

Collaboration between Veterinary Authorities and Veterinary Statutory Bodies to Ensure Implementation of OIE Standards and Guidelines

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The OIE defines “Veterinary Authority” as the governmental authority of a member country, comprising veterinarians, other professionals and para-professionals, having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of animal health and welfare measures, international veterinary certification and other standards and recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* in the whole territory⁽¹⁾. Likewise, the OIE notes that a competent “Veterinary Statutory Body” (VSB), autonomous from any political or commercial interests, can ensure the excellence of the veterinary profession through appropriately licensing or registering veterinary professionals, and providing minimum standards for initial and continuing education and professional conduct⁽²⁾.

Collaboration between the Veterinary Authority and VSB can help ensure maintenance of high standards for quality initial and continuing veterinary education requirements for the veterinary workforce. However, because the needs, resources and capabilities may differ vastly across countries, there may be no one ideal structure through which this collaboration can—or should—occur. For example, licensure requirements through the VSB in countries in which government (public) veterinarians comprise the majority of the profession may be different from those in countries in which private fee-for-service practice is the accepted model for delivery of both companion and food animal veterinary services. In the former, most veterinarians will be government employees working full-time under the auspices of the Veterinary Authority, whereas in the latter, the government workforce is often augmented through partnerships with private-practice veterinarians on an as-needed basis.

Examples of differently structured collaborative relationships between the Veterinary Authority and VSB in several countries will be discussed. Specific emphasis will be placed on how each can enhance implementation of the OIE Model Core Veterinary Curriculum by Veterinary Education Establishments (VEE) to help assure new veterinary graduates achieve the expected level of competency recommended by the OIE for delivery of national veterinary services of quality.

Key words: veterinary authority – veterinary statutory body – veterinary education – model core veterinary curriculum.

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