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## ARC Fees must be paid by 31 March 2004

You are reminded that it is illegal to undertake veterinary work, prescribe prescription animal remedies or call yourself a veterinarian if your annual retention certificate is not current. The new practising year begins on 1 April 2004.

Annual Retention forms were posted out to veterinarians in early February, and whilst payments are now streaming in, there is a large number who have still to complete their forms and arrange payment. If you have misplaced or not received your forms, you can download a blank set from the Veterinary Council website, at [www.vetcouncil.org.nz](http://www.vetcouncil.org.nz), email the Veterinary Council at [vet@vetcouncil.org.nz](mailto:vet@vetcouncil.org.nz), or ring on (04) 473 9600.

## Draft III: Consultation and Immediate Care

In the December 2003 Newsbrief the Council asked for feedback on the second draft of the proposed amendments to Sections 4.4-4.7 of the Code. Further feedback was received, including from Federated Farmers and the ACVM Group of the New Zealand Food Safety Authority. The Professional Standards Committee is now 'drawing breath' on this matter and revising a further draft of this section of the Code of Conduct.

## World Veterinary Day, April 24th

The fourth celebration of World Veterinary Day will take place on Saturday April 24th. This global celebration will highlight the important contribution that veterinarians make to animal health and welfare. Please visit <http://www.worldvet.org> for further information

## Election Year

A reminder that 2004 is Election year for the three elected veterinary positions on the Veterinary Council of New Zealand. If you are interested in serving on the Council, or in nominating another veterinarian for the Council, then take note of the calling of nominations which will be in the next Newsbrief. The elections will be held in November.

Anyone may now search for a New Zealand registered veterinarian online at the Council's website.

The relevant page is:

[www.vetcouncil.org.nz/public/findavet.html](http://www.vetcouncil.org.nz/public/findavet.html)

## COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Council were elected at the Council meeting in February, and Committee appointments were made:

### **Chairperson of the Veterinary Council**

Ron Gibson

### **Deputy Chairperson**

Norm Williamson

### **Complaints Assessment Committee**

Nigel Coddington (Chairperson), Mary Mountier, Nick Twyford

### **Registration Committee**

Allen Bryce (Chairperson), Sandra Forsyth, Tony Charleston, Paul Wiseman, Norm Williamson, Dave West

### **Finance and Administration Committee**

Gordon McIvor (Chairperson) Ron Gibson, John O'Flaherty, Julie Haggie

### **Professional Standards Committee**

Ron Gibson (Chairperson), Tony Zohrab, Gordon McIvor, Julie Wagner, Murray Gibb

### **Competency Review Committee**

The Council also formed a new committee, the Competency Review Committee, the function of which will be to develop draft policy and procedures in advance of the Council acquiring the power to undertake independent Competency Reviews. This Committee will be chaired by Jim Edwards. Peg Loague is appointed as a member.

### **The members of Council are:**

Ron Gibson (elected)  
Norm Williamson (for Dean of the Veterinary School, Massey University)  
Jim Edwards (Ministerial veterinary appointee)  
Julie Wagner (elected)  
Nigel Coddington (elected)  
Peg Loague (Ministerial lay appointee)  
Gordon McIvor (Ministerial lay appointee)

The Council meets four times a year. Its committees usually meet a week or two prior to the Council meeting, by teleconference if appropriate. The Complaints Assessment Committee meets more often (usually by teleconference), and its members also undertake complaints investigation work.

On occasions the Council also forms a Judicial Committee to consider charges of professional misconduct against a veterinarian. This Committee includes one Council member and also is likely to include a lay person and veterinarians with expertise in the relevant field of practice. It is possible that with changes in legislation the Judicial Committee will not include a member of the Council, but will include a person with relevant legal qualifications.

The Council is serviced by a Secretariat of three full time staff: The Secretary of the Council, the Executive Officer Registration and Complaints, and the Administration Officer.

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## Complaints Report 2003 & 2004



The total number of complaints received by the CAC in 2003 was 47. Of these, 37 were from clients against veterinarians; six were vets against vets and two followed receipt by the Secretary of information other than by direct complaint. Three complaints were referred to MAF for investigation. Mediation was attempted by the CAC in six complaints. Further information on the type of complaints received in 2003 will be provided in the Annual Report. One complaint from the 2003 year has resulted in a recommendation to the VCNZ Judicial Committee that the veterinarian be charged with professional misconduct, with diversion being recommended.

As at 20 March, eleven complaints had been received by the CAC since the start of 2004. At this early stage most are in the process of investigation, however two have been completed as they did not reach the threshold required for the Committee to investigate them.