Evolving Veterinary Statutory Bodies in the World

Relevant OIE TAHC Standards and the Evaluation of quality and performance using the OIE-PVS Tool

Dr Herbert SCHNEIDER
AGRIVENT International Consultants
Chaiman : OIE ad hoc Group on Veterinary Services

Standards on the Quality of Veterinary Services (VS)

- as contained in the TAHC, have been formally adopted by the OIE International Committee, the general assembly of all National Delegates of OIE Members, which constitutes the organization’s highest decision-making body
- and VS shall conform to these principles regardless of the political, economic or social situation of the respective country

Tasks (dependent upon the category of Terrestrial Code)

Licensed by the relevant Services (VS)

Veterinarian
means a person registered or licensed by the relevant veterinary statutory body of a country to practise veterinary medicine / science in that country

Veterinary para-professional
means a person who, for the purposes of the Terrestrial Code, is authorised by the veterinary statutory body to carry out certain designated tasks (dependent upon the category of veterinary para-professional) in a territory, and delegated to them under the responsibility and direction of a veterinarian. The tasks authorized for each category of veterinary para-professional should be defined by the veterinary statutory body depending on qualifications and training, and according to need.

Veterinary Statutory Body
means means an autonomous authority regulating veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals.
Thus a VSB is a very important and essential part - a kingpin - regarding Good Veterinary Governance and in meeting the TAHC standards on quality and performance for VS in a country.

**TAHC Article 3.2.12 - Evaluation of the VSB**

1. **Scope**
   
   In the evaluation of the veterinary statutory body, the following items may be considered, depending on the purpose of the evaluation:
   
   a) objectives and functions;
   b) legislative basis, autonomy and functional capacity;
   c) the composition and representation of the body’s membership;
   d) accountability and transparency of decision-making;
   e) sources and management of funding;
   f) administration of training programmes and continuing professional development for veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals.

2. **Evaluation of objectives and functions**
   
   The veterinary statutory body should define its policy and objectives, including detailed descriptions of its powers and functions such as:
   
   a) to regulate veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals through licensing and/or registration of such persons;
   b) to determine the minimum standards of education (initial and continuing) required for degrees, diplomas and certificates entitling the holders thereof to be registered as veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals;
   c) to determine the standards of professional conduct of veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals and to ensure these standards are met.

3. **Evaluation of legislative basis, autonomy and functional capacity**
   
   The veterinary statutory body should be able to demonstrate that it has the capacity, supported by appropriate legislation, to exercise and enforce control over all veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals. These controls should include, where appropriate, compulsory licensing and registration, minimum standards of education (initial and continuing), the recognition of degrees, diplomas and certificates, setting standards of professional conduct and exercising control and the application of disciplinary procedures. The veterinary statutory body should be able to demonstrate autonomy from undue political and commercial interests. Where applicable, regional agreements for the recognition of degrees, diplomas and certificates for veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals should be demonstrated.

4. **Evaluation of membership representation**
   
   Detailed descriptions should be available in respect of the membership of the veterinary statutory body and the method and duration of appointment of members. Such information includes:
   
   a) veterinarians designated by the Veterinary Authority, such as the Chief Veterinary Officer;
   b) veterinarians elected by members registered by the veterinary statutory body;
   c) veterinarians designated or nominated by the veterinary association(s);
   d) representative(s) of veterinary para-professions;
   e) representative(s) of veterinary academia;
   f) representative(s) of other stakeholders from the private sector;
   g) election procedures and duration of appointment;
   h) qualification requirements for members.
6. Evaluation of financial sources and financial management
Information regarding income and expenditure, including fee structures, for the licensing/registration of persons should be available.

7. Evaluation of training programmes and programmes for continuing professional development, for veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals
Descriptive summary of continuing professional development, training and education programmes should be provided, including descriptions of content, duration and participants; documented details of quality manuals and standards relating to Good Veterinary Practice should be provided.

The OIE PVS Evaluation Tool

4 Fundamental components

- Human, physical and financial resources
- Technical authority and capability
- Interactions with stakeholders
- Access to markets

III. INTERACTION WITH STAKEHOLDERS
This component of the evaluation appraises the capability of the VS to collaborate with and involve stakeholders in the implementation of programmes and activities. It comprises six critical competencies.

Critical competency:

III.5 Veterinary Statutory Body
The Veterinary Statutory Body (VSB) is an autonomous authority responsible for the regulation of the veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals. Its role is defined in the Terrestrial Code.
1. In evaluating the compliance of a country with OIE international standards of quality of Veterinary Services, a Veterinary Statutory Body – be it called a Veterinary Board or Council or by any other designation – plays a pivotal role and is indispensable in the establishment and maintenance of Good Veterinary Governance and Practice.

2. Countries without a VSB should be encouraged to establish a VSB in accordance with the provisions of the TAHC as a matter of high priority.

3. Veterinary Associations are vital stakeholders in the establishment and maintenance of public-private veterinary partnerships for Good Veterinary Governance and Practice.

4. To explore possibilities for possible harmonization of licensing/registration requirements for veterinarians and veterinary para-professionals in OIE member countries in the SADC Region, a networking and consultative forum between existing VSB’s (bi-lateral or multi-lateral) should be initiated.

5. The concept of “twinning” should be investigated between established and to-be-established VSB’s in order to share expertise and competencies.

6. The aim for the reciprocal recognition of veterinary degrees for licensing / registration purposes between OIE member countries in the SADC Region should be discussed and possibilities be explored as to the achievement of this goal.

THANK YOU