

## New procedure for nominating and electing experts to the Specialist Commissions



The OIE continues to improve participation and transparency within its procedure for developing standards, to ensure the best scientific basis for these standards and to make sure that they are practical and able to be implemented by Member Countries.

A major objective of the OIE's Sixth Strategic Plan 2016–2020 is **scientific excellence**. To help fulfil this goal, the OIE has developed a process to guide the selection of experts for election to the four Specialist Commissions. As with other major international organisations and leading scientific bodies, the process for selecting OIE experts must ensure the scientific basis and independence of the Specialist Commissions, while also ensuring the transparency of their recommendations and the standards developed. This process will make sure that the candidates presented for election in 2018 represent a range of expertise and viewpoints and include scientific experts from all geographic regions of the world.

The new process will bring the OIE into line with best practice approaches used by many other national and international bodies. It strengthens the role of the OIE Council, Bureaux of the Regional Commissions and OIE Delegates in ensuring that the best scientific advice is provided to support the development of OIE standards, guidelines and recommendations.

It is important to note that the process does not require changes to the Basic Texts of the OIE and will retain the authority of the Members of the World Assembly of Delegates (Assembly) to elect the President, Vice Presidents and the remaining members of each of the Specialist Commissions. This process will also provide greater transparency to the overall nomination process.

As part of the implementation of this new process, OIE Delegates will be asked, at the Assembly in May 2017, to adopt a resolution giving authority to OIE Headquarters to establish the new process in preparation for the 2018 elections.





## The process

If the resolution is adopted in May 2017, OIE Headquarters will launch the process for the selection of experts through **a call for nominations**, which will be disseminated widely throughout existing OIE networks during July 2017. The call for nominations, including selection criteria, will be:

- notified to the OIE Delegates, who will be asked to inform their national academic institutions and other relevant entities,
- published on the OIE website, and
- notified through the OIE's Reference Centre network.

Once the applications have been received at OIE Headquarters, they will be assessed by an **Evaluation Committee**, consisting of OIE Headquarters staff, a representative of the Council and independent experts. The Evaluation Committee will identify applicants of a very high calibre who meet the necessary criteria for election to one of the four Specialist Commissions. After the evaluation process, a list of suitable candidates to be proposed for election to the Commissions will be provided to the OIE Council in February 2018. Once the list has been endorsed by the Council, it will be disseminated to OIE Delegates to allow sufficient time for their full consideration in the lead-up to the Assembly and elections in May 2018.

The final nomination and election process at the Assembly will not change. Regions will still be able to support their preferred experts from the list endorsed by the Council, and OIE Delegates will vote in the same manner as they have in the past.

After the election, OIE Headquarters will take the necessary steps to establish the newly elected representatives in the four Specialist Commissions, ensuring that they are properly prepared for their new role.

## Frequently asked questions

### *What is the role of OIE Delegates in this process?*

OIE Delegates will be asked to endorse applications from experts in their country, before the application is submitted to OIE Headquarters.

During the Assembly in May 2018, Delegates will vote for their preferred candidates for each of the four Specialist Commissions, including Presidents, two Vice Presidents and the remaining members.

### *What are the qualifications needed to apply for selection as an expert?*

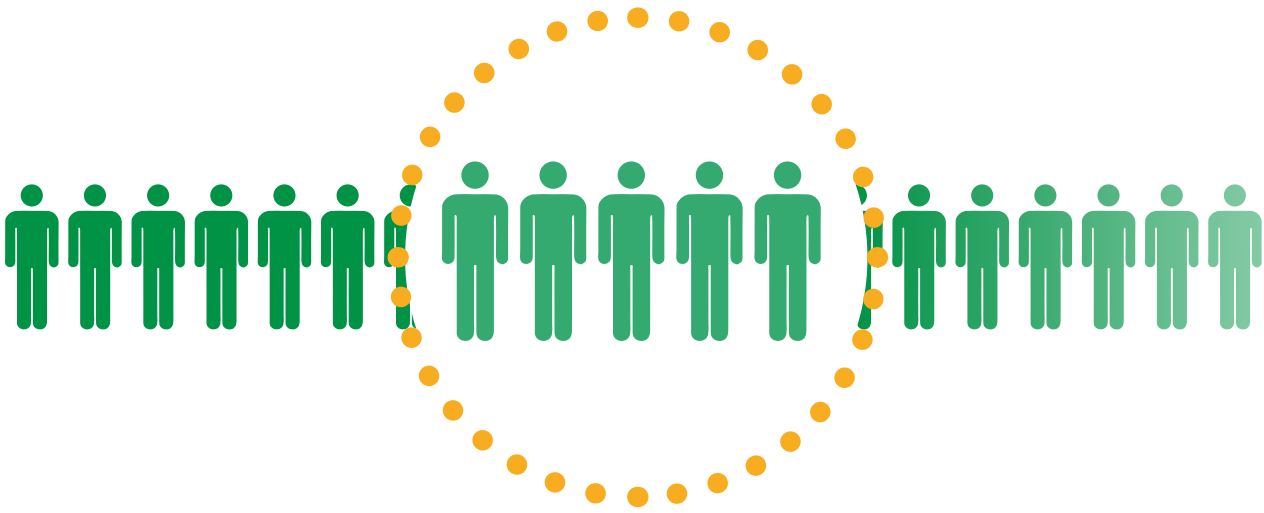
Applicants will be required to demonstrate in their applications that they have a range of personal attributes and technical qualifications. These will vary, depending on the Specialist Commission they wish to be considered for.

The type of qualifications will include a veterinary or scientific degree or other technical qualification relevant to one of the Specialist Commissions, and expertise in one or more of the following fields:

- the control of animal diseases, animal welfare and veterinary public health;
- the surveillance, diagnosis, control and prevention of infectious diseases of aquatic animals;
- the development or implementation of national or international standards and systems relevant to the mandate of the OIE;
- risk analysis, epidemiology, laboratory diagnosis, or new scientific technologies applied to disease prevention and control; and
- laboratory diagnosis or prevention of infectious terrestrial animal diseases.

This is just an indication of the types of specialist expertise that are required, together with a working knowledge of English and the ability to analyse and synthesise complex technical information into structured





assessments or reviews, and to work with people from different cultural backgrounds as well as other scientists from various disciplines.

It is important to note that specific criteria applicable to each of the Specialist Commissions will be published along with the call for nominations.

#### *What is the role of an expert?*

The experts elected to the Specialist Commissions are required to attend meetings held at the OIE Headquarters (Paris) at least twice a year, in February and September, and, if required, immediately prior to the Assembly (in May). Experts are required to allocate sufficient time to their own preparation before meetings. Depending on the Specialist Commission agenda, this can include familiarising themselves with the working documents, including Member Countries' comments on draft standards, Member Countries' disease status dossiers, Reference Laboratory and Collaborating Centre applications and associated reports of Working Groups and *Ad hoc* Groups.

Experts must be available to provide advice to OIE Headquarters on specific requests related to matters under the Terms of Reference of the Specialist Commissions and to participate as observers in *Ad hoc* Groups of relevance.

Experts must also act in a capacity that maintains their independence from the specific positions or views of the government of their country, although an awareness of the various animal health and welfare issues associated with their region is an advantage.

Meetings are conducted in English so experts need to have a relatively comprehensive understanding of the

English language and be able to write and contribute to discussions in English.

#### *How long are the meetings and for how long will experts be a member of the Specialist Commission?*

Meetings of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (the Code Commission) last for ten days; the other Specialist Commissions meet for up to five days.

Experts remain members of the Specialist Commission for a term of three years, commencing in May 2018. After this period they will be eligible for re-nomination for a second term. Members will only be eligible to serve three consecutive terms. However, under exceptional circumstances, when it may be necessary for experts to continue in a given role. In this case, the Director General, in consultation with the Council, may decide to extend an appointment.

#### *I am currently an expert or member of one of the Specialist Commissions, and I would like to maintain my position for another term (three years). What do I have to do?*

Existing members who wish to serve another term on one of the Specialist Commissions may be required to submit an application for nomination, in the same way as new candidates. Their previous participation and contribution to the Specialist Commission will be taken into account during the evaluation process.

#### **Interested in applying or have other questions regarding the process?**

Questions about the process can be sent directly to the Standards Department at OIE Headquarters:  
**expert\_applications@oie.int**