of Veterinary Registration scheme.

Secondly the Minister spoke of taking the opportunity to deal with another matter intended to improve the ability to contact veterinarians in a Biosecurity emergency.

#### **SUBMISSION**

The Board draws to the attention of the Committee that the two initiatives are in no way related. The emergency contact legislative proposal for veterinarians is a state initiative as opposed to the adoption nationally of the initiative for national recognition of veterinary registration.

The Board submits that it should be absolutely clear to the targeted sector of the community representative of registered veterinarians that the proposed amendments to the *Veterinary Surgeons Act 1936* have a two fold objective, national recognition being a national initiative and emergency contact arrangements being an initiative invoked only within the confines of Queensland.

#### **OBJECTIVE 1**

##### **NATIONAL RECOGNITION OF VETERINARY REGISTRATION (NRVR)**

The Board supports the NRVR initiative. The Board was previously afforded a limited opportunity to comment on the draft NRVR amendments. The Board noted that the draft amendments did not address a database of nationally registered veterinarians. The Board was advised that the Model Principles for NRVR adopted at the PIMC in November 2007 did not feature a reference to a 'national register of veterinarians'.

Victoria and New South Wales have enacted NRVR amendments in their respective veterinary practice legislation.

New South Wales have incorporated a provision whereby their Veterinary Board may enter into an arrangement with interstate registration authorities for the purposes of establishing a national register of veterinary practitioners and for other related purposes (*Veterinary Practice Act 2003 NSW section 34F*).

Victoria have incorporated a provision that the administering Board may give register particulars to an interstate veterinary registration authority for the purposes of enabling veterinary registration (*Veterinary Practice Act 1997 Victoria section 16 (7) and (8)*).

The Board believes that the South Australia government may have delayed the introduction of NRVR amendments to its veterinary practice legislation due to issues relating to achieving national drafting guidelines.

## **SUBMISSION**

The Board notes that the proposed NRVR amendments do not include a provision for recognition of a national database of registered veterinarians. The draft amendments do not represent uniformity with legislation adopted in other states in this regard. The omission of a provision for recognition of a national 'register' of veterinarians may prevent Queensland from participating to the detriment of Queensland based registered veterinarians.

## **OBJECTIVE 2**

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT ARRANGEMENTS**

The Board's position on this initiative was conveyed to the Honourable Mr Mulherin in a letter dated 2 August 2011 signed individually by each Board member.

## **SUBMISSION**

The following paragraphs are extracted from the brief to the Minister. The extracted text represents the Board's current position in relation to the proposed amendments.

*'Having taken into consideration the information provided by DEEDI in consultation the Board notified its position not to support the progress of amendments to the Act to require veterinary surgeons to provide emergency contact detail without all Queensland registered veterinary surgeons having first been given the benefit of consultation on the proposal.*


*The Board assessment of the amendments is that the incorporation of offence provisions provides the potential for significant impact on individual veterinary registrants and therefore the proposed amendments warrant individual consultation with each registrant'.*

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## **TO NOTE**

On 23 August 2011, the professional association of veterinarians, the Australian Veterinary Association (Queensland Division), copied to the Board a letter documenting its position in relation to the proposed NRVR and emergency contact arrangements amendments.

The Board encourages the Committee to recognise the Australian Veterinary Association (Queensland Division) as a significant stakeholder in this legislative proposal.

  
Wayne Murray  
Registrar  
Veterinary Surgeons Board

26 October 2011