



Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016

The primary purpose of the Veterinary Council is to protect the public interest by ensuring that veterinarians are fit and competent to practise

To achieve this purpose the Council has the following key statutory functions:

- registering veterinarians
- setting and implementing minimum standards for veterinary practice
- promoting high standards of veterinary education and conduct
- recognising as appropriate qualifications for registration by accrediting or approving the institutions which offer them
- recertifying veterinarians through the issue of practising certificates
- reviewing and acting, where necessary, in circumstances where concerns about a veterinarian's performance, professional conduct or health have been raised
- advising and making recommendations to the Minister and Massey University on relevant veterinary issues.

Values	Strategic Goals
Accountability Effectiveness Transparency Fairness Professionalism Collaboration	<p>Strategic Goal 1: Continue to develop Council policies and processes so the functions of the Veterinarians Act 2005 are fully implemented and based on proven regulatory practice.</p> <p>Strategic Goal 2: Achieve best practice in governance and management of the Council.</p> <p>Strategic Goal 3: Work with stakeholders to enable Council to deliver more effectively on its functions including updating and implementing cross sector communication strategies.</p>

The Council will work to achieve its strategic goals through the following objectives:

Goal 1: Continue to develop Council policies and processes so the functions of the Veterinarians Act 2005 are fully implemented and based on proven regulatory practice

Objectives
Continue to deliver on the statutory requirements of the Act.
Ensure veterinarians are competent to practice.
Advocate for changes so the provisions of the Act are aligned with best practice occupational regulation.

Goal 2: Achieve best practice in governance and management of the Council.

Objectives
Ensure Council members are focussed on, and have appropriate skills in governance.
Continue to review relevant overseas regulators and regulators in other sectors in NZ to ensure VCNZ operates by regulatory best practice.
Continue to be a “good employer” to retain high quality staff.

Goal 3: Work with stakeholders to enable Council to deliver more effectively on its functions including updating and implementing cross sector communication strategies.

Objectives
Improve the profession’s understanding of Council’s role and continue to articulate Council’s expectations of veterinarians.
Promote to the public the Council’s role in developing and maintaining minimum standards of veterinary practice and the fitness and competence of the profession.
Maintain and enhance working relationships with key stakeholders to promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater understanding of Council’s work and the role veterinarians play in improving outcomes for NZ inc • greater co-operation or joint approaches to shared issues
Maintain international networks to keep abreast of regulatory developments, gain learning, add value and assist in the development of Australasian and international standards.

Goal 1: Continue to develop Council policies and processes so the functions of the Veterinarians Act 2005 are fully implemented.

Objectives	This will be achieved by:	Actions
Continue to deliver on the statutory requirements of the Act.	Ensuring registration systems are transparent, operate efficiently and effectively and meet the needs of the sector.	Continue to explore electronic systems for verification of registration and APC applicants' good standing status beyond Australasia
		Assess if there are additional areas of veterinary science where limited registration provisions would assist the sector
	Conducting registration examinations while ensuring that the pass standards are fair, transparent and comparable for all candidates and do not create barriers to the registration of competent veterinarians.	Continue to review examination policies and processes and changes made to ensure no further risks to Council within the system.
		Continue to explore and promote learning opportunities for examination candidates
		Implement PC based written examination during final NZNVE
		Develop revised appeals processes for examination candidates
	Ensuring that veterinary education meets acceptable national and international standards at all levels.	Continue to play an active role in AVBC accreditation processes and the exploration of global accreditations initiatives
	Maintaining an up to date register of veterinarians that is used and trusted by the profession and the public	Develop further processes to encourage prompt renewal of APCs and continue reporting of those who have not renewed to employers and insurers
		Improve website search functions for specialists
	Ensuring that veterinarians with health conditions are fit to practise safely	Support NZVA in relation to its work on health/work life balance and pastoral care.
Monitor any changes in the HPCA Act with relation to pastoral care		

	Promoting high standards of professional education and conduct	Continue to develop and refine Council statements and guidelines on practising standards, continuing professional development and other important sector issues.
	Ensuring that veterinarians and the public have access to responsive, transparent, safe and timely complaints and discipline systems	<p>Improve processes, transparency and timeliness of the complaints processes so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An achievable standard is set for CAC timeliness and variance reports against this standard are reported at Council meetings • data base tracking is improved to keep those involved in complaints informed on the status of the matter and when milestones are reached.
	Collecting, analysing and disseminating accurate information about the veterinary workforce to facilitate a sustainable profession.	<p>Work with others so that the data collected is analysed and used to draw attention to “workforce sustainability”, reviewing matters such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ageing of the profession (and possible new ways of working in the third age) • Feminisation (as women usually work fewer hours), • Needs of generation x and y • Why graduates leave NZ • How to attract veterinarians who will work in new areas of veterinary practice <p>Find “partners” to develop a series of articles using the data to discuss “profession sustainability” and feature in sector newsletters, related websites and at profession related conferences.</p>
	Advising and making recommendations to the Minister on matters relating to veterinarians and veterinary science.	<p>In accordance with Council’s statutory function of advising and making recommendations to the Minister, increase the awareness of the Minister and the Ministry of the ways veterinarians can contribute to improve outcomes for NZ across a broad range of NZ Inc and government objectives including economic, environmental sustainability, biosecurity, food safety, animal welfare and human welfare</p> <p>Discuss rationale for and need to update Act.</p>

Ensure veterinarians are competent to practice.	Further developing the CPD standards and provisions to ensure all veterinarians understand the required standards and comply.	Review the functioning of current CPD provisions and develop simple to apply audit mechanisms to identify those not fulfilling CPD requirements.
	Developing ways to identify and remediate veterinarians operating below the acceptable standard	Research sector and VCNZ data to develop “triggers” (risk profiling) that will identify those who may be operating below the required standard.
		Research ways other regulators improve the practice of the underperforming practitioners and put in place remediation strategies, monitor and promote the outcomes.
		Work with NZVA and other stakeholders to ensure CPD programmes and activities link to areas where there is evidence of shortcomings/ competency gaps
		Fully implement the preliminary competence inquiry process
Advocate for changes so the provisions of the Act are aligned with best practice occupational regulation.	Continuing to advocate so areas of the Act that need to be changed are progressed to enable VCNZ to better regulate the profession.	Develop further strategies so that omissions, and conflict or errors in the Act are addressed particularly in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health thresholds • separating out Council’s regulatory and judicial responsibilities • registration of para veterinary professionals • maintaining the Register of veterinarians – provisions for voluntary removal and reinstatement

Goal 2: Achieve best practice in governance and management of the Council.

Objectives	This will be achieved by:	Actions
Ensure Council members are focussed on, and have appropriate skills in, governance.	Ensuring Council members' time is focused on governance decisions and uses the expertise of members.	Develop an annual Board plan to focus work and designate Council members to lead generative sessions.
		Use the enhanced staff structure to assess what other matters could be delegated to staff and examine the continued need for all of Council's standing committees.
		Assess agenda structure and decision making to see if the Council needs to work differently.
	Implementing a plan to address Council and Committee succession.	Review all Committee memberships to ensure there is depth of experience in each Council Committee when Council membership changes in 2013/14 and beyond.
		Review training for those who may take on key roles – such as governance training, media training for potential spokespeople, decision making and critical thinking for CAC and Judicial Committee members.
	Ensuring Council continues to benefit from the highest possible level of expertise at the governance level.	Organise refresher training where needed including inviting other Chairs/CEO of regulators to Council meetings to talk about the way they operate especially in terms of dealing with competence, complaints, risk profiling etc.
Continue to review relevant NZ and overseas regulators to ensure VCNZ operates by regulatory best practice.	Reviewing international best regulatory practice to identify learning for VCNZ.	Monitor moves in New Zealand to decrease regulation – “Better regulation, Less regulation” and regulatory changes taking place within other NZ sectors to assess any learning for the Council.
		Assess whether any savings can be made to “back office costs” via closer relations with Health Regulatory Authorities Secretariat such as use of HR systems, procurement etc.
		Monitor international changes in relation to regulation/registration of veterinarians and veterinary paraprofessionals.

Continue to be a “good employer” to retain high quality staff.	Retaining and upskilling competent and experienced staff.	Ensure terms and conditions continue to meet sector benchmarks.
		Enable staff to learn functions across the office to strengthen multi skilling and allow for succession planning.
		Maintain up to date HR policies and systems
	Enabling staff to identify and access effective professional development	Review opportunities for learning from other regulators (such as such as visiting/working with regulators in other sectors) so that Council benefits from new ways of addressing issues.
		Ensure annual personal development plans are in place and adhered to.

Goal 3: Work with stakeholders to enable Council to deliver more effectively on its functions by updating and implementing cross sector communication strategies

Objectives	This will be achieved by	Actions
<p>Improve the profession's understanding of Council's role.</p>	<p>Identifying what vets need to know about Council and developing a proactive programme of engagement.</p>	<p>Promote Council's expectations of the profession via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentations to each regional NZVA branch over a three year period • a significant presence at NZVA conferences • presenting annually to final year Massey students • issuing regular NewsBriefs on topical issues- using an "invited writer" to promote developments/initiatives in the profession that may not be core business such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - using technology to identify how to improve farm efficiency (LandCorp) - new areas where vets are needed i.e. controlling pandemics, understanding epidemiology, virtual monitoring - developing animal health plans - new ways of billing i.e. retainers rather than fees. • profile Council members and their experience in the sector via newsletter.
		<p>Review website structure to ensure it provides information needed by the profession in a form they can use.</p>
<p>Promote to the public the Council's role in developing and maintaining minimum standards of veterinary practice and the fitness and competence of the profession</p>	<p>Promoting understanding of the principles, policy and procedures of the Veterinarians Act and increased understanding of the work of the Council.</p>	<p>Issue relevant and topical media releases, for example on animal welfare and the links with VCNZ's role.</p>
		<p>Assess the usefulness of consumer forums on certain topics such as animal welfare.</p>
		<p>Offer Council members to talk at appropriate external events.</p>
		<p>Review website structure to ensure it provides information needed by the public in a form they can use.</p>

Maintain and enhance working relationships with key stakeholders to promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • greater understanding of Council's role & the role veterinarians play in improving outcomes for NZ inc • greater co-operation or joint approaches to shared issues 	Debating the effectiveness and sector understanding of Council's educational approach (as opposed to the discipline approach) to those not meeting the standard.	Stage a forum or debate as part of a stakeholder meeting to clarify the differing perspectives and rationale of an educational or discipline approach and develop a Council statement and promote this outcome to the wider sector.
	Developing links with others so VCNZ can contribute to the "NZ veterinary service.	Hold periodic forums with other main stakeholders to identify areas VCNZ can take a lead or work with others to improve understanding of the roles vets play in improving outcomes for NZ Inc.
		Maintain key relationships by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • offering Council members to talk at cross sector events • having stakeholders to meetings for 30 mins interaction and lunch at VCNZ Board meetings • having guest columns in NewsBrief
Maintain international networks to keep abreast of regulatory developments, gain learning, add value and assist in the development of Australasian and international standards	Maintaining and enhancing presence on AVBC.	Assess where greater cooperation or joint processes with AVBC can add value to VCNZ.
	Engaging with and monitoring the work of international veterinary regulatory bodies including OIE	Assess where VCNZ can gain learning, add value internationally and assist in the development of international standards