Guidelines for the evaluation of Veterinary Services *

Summary: The evaluation of Veterinary Services is an important element in the risk assessment process which countries may legitimately use to formulate policies with regard to animal health and public health controls of international trade in animals, animal-derived products, animal genetic material and animal feedstuffs.

In order to ensure maximum objectivity in the evaluation process, some standards of discipline must be applied. The Office International des Epizooties has developed a set of guidelines which can be applied by a country to the evaluation of its own Veterinary Services, or the Services of another country, for the purposes of risk assessment in international trade.

These guidelines set out in detail the criteria to be used for the evaluation of the activities of Veterinary Services and their relations with other public bodies and industry. In making an evaluation, a selection should be made from among these criteria, according to the objective of a particular investigation.

A model questionnaire is also included, which may be used to document the evaluation of Veterinary Services.


INTRODUCTION

1. Evaluation of Veterinary Services is an important element in the risk assessment process which countries may legitimately use in their policy formulations directly applying to animal health and sanitary controls of international trade in animals, animal-derived products, animal genetic material and animal feedstuffs (1, 2).

2. In order to ensure that objectivity is maximised in the evaluation process, it is essential for some standards of discipline to be applied. The Office International des Epizooties (OIE) has developed guidelines which can be practically applied to the evaluation of Veterinary Services. These are relevant for evaluation of the Veterinary Services of one country by those of another country for the purposes of risk assessment in international trade. The guidelines are also applicable for evaluation by a country of its own Veterinary Services – the process known as self-evaluation – and for periodic re-evaluation. This document is intended to cover all of these purposes.

In carrying out a risk assessment prior to deciding the sanitary/zoo-sanitary conditions for the importation of a commodity, an importing country is justified in regarding its evaluation of the Veterinary Services of the exporting country as critical.

* This text (approved by the International Committee of the Office International des Epizooties during the 61st General Session, held in Paris from 24 to 27 May 1993) was initially prepared by an OIE Ad hoc Group chaired by K.J. Dunn (Australia).
WHAT IS MEANT BY EVALUATION OF VETERINARY SERVICES?

3. The purpose of evaluation may be either to assist a national authority in the decision-making process regarding priorities to be given to its own Veterinary Services (self-evaluation) or to assist the process of risk assessment in international trade in animals and animal-derived products to which official sanitary and/or zoo-sanitary controls apply.

4. In both situations, the evaluation should demonstrate that the Veterinary Services have the capability for effective control of the sanitary and zoo-sanitary status of animals and animal products. Key elements to be covered in this process include resource adequacy, management capability, legislative and administrative infrastructures, independence in the exercise of official functions and performance history.

5. Competence and integrity are qualities on which others base their confidence in individuals or organisations. Mutual confidence between relevant official Veterinary Services of trading partner countries contributes fundamentally to stability in international trade in animals and animal-related products. In this situation, scrutiny is directed more at the exporting country than at the importing country.

6. Although quantitative data can be provided on Veterinary Services, the ultimate evaluation will be essentially qualitative.

7. An importing country has a right of assurance that information on sanitary/zoo-sanitary situations provided by the Veterinary Services of an exporting country is objective, meaningful and correct. Furthermore, the Veterinary Services of the importing country are entitled to expect validity in the veterinary certification of exports.

8. An exporting country is entitled to expect that its animals and animal products will receive reasonable and valid treatment when they are subjected to import inspection in the country of destination. The country should also be able to expect that any evaluation of its standards and performance will be conducted on a non-discriminatory basis. The importing country should be prepared and able to defend any position which it takes as a consequence of the evaluation.

SCOPE

9. In the evaluation of Veterinary Services, the following items may be considered, depending on the purpose of the evaluation (3, 4):

- organisation and structure of the Services
- human resources
- material (including financial) resources
- functional capabilities and legislative support
- animal health and veterinary public health controls
- monitoring and audit programmes
- participation in OIE activities.
The attached model questionnaire (Appendix) could be used for the following objectives:

- self-evaluation by national Veterinary Services which perceive a need to prepare information for national or international purposes
- evaluation by a prospective or actual importing country of the Veterinary Services of a prospective or actual exporting country
- verification or re-verification of an evaluation in the course of a visit to the exporting country by the importing country.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE OF THE VETERINARY SERVICES

10. A key element in the evaluation is the study of the organisation and structure of the official Veterinary Services. Organograms and details of functional responsibilities of staff should be available for evaluation. The role and responsibility of the Chief Veterinary Officer/Veterinary Director should be clearly defined. The organisational structure should also clearly set out the interface relationships of government Ministers and departmental Authorities with the Chief Veterinary Officer/Veterinary Director and the Veterinary Services. Formal relationships with statutory authorities and with industry organisations and associations should also be described. It is recognised that Services may be subject to changes in structure from time to time. Trading partners should be notified of major changes so that the effects of re-structuring may be assessed (3, 5, 6).

National Veterinary Services

11. The national Veterinary Services of a country is the relevant authority with ultimate responsibility for veterinary matters involving its international trade. National authorities alone speak for the country as far as official international dialogue is concerned. This is particularly important with regard to cases where zoning and regionalisation are being applied.

Sub-national Veterinary Services

12. As some countries have some official veterinary authority vested in autonomous sub-national (state/provincial, municipal) government bodies, there is an important need to assess the role and function of these Services. Details of their roles and relationships (legal and administrative) to each other, and to the national Veterinary Services, should be available for evaluation. Annual reports, review findings and access to other information pertinent to the veterinary activities of such bodies should also be available.

Other providers of veterinary services

13. Similarly, where the national Veterinary Services have arrangements with other providers of veterinary services, such as universities, laboratories, information services, etc., these arrangements should also be described.
14. The Veterinary Services should demonstrate that their human resource component includes an integral core of full-time civil service employees. This core must include graduate veterinarians. It should also include other qualified professional officers, administrative officials and technical support staff. This does not exclude the possibility of employing, in addition, part-time veterinary and para-veterinary staff and private sector veterinarians. It is essential that all the above categories of staff be subject to legal disciplinary provisions. Data relating to the resource base of the Veterinary Services undergoing evaluation should be available.

**Role of the human resources**

15. In addition to raw quantitative data on this resource base, the functions of the various categories of staff in the Veterinary Services should be described in detail. This is necessary for analysis and estimation of the appropriateness of the application of qualified skills to the tasks undertaken by the Veterinary Services and may be relevant, for example, to the roles of veterinary and animal health technical assistants in field services. In this case, the evaluation should provide assurances that disease monitoring is being conducted by a sufficient number of qualified, experienced field veterinarians who are directly involved in farm visits; there should not be an over-reliance on technical assistant staff for this task.

16. Analysis of these data can be used to estimate the potential of the Veterinary Services to accrue reliable knowledge of the state of animal health in the country and to support an optimal level of animal disease control programmes. A large population of private practitioners would not provide the Veterinary Services with an effective epizootiological information base without legislative (e.g. compulsory reporting of notifiable diseases) and administrative (e.g. official animal health surveillance and reporting systems) mechanisms in place.

17. These data should be assessed in close conjunction with the other information described in this document. For example, a large field staff (veterinarians and animal health technical assistants) need fixed, mobile and budgetary resources for veterinary activities in the livestock farming territory of the country. If deficiencies are evident, there would be reason to challenge the validity of epizootiological information.

**MATERIAL RESOURCES**

**Financial**

18. Actual yearly budgetary information regarding the Veterinary Services should be available and should include the details set out in the model questionnaire. Information is required on conditions of service for veterinary staff (including salaries and incentives) and should provide a comparison with the private sector and perhaps with other professionals. Information should also be available on non-government sources of revenue available to veterinarians in their official responsibilities.

**Administrative**

**Premises**

19. The Veterinary Services should be accommodated in premises suitable for efficient performance of their functions. The component parts of the Veterinary
Services should be located as closely as possible to each other at the central level, and in the regions where they are represented, in order to facilitate efficient internal communication and function.

**Communications**

20. The Veterinary Services should be able to demonstrate that they have reliable access to effective communications systems, especially for animal health surveillance and control programmes. Inadequate communications systems within the field services components of these programmes or between outlying offices and headquarters, or between the Veterinary Services and other relevant administrative and professional services, signify an inherent weakness in these programmes. Adequate communications systems between laboratories and between field and laboratory components of the Veterinary Services should also be demonstrated.

21. Examples of types of communications which should be routinely available on an adequate country-wide basis are national postal, freight and telephone networks, together with telex or two-way radio. Rapid courier services, facsimile and electronic data interchange systems are examples of useful modern communication services which, if available, can supplement or replace the others. A means for rapid international communication should be available to the national Veterinary Services, to permit reporting of changes in national disease status consistent with OIE requirements and to allow bilateral contact on urgent matters with counterpart Services in trading-partner countries.

**Transport systems**

22. The availability of sufficient and reliable transport facilities is essential for the performance of many functions of Veterinary Services. This applies particularly to the field services components of animal health activities (e.g. emergency response visits). Otherwise, the Veterinary Services cannot assure counterpart services in other countries that they are in control of the animal health situation within the country.

23. Appropriate means of transport are also vital for the satisfactory receipt of samples to be tested at veterinary laboratories, for inspection of imports and exports, and for the performance of animal and animal product inspection in outlying production or processing establishments.

**Technical**

24. Details available on laboratories should include resource data and programmes under way, as well as those recently completed, and review reports on the role or functions of the laboratory. Information as described in the model questionnaire should be used in the evaluation of laboratory services.

**Cold chain for laboratory samples and veterinary medicines**

25. Adequate refrigeration and freezing systems should be available and should be used throughout the country to provide suitable low temperature protection for laboratory samples in transit or awaiting analysis, as well as veterinary medical products (e.g. vaccines) when these are required for use in animal disease control programmes. If these assurances cannot be given, it may be valid to discount many types of test results, as well as the effectiveness of certain disease control programmes and the export inspection system in the country undergoing evaluation.
Diagnostic laboratories

26. Analysis of the laboratory service component of Veterinary Services, which would include official governmental laboratories and other laboratories accredited by the Veterinary Services for specified purposes, is an essential element of the evaluation process. The quality of the veterinary diagnostic laboratories of a country underpins the entire control and certification processes of the zoo-sanitary/sanitary status of exported animals and animal products; therefore these laboratories should be subject to rigid quality assurance procedures and should use International Standard Sera (wherever available) for standardising reagents.

27. This emphasis is valid whether one relates it to the actual testing performed on individual export consignments or to the broader and ongoing testing regimes which are used to determine the animal health and veterinary public health profiles of the country and to support its disease control programmes. For the purposes of evaluation, veterinary diagnostic laboratories include those which are concerned with either animal health or veterinary public health activities.

Research laboratories

28. The scope of animal disease and veterinary public health problems in the country concerned and the stages reached in the controls which address those problems (and their relative importance) can be measured, to some degree, by analysis of information on the government research facilities, where such facilities exist. This information should be accessible for evaluation purposes.

FUNCTIONAL CAPABILITIES AND LEGISLATIVE SUPPORT

Animal health and veterinary public health

29. The Veterinary Services should be able to demonstrate that they have the capacity, supported by appropriate legislation, to exercise control over all animal health matters. These controls should include, where appropriate, compulsory notification of prescribed animal diseases, inspection, movement controls, quarantine of infected premises/areas, testing, treatment, destruction of infected animals or contaminated materials, etc. The scope of the legislative controls should include domestic animals and their reproductive material, animal products, wildlife as it relates to the transmission of diseases to domestic animals, and other products subject to veterinary inspection. Arrangements should exist for co-operation with the veterinary authorities of the neighbouring countries for the control of animal diseases in border areas. Information on the veterinary public health legislation covering the production of products of animal origin for national consumption may be also considered in the evaluation.

Export/import inspection

30. National Veterinary Services should have adequate capabilities to prescribe the methods for control and to exercise systematic control over the export process of animals and animal products in so far as this control relates to sanitary and zoo-sanitary matters. The evaluation should involve the consideration of relevant legislation and administrative instructions to ensure the enforcement of importing country requirements during the pre-export period.
31. In the context of production for export of foodstuffs of animal origin, the Veterinary Services should demonstrate that comprehensive legislative provisions are available for the veterinary oversight of the hygienic process and to support official inspection systems of these commodities which function to standards consistent with, or equivalent to, relevant Codex Alimentarius and OIE standards.

32. Control systems should be in place which permit the exporting veterinary authorities to approve export premises. The Veterinary Services should also be able to conduct testing and treatment, as well as to exercise controls over the movement, handling and storage of exports, and to make inspections at any stage of the export process. The product scope of this export legislation should include, inter alia, animals and animal products (including animal semen, ova and embryos), and animal feedstuffs.

33. The national Veterinary Services should be able to demonstrate that they have adequate capabilities and legislative support for zoo-sanitary control of imports and transit of animals, animal products and other materials which may introduce animal diseases. This could be necessary to support claims by the Veterinary Services that the animal health status of the country is suitably stable and that cross-contamination of exports from imports of unknown, or less favourable zoo-sanitary status is unlikely. The same considerations should apply with respect to veterinary control of public health. The Veterinary Services should be able to demonstrate that there is no conflict of interest when certifying that veterinarians are performing official duties.

**Documentation control (7)**

34. Legislation should also provide the right to deny and/or withdraw official certification. Penalty provisions applying to malpractice on the part of certifying officials should be included.

35. The Veterinary Services should demonstrate that they are capable of providing accurate and valid certification for exports of animals and animal products. They should have appropriately organised procedures which ensure that sanitary/animal health certificates are issued by efficient and secure methods. The documentation control system should be able to correlate reliably the certification details with the relevant export consignments and with any inspections to which the consignments were subjected.

36. Security in the export certification process, including electronic documentation transfer, is important. A system of independent compliance review is desirable, to safeguard against fraud in certification by officials and by private individuals or corporations. The certifying veterinarian should have no financial interest in the animal or product being certified and should not be in the direct employment of the owner of the animal or product.

**ANIMAL HEALTH CONTROLS**

**Animal health status**

37. An assessment of the present animal disease status of a country is an important and necessary procedure. For this undertaking, studies of the FAO/OIE/WHO *Animal Health Yearbook*, the OIE publications, *World Animal Health*, the monthly *Bulletin* and weekly *Disease Information* must be fundamental reference points. The evaluation
should consider the recent history of the compliance of the country with its obligations regarding international notification of animal diseases. In the case of an OIE Member Country, failure to provide the necessary animal health reports consistent with OIE requirements will detract from the overall outcome of the evaluation of the country.

38. An exporting country should be able to provide further, detailed elaboration of any elements of its animal disease status as reported to the OIE. This additional information will have particular importance in the case of animal diseases which are foreign to, or strictly controlled in the importing country or region. The ability of the Veterinary Services to substantiate elements of their animal disease status reports with surveillance data, results of monitoring programmes and details of disease history is highly relevant to the evaluation. In the case of evaluation of the Veterinary Services of an exporting country for international trade purposes, an importing country should be able to demonstrate the reasonableness of its request and expectations in this process.

Animal health control

39. Details of current animal disease control programmes should be considered in the evaluation. These programmes would include epizootiological surveillance, official government-administered or officially-endorsed, industry-administered control or eradication programmes for specific diseases or disease complexes, and animal disease emergency preparedness. Details should include programme plans, incidence and prevalence data, resource commitments, interim results and programme review reports.

National animal disease reporting systems

40. The presence of a functional animal disease reporting system which covers all agricultural regions of the country and all veterinary administrative control areas should be demonstrated.

41. An acceptable variation would be the application of this principle to specific zones of the country. In this case also, the animal disease reporting system should cover each of these zones. Other factors should come to bear on this situation, e.g. the ability to satisfy trading partners that sound animal health controls exist to prevent the introduction of disease or export products from regions of lesser veterinary control.

VETERINARY PUBLIC HEALTH CONTROLS

Food hygiene

42. The national Veterinary Services should be able to demonstrate effective responsibility for the veterinary public health programmes relating to the production and processing of animal products, especially for export. If the national Veterinary Services do not exercise responsibility over these programmes, the evaluation should include a comprehensive review of the role and relationship of the organisations (national, state/provincial and municipal) which are involved. In such a case, the evaluation should consider whether the national Veterinary Services can provide guarantees of responsibility for, and effective control of the sanitary status of animal products prior to export, especially meat and meat products throughout the slaughter, processing, transport and storage periods.
Zoonoses

43. Within the structure of Veterinary Services, there should be appropriately qualified staff whose responsibilities include the monitoring and control of zoonotic diseases and, where appropriate, liaison with medical authorities.

Chemical residue testing programmes

44. Adequacy of controls over chemical residues in exported animals, animal products and feedstuffs should be demonstrated. Statistically-based surveillance and monitoring programmes for environmental and other chemical contaminants in animals, in animal-derived foodstuffs and in animal feedstuffs should be favourably noted. These programmes should be coordinated nationwide. Correlated results should be freely available on request to existing and prospective trading partner countries. Analytical methods and result reporting should be consistent with internationally recognised standards. If official responsibility for these programmes does not rest with the Veterinary Services, the latter should provide appropriate help to obtain the relevant information for assessment.

Veterinary medicines

45. It should be acknowledged that primary control over veterinary medicinal products may not rest with the veterinary authorities in some countries, owing to differences between governments in the division of legislative responsibilities. However, for the purpose of evaluation, the Veterinary Services should be able to demonstrate the existence of effective controls (including nationwide consistency of application) over the registration, supply and use of veterinary medicines, biologicals and diagnostic reagents. The control of veterinary medicines has direct relevance to the areas of animal health and public health.

46. In the animal health sphere, this has particular application to biological products. Inadequate controls on the registration and use of biological products leave the Veterinary Services open to challenge over the quality of animal disease control programmes and over safeguards against animal disease introduction in imported veterinary biological products.

47. It is valid, for evaluation purposes, to seek assurances of effective government controls over veterinary medicines in so far as these relate to the public health risks associated with residues of these chemicals in animals and animal-derived foodstuffs. This process should be consistent with the standards set by the Codex Alimentarius or with alternative requirements set by the importing country where the latter are scientifically justified.

Integration between animal health control and veterinary public health

48. The existence of any organised programme which incorporates a structured system of information feedback from inspection in fresh meat or dairy product establishments and applies this in animal health control should be favourably noted. Such programmes should be integrated within a national epizootiological surveillance scheme.

49. Veterinary Services which direct a significant element of their animal health programmes specifically towards minimising microbial and chemical contamination of animal-derived products in the human food chain should receive favourable recognition in the evaluation. There should be evident linkage between these programmes and the official control of veterinary medicines and relevant agricultural chemicals.
MONITORING AND AUDIT PROGRAMMES

Corporate plans

50. The objectives and priorities of the Veterinary Services can be well evaluated if there is a published official corporate plan which is regularly updated. Understanding of functional activities is enhanced if an operational plan is maintained within the context of the corporate plan. The corporate and operational plans, if these exist, should be included in the evaluation.

51. Veterinary Services which use corporate and operational plans may be better able to demonstrate effective management than countries without such plans.

Corporate review

52. If a corporate plan is used, it is desirable to have a process which allows the organisation to assess its own performance against its objectives. The results should be considered in the evaluation process.

Compliance

53. Matters which can adversely affect a favourable evaluation include instances of inaccurate or misleading official certification, evidence of fraud or corruption, or interference by higher political levels in veterinary certification.

54. It is desirable that the Veterinary Services contain (or have a formal linkage with) an independent internal unit/section/commission, the function of which is to scrutinise their operations critically. The aim of this unit should be to ensure consistent and high integrity in the work of the individual officials in the Veterinary Services and of the corporate body itself. The existence of such a body can be important to the establishment of international confidence in the Veterinary Services.

55. An important means of demonstrating the integrity of the Veterinary Services is their ability to take corrective action when miscertification, fraud or corruption has occurred.

Veterinary Services administration

Annual reports

56. Official government annual reports, which provide information on the organisation, structure, budget and contemporary performance of the Veterinary Services, should be published. Current and retrospective copies of such reports should be available to counterpart Services in other countries, especially trade partners.

Reports of government review bodies

57. The reports of any periodic or ad hoc government reviews of Veterinary Services, or of particular functions or roles of the Veterinary Services, should be considered in the evaluation process. Details of action taken as a consequence of the review should also be accessible.

Reports of special committees of enquiry or independent review bodies

58. Recent reports on the Veterinary Services, or on elements of their role or function, and details of any subsequent implementation of recommendations contained in these reports, should be available. The Veterinary Services concerned should recognise that
the provision of such information need not be detrimental to the evaluation outcome; in fact, it may demonstrate evidence of an effective audit and response programme. The supplying of such information can reinforce a commitment to transparency.

*In-service training and development programme for staff*

59. To maintain a progressive approach to meeting the needs and challenges of the changing domestic and international role of Veterinary Services, the national administration should implement an organised programme which provides relevant training, across a range of subjects, for graduate staff and middle-ranking and senior administrative officials. This programme should include participation in scientific meetings of veterinary organisations. Such a programme should be used in assessing the effectiveness of the Services.

*Publications*

60. Veterinary Services can augment their reputation by demonstrating that their staff publish scientific articles in refereed veterinary journals or other publications.

*Formal linkages with sources of independent scientific expertise*

61. Details of formal consultation or advisory mechanisms, in place and operating between the Veterinary Services and local and international universities, scientific institutions or recognised veterinary organisations, should be taken into consideration. These could serve to enhance the international recognition of the Veterinary Services.

*Trade performance history*

62. In the evaluation of the Veterinary Services of a country, it is pertinent to examine the recent history of their performance and integrity in trade dealings with other countries. Sources of such historical data may include Customs Services.

**PARTICIPATION IN OIE ACTIVITIES**

63. The questions of the adherence of a country to the OIE and to the recommendations of the OIE *Animal Health Code* are relevant to an evaluation of the Veterinary Services of the country. Self-acknowledged inability, or repeated failure, of a Member Country to fulfil reporting obligations to the OIE will detract from the overall outcome of the evaluation. Such countries, as well as non-member countries, will need to provide extensive information regarding their Veterinary Services and sanitary/zoo-sanitary status for evaluation purposes.

**CONCLUSION**

64. The Veterinary Services of a country may undertake self-evaluation against the above criteria for such purposes as national interest, improvement of internal efficiency or export trade facilitation. The way in which the results of self-evaluation are used or distributed is a matter for the country concerned.

65. A prospective importing country may undertake an evaluation of the Veterinary Services of an exporting country as part of a risk assessment process, which is necessary to determine the sanitary or zoo-sanitary measures which the country will use to protect
human or animal life or health from disease or pest threats posed by imports. Periodic evaluation reviews are also valid following the commencement of trade.

66. In the case of evaluation for the purposes of international trade, the authorities of an importing country should use the principles elaborated above as the basis for the evaluation and should attempt to acquire information according to the model questionnaire. The Veterinary Services of the importing country are responsible for the analysis of details and for determining the outcome of the evaluation after taking into account all the relevant information. The relative ranking of importance ascribed, in the evaluation, to the criteria described in this document will necessarily vary according to case-by-case circumstances. This ranking should be established in an objective and justifiable way. Analysis of the information obtained in the course of an evaluation study must be performed in as objective a manner as possible. The validity of the information should be established and applied reasonably. The assessing country must be willing to defend any position taken on the basis of this type of information, if challenged by the other party.

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Appendix

MODEL QUESTIONNAIRE

Information requirements for self-evaluation/evaluation/verification of Veterinary Services

NATIONAL VETERINARY SERVICES OF

(country)

Numbers below, refer to paragraphs in the Guidelines

A. Organisation and structure of Veterinary Services 10-13

1. National Veterinary Services
   Organogram (or organisational chart) including numbers, positions and numbers of vacancies.

2. Sub-national Veterinary Services
   Organograms (or organisational charts) including numbers and positions.
3. **Other providers of Veterinary Services**

Description of any linkage with other providers of veterinary services.

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B. **Human and material resources**

1. **National data on human resources**

   1.1. **Veterinarians**

   a) Total numbers of:
      - veterinarians registered in the country who are graduates from internationally-recognised veterinary schools which are registered accordingly in the WHO/FAO World Directory of Veterinary Schools
      - graduate veterinarians not included above.

   b) Numbers of:
      - full time government veterinarians
        - national
        - sub-national
      - part-time government veterinarians
        - national
        - sub-national
      - private veterinarians authorised by the Veterinary Services to perform official veterinary functions *[Describe accreditation standards, responsibilities and/or limitations applying to these private veterinarians]*.

   c) **Animal health**

   - Numbers associated with farm livestock sector on a majority time basis in a veterinary capacity, by geographical area *[Show categories and numbers to differentiate staff involved in field service, laboratory, administration, import/export and other functions, as applicable]*
      - privately-employed veterinarians
      - veterinarians in national government service
      - veterinarians in sub-national government service.

   d) **Veterinary public health**

   - Numbers employed in food inspection on a majority time basis, by commodity *[Show categories and numbers to*
1.3. Technical assistants employed by the Veterinary Services

a) Animal health
- Numbers involved with farm livestock on a majority time basis
  - by geographical area
  - proportional to numbers of field Veterinary Officers in the Veterinary Services, by geographical area
- Education details.
b) Veterinary public health
   - Numbers in food inspection on a majority time basis
     - meat inspection
       - meat establishments with an export function
       - domestic meat establishments (no export function)
     - dairy inspection
     - other foods
   - Numbers in import/export inspection
   - Education details.

1.4. Support staff
   - Numbers directly available to Veterinary Services
     - administration
     - communication
     - transport.

1.5. Descriptive summary of the functions of the various categories of staff mentioned above

1.6. Additional information and/or comments

2. Financial management information from the Veterinary Services which should be considered in the assessment procedure

   a) Total budgetary allocations to the Veterinary Services for the current and past two fiscal years
      - for the national Veterinary Services
      - for each of any sub-national veterinary authorities
      - for other relevant government-funded institutions.

   b) Sources and amount of the budgetary allocations
      - government budget
      - sub-national authorities
      - taxes and fines
      - grants
      - private services.

   c) Proportional allocations of the amounts in a) above for operational activities and for the programme components of Veterinary Services.

   d) Total allocation proportional to national public sector budget
      [This data may be necessary for comparative assessment with
other countries, which should take into account the contexts of the importance of the livestock sector to the national economy and of the animal health status of the country].

e) Actual and proportional contribution of animal production to gross domestic product.

3. **Administration details for consideration in the assessment** 19-23

3.1. **Accommodation** 19

Summary of the numbers and distribution of official administrative centres of the Veterinary Services (national and sub-national) in the country.

3.2. **Communications** 20-21

Summary of the forms of communication systems available to the Veterinary Services on a nation-wide and local area basis.

3.3. **Transport** 22-23

- Itemised numbers of the types of functional transport available on a full-time basis for the Veterinary Services
  - also, details of transport means available part-time
- Details of annual funds available for maintenance and replacement of motor vehicles.

4. **Laboratory services** 24-28

4.1. **Diagnostic laboratories** (laboratories engaged primarily in diagnosis) 26-27

- Descriptive summary of the organisational structure and role of the government veterinary laboratory service, particularly its relevance to the field veterinary services
- Numbers of veterinary diagnostic laboratories operating in the country
  - government-operated laboratories
  - private laboratories accredited by the government for the purposes of supporting official or officially-endorsed animal health control or public health testing and monitoring programmes and import/export testing
- Descriptive summary of accreditation procedures and standards for private laboratories
- Human and financial resources allocated to the government veterinary laboratories, including staff numbers, graduate and post-graduate qualifications and opportunities for further training
- List of diagnostic methodologies available for major diseases of farm livestock (including poultry)
- Details of collaboration with external laboratories, including international reference laboratories and details on numbers of samples submitted
- Details of quality control and assessment (or validation) programmes operating within the veterinary laboratory service
- Recent published reports of the official veterinary laboratory service which should include details of specimens received and foreign animal disease investigations made
- Details of procedures for storage and retrieval of information on specimen submission and results
- Reports of independent reviews of the laboratory service conducted by government or private organisations (if available)
- Corporate and operational plans for the official veterinary laboratory service (if available).

4.2. Research laboratories (laboratories engaged primarily in research) 28
- Numbers of veterinary research laboratories operating in the country
  - government-operated laboratories
  - private laboratories involved in full-time research directly related to animal health and veterinary public health matters involving production animal species
- Summary of human and financial resources allocated by government to veterinary research
- Published programmes of future government-sponsored veterinary research
- Annual reports of the government research laboratories.

C. Functional capabilities and legislative support 29-36

1. Animal health and veterinary public health 29

Assessment of the adequacy and implementation of relevant legislation (national or sub-national) concerning the following:
- animal and veterinary public health controls at national frontiers
- control of endemic diseases of livestock
- control of zoonotic diseases
- emergency powers for control of exotic disease outbreaks
- compensation provisions for animal owners affected by disease control measures
- fish disease control
- veterinary public health controls of the production, processing, storage and marketing of meat for domestic consumption
- veterinary public health controls of the production, processing, storage and marketing of fish, dairy products and other foods of animal origin for domestic consumption
- registration and use of veterinary pharmaceutical products, including vaccines.

Assessment of ability of Veterinary Services to enforce legislation.

2. **Export/import inspection**

Assessment of the adequacy and implementation of relevant national legislation concerning:

- veterinary public health controls of the production, processing, storage and transportation of meat for export
- veterinary public health controls of production, processing, storage and marketing of fish, dairy products and other foods of animal origin for export
- animal health and veterinary public health controls of the export and import of animals, animal genetic material, animal products, animal feedstuffs and other products subject to veterinary inspection
- animal health controls of the importation, use and biocontainment of organisms which are aetiological agents of animal diseases, and of pathological material
- animal health controls of importation of veterinary biological products, including vaccines
- administrative powers available to Veterinary Services for inspection and registration of facilities for veterinary control purposes (if not included under other legislation mentioned above)
- documentation and compliance.

Assessment of ability of Veterinary Services to enforce legislation.

D. **Animal health and veterinary public health controls**

1. **Animal health**

   Description of, and sample reference data from any national animal disease reporting system controlled and operated, or coordinated, by the Veterinary Services.
Description of, and sample reference data from other national animal disease reporting systems controlled and operated by other organisations which make data and results available to Veterinary Services.

Description and relevant data of current animal disease control programmes controlled and operated, or coordinated, by the Veterinary Services, including:

- epizootiological surveillance or monitoring programmes
- officially-endorsed, industry-administered control or eradication programmes for specific diseases.

Description and relevant details of animal disease emergency preparedness and response plans.

Recent history of animal disease status:

- animal diseases eradicated nationally, or from defined sub-national zones, in the last ten years
- animal diseases of which the prevalence has been controlled to a low level in the last ten years
- animal diseases introduced to the country, or to previously free sub-national regions, in the last ten years
- emerging diseases in the last ten years
- animal diseases of which the prevalence has increased in the last ten years.

2. Veterinary public health

2.1. Food hygiene

Annual national slaughter statistics for the past three years according to official data

- bovine
- ovine
- porcine
- caprine
- poultry
- equine
- other

Estimate of total annual slaughterings which occur, but are not recorded, under official statistics

Proportion of total national slaughter which occurs in registered export establishments, by category of animal

Proportion of total national slaughter which occurs under veterinary control, by category of animal
Numbers of commercial fresh meat establishments in the country which are registered for export by national Veterinary Services

- slaughterhouses (indicate species of animals)
- cutting/packing plants (indicate meat type)
- meat processing establishments (indicate meat type)
- cold stores

Numbers of commercial fresh meat establishments in the country approved by other importing countries which operate international assessment inspection programmes associated with approval procedures

Numbers of commercial fresh meat establishments under direct public health control of the Veterinary Services

- including details of category and numbers of inspection staff associated with these premises.

Description of the veterinary public health programme related to production and processing of the following animal products for human consumption, especially including details applying to exports of these commodities

- fresh meat
- poultry meat
- meat products
- game meat
- dairy products
- fish, fishery products, molluscs and crustaceans
- other foods of animal origin

Descriptive summary of the roles and relationships of other official organisations in public health programmes for the products listed above, if the national Veterinary Services do not have responsibility for those programmes which apply to national production destined for domestic consumption and/or exports of the commodities concerned.

2.2. Zoonoses

Descriptive summary of the numbers and functions of staff of the Veterinary Services involved primarily in monitoring and control of zoonotic diseases.

Descriptive summary of the role and relationships of other official organisations involved in monitoring and control of zoonoses (to be provided if the national Veterinary Services do not have these responsibilities).
2.3. Chemical residue testing programmes

Descriptive summary of national surveillance and monitoring programmes for environmental and chemical residues and contaminants applied to animal-derived foodstuffs, animals and animal feedstuffs.

Role and function in these programmes of the national Veterinary Services and other competent authorities (to be described in summary form).

Descriptive summary of the analytical methodologies used and their consistency with internationally-recognised standards.

2.4. Veterinary medicines

Descriptive summary of the administrative and technical controls involving registration, supply and use of veterinary pharmaceutical products, especially including biological products. This summary should include a focus on veterinary public health considerations relating to the use of these products in food-producing animals.

Role and function in these programmes of the national Veterinary Services and other competent authorities (to be described in summary form).

E. Monitoring and audit programmes

1. Corporate plans and review

Descriptive summary and copies of corporate (or strategic) and operational plans of the Veterinary Services organisation.

Descriptive summary of corporate review (or performance assessment) programmes which relate to the corporate and operational plans; copies of recent review reports.

2. Compliance

Descriptive summary of any compliance unit which monitors the work of the Veterinary Services (or elements thereof).

3. Annual reports of the national Veterinary Services

Copies of official annual reports of the national (sub-national) Veterinary Services.

4. Other reports

Copies of reports of official reviews into the function or role of the Veterinary Services which have been conducted within the past three years.

Descriptive summary (and copy of reports if available) of subsequent action taken on recommendations made in these reviews.
5. **Training**

Descriptive summary of in-service and development programmes provided by the Veterinary Services (or their parent Ministries) for graduate staff and middle-ranking and senior veterinary administrative officials.

Summary descriptions of training courses and duration.

Details of staff numbers (and their function) who participated in these training courses in the last three years.

6. **Publications**

Bibliographical list of scientific publications by staff members of Veterinary Services in the past three years.

7. **Sources of independent scientific expertise**

List of local and international universities, scientific institutions and recognised veterinary organisations with which the Veterinary Services have consultation or advisory mechanisms in place.

F. **Membership of the OIE**

State if country is a member of the OIE and period of membership.

G. Other assessment criteria

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**INFORMATION COMPIL ED BY**

(signature)

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REFERENCES


