

PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON ACTIVITIES
2019

It has struck me, through an obscure course of events, that I have now been a member of the New South Wales Veterinary Practitioners Board for a decade. The revelation has led to some reflection, of my growth as a contributor to the activities of the Board, and the evolution of the Board itself over that time. Life has become more complicated over that decade, and the Board now faces a more complex horizon as the regulation of the veterinary profession moves into the future.

However, there is some wisdom in returning to simple guiding principles about the way the Board does its work. So, it is with some confidence that I report that the Board maintains and continues to develop a number of programs to improve regulation of the veterinary profession in NSW:

1. The **hospital inspection program** continues to provide the best mechanism for maintaining appropriate standards in NSW's licensed veterinary hospitals.
2. Veterinarians in NSW continue to lead the country in the formal acceptance and use of **continuing education** to maintain the standards of practice.
3. **Communication** with the profession is critical to the success of the Board's regulatory function, and the Board employs BoardTalk, the Registrar's "Update" email, and the News section on the Board's website to disseminate critical information to NSW veterinarians
4. The **complaint investigation** process is continuously being reviewed and revised, and guided by our legislation, provides an important mechanism whereby the Board carries out its role in regulating the profession, maintaining standards of animal welfare, and protecting the public. As I reflect on a decade in this space, I am especially struck by the increase in sophistication and precision of the complaint investigation process.

In particular, the Board has focused on the increasing manner in which the veterinary profession is happy to conduct its interactions with the Board in the online world. This could raise a new slew of potential problems, and I am pleased that the Board has been proactive in establishing systems which will facilitate the routine actions of veterinarians with the Board. I think that this is the next big step for the Board: to move to a more modern and electronic environment as a vehicle to increase efficiency in these interactions.

I have commented in previous reports to the profession that it is foundational to the Board's mission that it remains in a solid financial position and I am very pleased to report that the Board continues to maintain a financial position that ensures that the important regulatory work of the Board will not be constrained or compromised. The Board operates its budget on the principle of achieving a small profit each year to allow continued investment in Board activities and maintenance of the real value of its financial reserves. The Registrar and the Finance subcommittee are to be congratulated in that they have been instrumental in the long-term process of establishing this sound financial basis that underpins the Board's activities.

The Board has for several years now made a significant contribution to the leadership and governance of the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council (AVBC). The AVBC accredits Australian veterinary schools and provides recommendations for the accreditation of specialists. It thereby plays a fundamental role in maintaining standards of veterinary science across Australia and New Zealand. The AVBC has had to deal with some internal division and dispute from different jurisdictions across Australia over the last few years, and I am very proud of the leadership role our Board has played in working to resolve these issues and strengthen the AVBC.

Finally, I would once again like to sincerely thank all the Board members and Board staff with whom I have worked with, and learned from, over the last 10 years. Their considerable contributions and good judgement are really the driving forces that ensure the effective delivery of the Board's regulatory functions.



Dr J Mark Simpson NSW V5433
President