



# Newsletter

Veterinary Board of the Northern Territory

BAL Building, Berrimah Farm, Berrimah NT  
GPO Box 3000, DARWIN, Northern Territory 0801  
Email: [vetboard@nt.gov.au](mailto:vetboard@nt.gov.au) Phone: 08 89992028  
Web: [www.vetboard.nt.gov.au](http://www.vetboard.nt.gov.au) Fax: 08 89992089

March 2014

## BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Position	Name
President ( <i>ex-officio</i> - Chief Inspector of Livestock)	Dr Malcolm Anderson
Vice President (elected veterinarian)	Dr Ian Gurry
Member (elected veterinarian)	Dr Shane Bartie
Member (appointed veterinarian)	Dr Richard (Dick) Morton
Public Interest Member (appointed non-veterinarian)	Marion Davey
Administrative Support (Board Registrar)	Sue Gillis

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## RE-LOCATION OF THE VETERINARY BOARD OFFICE

We have moved!

The Veterinary Board office has re-located to the Berrimah Agriculture Laboratory (BAL) Building at Berrimah Farm, Makagon Road Berrimah.

Contact details for the Board remain the same:

Tel: 08 89992028

Fax: 08 89992089

Email: [vetboard@nt.gov.au](mailto:vetboard@nt.gov.au)

Website: [www.vetboard.nt.gov.au](http://www.vetboard.nt.gov.au)



## PRESCRIBED FEE INCREASE

Veterinary Registration Fees are prescribed in the Veterinarians Regulations as “revenue units”. The monetary value of a revenue unit is reviewed annually under the *Revenue Units Act* based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). A recent review determined that the monetary value of a revenue unit should be raised from \$1.07 to \$1.11.

As a result, **there will be an increase in Veterinary Registration Fees from 1 July 2014.**

### VETERINARIANS:

#### Primary Registration

(for majority practice in Northern Territory)

**Initial Registration                      \$166.00 (AUD)**

**Annual Renewal                              \$111.00 (AUD)**

### VETERINARY SPECIALISTS:

#### Primary Registration

(for majority practice in Northern Territory)

**Initial Registration                      \$222.00 (AUD)**

**Annual Renewal                              \$166.00 (AUD)**

The National Recognition of Veterinary Registration (NRVR) cannot be fully adopted until the *Veterinarians Act* is amended. However, **amendments to the Veterinarians Regulations** that commenced on 3 August 2012 have **resulted in NO FEES being payable for secondary registration** (ie registration to undertake locum/periodic practice in the Northern Territory). In the interim, **it is still necessary to lodge an application to apply for secondary registration and to renew existing secondary registration.**

## Proposed Increase in Fees for new Primary Registration and Primary Renewals

With the cancellation of fees for secondary registration (which represents roughly half of the veterinarians on the Northern Territory Veterinary Register), **the fees for primary registration and renewals will need to be increased** to a level commensurate with those levied by other Veterinary Boards in Australia.

Therefore an update of the Veterinary Regulations will take place in 2014 to increase the revenue units for both renewal of registration and new registrations. The increase of a renewal will increase to between \$200.00 and \$250.00 up from the current rate of \$107.00 per annum and new registration will cost around \$300.00 to \$350.00 up from the current rate of \$160 for Veterinarians. In the case of Veterinary Specialists renewal will increase between \$270.00 to \$280.00 per annum and new registration for a Veterinary Specialist will cost around \$380 to \$390.00 up from the current rate of \$160.00.

## RESPONSIBILITIES ASSUMED BY VETERINARIANS WHEN PROVIDING VETERINARY SERVICES FOR NON VETERINARIANS SUCH AS EQUINE DENTISTS

Some non-veterinary services require veterinarian involvement. For example equine dentistry may require sedation in order to be performed effectively and safely. If veterinarians are approached to

provide such a service for a non-veterinarian they need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities.

There is no compulsion to supply such services.

If veterinarians do supply this service, they must be aware of the limitations non veterinarians may have in regard to their varied level of skills and what they are legally permitted to do.

Veterinarians must be aware that, in providing such a service, they are not only responsible for the sedation and analgesia, but are also responsible for the welfare of the animal. That is to say, they are responsible for the physical assessment of each animal's health status prior to administration of appropriate doses of the drug and may be responsible for the outcome of the procedure.

Therefore, it is important that you are familiar with the expected outcomes and associated risks (for example, the correct use of power tools can result in over-heating of the teeth, which can cause the death of blood vessels and nerves and an over-aggressive technique or excessive rasping, can change the grinding dynamics and expose nerves, resulting in pain when eating, colic, loss of appetite and weight loss).

Veterinarians providing this service need to keep records consistent with contemporary veterinary standards and the Board's guidelines on record keeping and may be responsible for follow up veterinary services.

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## COMPLAINT STATISTICS

It is very pleasing to report that, the Board has received no complaints alleging misconduct against any Northern Territory registered veterinarians during 2013.

The overwhelming majority of complaints arise from a breakdown or lack of communication between parties: either through misunderstanding, lack of information, a mistaken perception of a lack of caring or poor skills. Veterinarians need to be ever mindful that often clients are in a distressing situation with little knowledge of the procedures involved. Tactful handling can prevent grief turning into anger. Complaints can be often resolved simply if the client receives a further explanation of services carried out when they have had a chance to calm down.

The best means of reducing the chance of complaints and/or defending complaints is strict adherence to the Code of Conduct.

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## PRACTICE SELF-AUDIT OF COMPLIANCE WITH CODE OF CONDUCT

The Veterinary Board has developed and endorsed a practice audit form to be used by the Board when conducting investigations associated with the receipt of a complaint. This form is available on request, to veterinary practice owners who wish to undertake a self-assessment of their compliance with the legislation and Code of Conduct. To date there have been 5 veterinary practices that have availed themselves of the self-assessment. If your practice wishes to undertake the self-assessment please contact the Board Registrar Sue Gillis.

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## AUSTRALIAN BAT LYSSAVIRUS WORK SAFETY ISSUES

Veterinarians should note that there was a recent Queensland Work Health and Safety prosecution related to Australian Bat Lyssavirus work safety protocols and procedures regarding handling of bats,



that may be of relevance. It should also be noted that bat management should be included in practice induction protocols for staff. For further information go to the below website. <http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/resources/pdfs/lyssavirus-handling-bats.pdf>

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## EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE ALERTS

Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Alerts are published by Emergency Animal Disease Preparedness, Animal Health Policy Branch, and Australian Department of Agriculture and are directed at maintaining the EAD awareness of veterinary practitioners.

**Copies of EAD Alerts may** be accessed on their website at: <http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/pests-diseases-weeds/animal/ead-bulletin>

Veterinary practitioners who wish to obtain further information about EAD Alerts should contact Dr Richard Rubira at: [richard.rubira@daff.gov.au](mailto:richard.rubira@daff.gov.au) or your local Veterinary Officer.

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## HENDRA VIRUS UPDATE

The guidelines for veterinarians handling potential Hendra Virus infection in horses have been updated by the Queensland Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and are available online.

A significant review of the guidelines was undertaken involving the AVA, Equine Veterinarians Australia, Queensland Health and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.

Changes from previous version include:

- Removal of the case definitions 'exclusion' and 'suspect'
- Inclusion of information from recent incidents
- Changes to the preferred samples and collection for Hendra Virus laboratory testing
- Inclusion of information about the Hendra Virus for horses

For more information visit the DAFF website on: [www.daff.qld.gov.au](http://www.daff.qld.gov.au)

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## YOUNG PROFESSIONALS NETWORK

The Young Professionals Network welcomes individuals from all professions and areas of employment and strives to be the leader in creating opportunities for young professional in the NT by providing a knowledge-sharing network for young Territorians employed in the private, public and not for profit sector to meet, exchange ideas and enhance their career.

They provide this through opportunities for young professionals to:

- Network with other young professionals from a broad range of professions
- Connect you to Government and business leaders
- Attend discounted professional development, networking and social events
- Welcoming new people to the NT
- Share their own experiences, knowledge and skills to other members
- Join the Institute of Public Administration Australian (IPAA) at a discounted membership rate

Membership for the 2013/2014 financial year is \$30.

For more information please go to [www.facebook.com/ypnnt](http://www.facebook.com/ypnnt) or to become a Young Professional Network member please email [youngprofessionalsnt@gmail.com](mailto:youngprofessionalsnt@gmail.com)

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## COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE - ENGAGEMENT OF PRIVATE VETERINARIANS IN AN EMERGENCY ANIMAL DISEASE RESPONSE

Private vets have an important role to play in emergency disease responses in Australia. However, a 2011 report into Australia's preparedness for foot-and-mouth disease identified inconsistencies in employment and contractual conditions between State and Territory jurisdictions which could act as a potential barrier to their engagement in an emergency.

In 2013, the Animal Health Committee agreed to nationally consistent conditions and remuneration policy, developed by a working group involving representatives of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, State and Territory Governments, the Australian Veterinary Association as well as private veterinarians.

These arrangements allow private veterinarians to be directly engaged by State and Territory Governments as temporary or casual government employees, or as contractors at a nationally agreed remuneration rate.

Three policy documents were developed to assist private veterinarians and jurisdictions implement the new arrangements.

- *National Guidance Document on the Engagement of Private Veterinarians during an Emergency Animal Disease Response*
- *Employment conditions for Private Veterinarians Engaged as Employees during and Emergency Animal Disease Response and*
- *Contract for Engaging the Services of Private Veterinarians during an Emergency Animal Disease Response.*

States and Territories will integrate the national policy and with their respective policies and contracts, ensuring that private vets can be engaged efficiently and effectively if their assistance is required.

For further information see the Frequently Asked Questions (<http://www.daff.gov.au/animal-plant-health/animal/engagement-of-private-veterinarians>)

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## A REMINDER

### Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

A reminder to all registered veterinarians that the Board expects all veterinarians practising in the Northern Territory to undertake some form of CPD each year and maintain a record of their CPD in order to uphold contemporary professional standards and as a defence against allegations of misconduct as defined in section 28 of the *Veterinarians Act*.

CPD may comprise of:

- formal continuing education
- peer group activities (e.g. within the workplace and within the profession)



- self-directed learning

Be aware that CPD need not be restricted to veterinary services and may include such related areas as practice management, stress management, communication skills, cultural awareness etc.

### [Change of Name, Contact Address, Practice Details or Qualifications](#)

To assist in ensuring the accuracy of the details listed on the Veterinary Register, it is important that registered veterinarians advise the Board of any changes to their name, contact address, practice details or qualifications. Section 22 of the *Veterinarians Act* requires veterinarians to notify the Board of such changes not later than 28 days after their occurrence.

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