Dear Colleagues, on behalf of the professions, we congratulate and welcome newly appointed Minister Senzeni Zokwana and Deputy Minister Bheki Cele to the portfolio Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. We further extend our assistance to both Ministers in order to take work in the sector forward in ensuring that we meet objectives for food safety and security for all South Africans. Council has written to the two leaders informing them briefly of issues in the profession and the sector which require their urgent intervention. We have attached to these letters, copies of the SAVC strategic plan for the period 2014-2016. We await an opportunity for further engagement and to take issues of concern forward.

Council welcomes the report of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on the performance of veterinary service for South Africa
CONDUCTED IN OCTOBER 2012. DESPITE THE DELAYS IN THE RELEASE OF THE REPORT, IT IS OUR HOPE THAT ALL STAKEHOLDERS CAN TAKE STOCK AND HAVE A CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN SEEKING WAYS TO ADDRESS IDENTIFIED SHORTCOMINGS.

COUNCIL REMAINS COMMITTED IN ITS ROLE TO ADVISE THE MINISTER, ENGAGE WITH DAFF TOWARDS ENSURING THE DELIVERY OF STATE VETERINARY SERVICES AND EFFECTIVE REGULATION OF THE PROFESSION.

IN BRIEF, COUNCIL NOTES THAT THE ISSUE OF THE NATIONAL CHAIN OF COMMAND HAS BEEN FOUND TO BE PROBLEMATIC. Indeed, this had been known for a while now and short of an amendment to the constitution, all of us should find alternative ways of restoring it. The report points that veterinary services is treading on the brink of a collapse for the worst and perhaps the previously discussed strategy for veterinary services should be finalised and serve as policy that dictates a common vision for veterinary services in South Africa that we all should rally around in service for the peoples of our country.

COUNCIL HAS HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH OTHER STAKEHOLDERS AROUND THE SAVC’S STRATEGIC PLAN FOCUSSING ON ISSUES AROUND THE SET OBJECTIVES. WE HAVE AGREED WITH DAFF AND SAVA TO INITIATE WORK TOWARDS THE PRIVATE PUBLIC PARTNERSHIP MODELLING ON THE DEFINITION OF VETERINARY SERVICES BY THE OIE.

WE WILL HAVE REGULAR MEETINGS WITH THE BLACK VETERINARY FORUM (BFV) AND THE SAVA TO ADDRESS ISSUES OF MUTUAL CONCERN. WE REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT THIS PROCESS WILL YIELD A GOOD RESULT TO BRING ABOUT UNITY, COMMON PURPOSE AND FOCUS ACROSS THE DIFFERENT SPHERES AND STRATA IN THE VETERINARY PROFESSIONS AND THAT A FEW YEARS FROM NOW, WE WOULD HAVE COLLECTIVELY ELEVATED OUR POSITION AS A PROFESSION IN THE EYES OF THE STAKEHOLDERS AS WE WOULD BE SEEN AS RELEVANT TO THE NEEDS OF OUR COUNTRY AND CONTRIBUTING TO ITS DEVELOPMENT.

OUR VISION OF “ADVANCING PUBLIC AND ANIMAL HEALTH THROUGH QUALITY VETERINARY SERVICES FOR ALL” WOULD BECOME OUR REALITY!

COUNCIL HAS NOTED SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS AND SOME FEEDBACK FROM THE ROADSHOWS CONDUCTED BY MRS. DINAMARE STOLTZ AND PROF VINNY NAIIDO. WE NEED TO COMPLETE THIS EXERCISE OF REVISING COUNCIL’S RULES (AFD) AS PART OF RESOLVING THE FINDINGS OF ANTICOMPETITIVE BEHAVIOUR AGAINST THE SAVC BY THE COMPETITION COMMISSION. THIS LECTURE IS ALSO AVAILABLE FROM COUNCIL’S WEBSITE THAT IS FOR THOSE THAT HAVE NOT HAD A CHANCE TO ATTEND THE LECTURES. WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR PROMPT FEEDBACK!

THE AMENDED RULES WILL BE APPROVED BY THE MINISTER AND THEN BE PUBLISHED IN THE GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.

COUNCIL ALSO INTENDS TO HOLD WORKSHOPS ON STANDARDS FOR FACILITIES AND ON THE CONTROL OF THE ILLEGAL USE OF HIGHLY SCHEDULED SUBSTANCES. THE WORKSHOP ON THE CONTROL OF THE USE OF HIGHLY SCHEDULED SUBSTANCES WILL INCLUDE REGULATORY AGENCIES FROM GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS THE NATIONAL PROSECUTION AUTHORITY.

COUNCIL HAS RECEIVED A REQUEST FROM THE VETERINARY COUNCIL OF TANZANIA TO BE PART OF A TWINNING PROJECT UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE OIE. TWINTING IS MEANT TO ALLOW FOR THE CROSS POLLINATION OF IDEAS WHERE THE TWO COUNCILS IDENTIFY AREAS OF COMMON WORK AND DEVELOPMENT. COUNCIL HAS CONSULTED AND RECEIVED BACK FROM THE CHIEF VETERINARY OFFICER OF SOUTH AFRICA, DR MIKE MODISANE. THE DRAFT PROPOSAL HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO THE OIE FOR REVIEW AND FEEDBACK FROM DR B VALLAT IS ENCOURAGING.

SAVC CONGRATULATES DR MIKE MODISANE ON BEING ELECTED THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD ASSEMBLY OF THE OIE. WE WISH HIM WELL IN THIS POSITION AND OFFER OUR ASSISTANCE ALWAYS.

THE COMMEMORATION OF THE WORLD VETERINARY DAY TOOK PLACE ON 28TH APRIL 2014. THE THEME FOR THE DAY WAS “ANIMAL WELFARE AND THAT IT REMAINS RELEVANT TO MEMBERS OF THE PROFESSION TO ASSIST INDIGENT COMMUNITIES AND FOR THE TRAINING OF ANIMAL OWNERS, FARMERS AND EVERYONE TO ENSURE THAT THE WELFARE OF ANIMALS IS ALWAYS TAKEN CARE OF.

COLLEAGUES, PAULO COELHO SAID OF HOPE: “THAT WORD THAT SO OFTEN RISES IN OUR MIND, GETS SORELY WOUNDED AS THE DAY PROGRESSES, DIES AT NIGHTFALL, AND IS REBORN WITH THE NEW DAY.” LET US HAVE HOPE FOR THE SAKE OF OUR FUTURE AND FOR THOSE COMING AFTER US AND THAT WE SHALL BE EQUAL TO TASKS BEFORE US!

THANK YOU, BOITSHOKO NTSHABELE.
UPDATE ON MATTERS AFFECTING THE VETERINARY PROFESSION

THREATENED AND PROTECTED SPECIES [TOPS PERMITS]

The new Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Mr Senzeni Zokwana was requested to intervene in two matters namely the proposed Game Meat Scheme which was recently dispensed with and the requirement that veterinarians need to obtain permits to treat Threatened and Protected Species [TOPS] and Minster Zokwana was requested to meet with the SAVC in order that he can be advised on the developments in these matters.

WRSA

The SAVC discussed a further proposal by the WRSA in February 2014 which proposal is no different to its previous proposals. The SAVC therefore informed the WRSA that the proposal was not accepted.

The WRSA had now been placed on terms to file its replying affidavit by no later than Wednesday, 28 May 2014, failing which the State Attorney was instructed to enrol the matter in accordance with High Court Rule 6(5) (f). The WRSA subsequently filed its replying affidavit and are now awaiting a date for the matter to be heard.

CCS

The Compulsory Community Services (CCS) regulations have not been finalised yet. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries is liaising with the State Law Advisors regarding the CCS regulations.

FURTHER UPDATE ON COMPETITION COMMISSION ISSUES

The Council is in the final phase entering into a consent agreement with the Competition Commission on 28 May 2014 that more Rules might be affected, the SAVC will in conjunction with the Commission identify any of the remaining rules that may contravene the Act overtly. The aim is to hand any suggested amendments to the remaining rules to DAFF by June 2015.

2.4 There are no pending disciplinary inquiries in respect of charges related to canvassing and touting and/ or advertising. These charges were dismissed out of hand by the last Investigation Committee (IC) meeting held on 22 May 2014 as a result of the undertaking given to the Commission on 12 December 2013.

2.5 The SAVC declared a moratorium on enforcement of the rules relating to canvassing, touting, advertising and undercharging on 12 December 2013. All members of the profession were informed by smms on 16 January 2014 to log into the SAVC’s website for information to access the information regarding the moratorium under the heading Guidelines of Tariffs.

ThREATENED aND PROTECTED Species [TOPS PERMITS]

The SAVC will once again firmly commit not to enforce the Rules pertaining to veterinarians relating to touting and/ or advertising pending the formal amendments to the Rules that require amendment to comply with the Act, as it had done from 12 December 2013.

2.6 The SAVC resolved on 11 December 2013 not to publish the Guideline of Tariffs for 2014 (which was due for publication at the beginning of December 2013) and to refrain from publishing it in future.

2.7 The SAVC will inform all registered veterinarians either by e-mail or ordinary mail regarding the consent settlement agreement, once it is approved by the Tribunal.

2.10 The SAVC will engage with the Commission on the amendments to the rules, regulations and Veterinary Act relevant to the Act.

2.8 The SAVC established a permanent review committee at its Council meeting held on 30 and 31 July 2013 to consider and deal with amendments of the Veterinary and Para-Veterinary professions Act, Act 19 of 1982, the regulations and rules promulgated under the said Act, as well as certain protocols and codes of conduct.

2.9 The SAVC is undertaking a series of road shows (at least one per province) during 2014 to educate veterinarians on the use and control of restricted medicines (Professor Vinny Naidoo presents this part) and the amendment of the Rules pertaining to veterinarians (Mrs D Stoltz, SAVC: Director Legal Services) presenting this part. The intention of the second part of each of the road shows is to educate the veterinarians, amongst others, in respect of the requirements of the Act in relation to the Rules.
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Fact: Contains 4 Potent Active Ingredients + Vitamin C + Manganese
(Chondroitin, Glucosamine, MSM and GlycOmega-PLUS™ Green Lipped Mussel Extract).

Fact: Low kDa Chondroitin Sulphate is of bovine origin
(no sharks are harmed in the making of our products)

Fact: We source cold-pressed GlycOmega-PLUS™ Green Lipped Mussel Extract from New Zealand
(it is 5 times more potent than other Green Lipped Mussel, giving MobiFlex® its smell of the sea)

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The Council finalised its policy relating to Rodeos at its meeting held on Tuesday, 27 May 2014. In essence the SAVC agreed with the opinion of the veterinary profession and the South African Veterinary Association.

Therefore, the SAVC resolved that rodeos should be banned as it is regarded as high risk events for animals which may lead to serious injury, suffering or to death of animals.

Rodeos should only be held in the event of regulation thereof and the regulation of rodeos should include the following requirements:

- A responsible governing body is in place;
- A well-developed set of rules and regulations are in place and can be enforced;
- A responsible veterinarian is able to, based on the abovementioned rules and regulations, evaluate the welfare of the animals and the risk at these events; and
- An analysis and decision can be made on the classification of rodeos as a welfare risk.

The banning of rodeos should only be lifted in the event that rodeos are regulated and that veterinarians are present at these events.

Council informed the National Council of SPCAs accordingly.
Review of the minimum standards for Veterinary facilities and professional practice

Council resolved to review the minimum standards for facilities. The review of the minimum standards for facilities commenced in 2013 and input was sourced from the various groups of the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA). Most of these groups provided input on the minimum standards for their particular field of practice. These inputs will be debated together with other inputs at a workshop to be scheduled for a date during the first two weeks of September or during the first two weeks of October 2014. An invitation to attend the workshop will be addressed to all members of the veterinary profession. The invitation will be published on the SAVC’s website and members will be alerted by sms.

The standards of practice will be discussed once the outcome of the workshop on the minimum standards for facilities is known. The standards of practice relates to professional services and how members should practice professionally. The Review Committee of the SAVC is currently reviewing all rules and all the above mentioned standards will be incorporated in the amendment rules. It is therefore important that members provide their inputs to these rules to ensure that the SAVC is informed on the needs of the veterinary profession. It is also important that members attend the workshop regarding the incorporation of input on the above standards and all the rules affecting the profession.

Those members who did not have the opportunity to attend a CPD talk on rules presented by the Director Legal Affairs, Mrs Dinamarie Stolz, are requested to view page 18 & 19 of this Newsletter for such an opportunity and provide written input on the changes to the rules and/or to attend the forthcoming events.

Members can access the CPD lecture at www.savc.org.za or visit the link: http://www.savc.org.za/14-latest-news/latest-news/384-lectures-review-of-the-rules-medicine

Acceptance of Veterinary Qualifications for Registration Purposes

The SAVC wishes to confirm that the BVSc degree (UP) is currently accepted by both the Australasian Veterinary Boards Council [AVBC] and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons [RCVS] for registration purposes without the holder of the BVSc degree (UP) having to pass a registration examination.

The RCVS has indicated that the RCVS is interested, as in the case of the AVBC, who already has an agreement with the SAVC, to enter into an agreement with the SAVC regarding the accreditation of veterinary qualifications offered in the UK and South Africa. The SAVC and RCVS are currently looking into the terms of the agreement.

Veterinary qualifications are no longer automatically accepted for registration purposes as acceptance of qualifications is based on the regular assessment of the qualifications and validation of the standard of the tuition and training offered by veterinary faculties or schools.

The terms “reciprocity” and “automatic acceptance” are no longer part of any considerations in the agreements entered into when qualifications are assessed.

Continued Professional Development (CPD) audit feedback: 2013 & 2014

1. 2013 CPD AUDIT FEEDBACK REPORT (DUE DATE TO SUBMIT FEEDBACK – 31 JULY 2014)

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<th>Medical reasons</th>
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<th>Busy with studies</th>
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<th>Removed from register</th>
<th>Previous non-compliance cases</th>
<th>IB decisions communicated to members. Referred to the IB.</th>
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2. 2014 CPD AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT AS ON 2 JULY 2014

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Please submit your response if you were selected in the 2014 annual audit.

Click on this link to view: www.eduvet.co.za
SAVC full registration examination 2014

Following the annual audit report Council resolved to proceed with the Full Registration Examination in 2014. Application for the 2014 examination has closed.

Dates for the examination are as follows:

**Computer Based Examination**
- Monday, 1 September 2014 10h30 – 13h30 [CBE 1]
- Tuesday, 2 September 2014 9h00 – 12h00 [CBE 2]

Only candidates who pass the Computer Based Examination will be allowed to proceed to the Oral and/or Practical Examination.

**Oral and/or Practical Examination**
- Monday, 8 and/or Tuesday, 9 September 2014 Veterinarians
- Wednesday, 10 September 2014 Para-veterinarians

Dr Dietmar Holm has been appointed as Examination Officer for 2014.

Please refer to the SAVC website www.savc.org.za for detailed information regarding the 2014 examination.

Assessment of qualifications

Dr Boitshoko Ntshabele attended a visitation to Massey University from 2 – 9 May 2014.

Treatment of cattle with burnt hooves

With reference to the recent veld fires in the Kokstad, Matalie, Cedarville areas, the NSPCA would like to draw attention to the following information confirmed by a consortium of livestock veterinarians, one of which worked many years in private practice in the Free State and every year he had to euthanize 50 cattle or more with hoof injuries as a result of veld fires.

In light of the above and aforementioned factors of burns affecting cattle hooves, the NSPCA’s viewpoint remains steadfast that to prevent cruelty and prolonged suffering in terms of Section 2(1)(e) and Section 5 of the Animals Protection Act no. 71 of 1962, animals must be immediately humanely destroyed upon discovering burned/sloughed hooves resulting from veld fires. Our comments are based on the following facts:

1. If the coronary bands of the hooves are not damaged, the hoof takes between 18 months to 2 years to grow back.
2. The coronary band of the hoof is more than often irrecoverably damaged when cattle hooves are burnt but this is very difficult if not impossible to ascertain or confirm. This will result in either the hoof not growing back or if it does grow back it will grow back skewed.
3. This is an incredibly painful injury for cattle to endure. You can compare it to the pain one endures when tearing a finger or toe nail, or if a toe or finger nail is ripped off. Add to this that cattle have to bear their entire 300 kg plus body weight on these injured hooves.
4. As a result of the pain the cattle may stop eating and will drastically lose condition making the recovery process even more challenging especially as they may never regain their lost weight.
5. In the opinion of the consortium of veterinarians, “it is inhumane to even attempt to treat these animals” and their experience and advice suggests that affected animals should rather be euthanized.

Additional research has indicated or suggested that once the hoof falls off, the affected animal is forced to walk on the pedal bone which is extremely painful for the animal or causes considerable pain: http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/fire-and-emergencies/recovery-after-an-emergency/livestock-after-an-emergency/assessing-cattle-after-a-bushfire

We trust that this information will be imparted to registered veterinarians, veterinary nurses and Para-veterinarians as this will prevent considerable pain and suffering in the event of livestock falling victim to veld fires in the future.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SPCAs

For advice please contact:
- Dr Bryce Marock – 011 672-0448 / 10; hospital@rdptspca.co.za
- Dr Charles Gilfillan – 012 817-9087; charles.gilfillan@afrivet.co.za

Cow with badly burnt udder and legs requiring destruction.
Animal with separation of the hooves at least one week after the fire and requiring destruction.
Cracked skin of axilla causing immobility 2-4 days after a fire. Destroy immediately.

Cow with badly burnt udder and legs requiring destruction.
CPD for Para-veterinary Professionals

Council resolved to implement CPD for Para-veterinary professionals as from 1 April 2015. Para-veterinary professionals are requested to keep record and proof of CPD activities for at least two CPD cycles.

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN VETERINARY COUNCIL

CONGRESS 2014

1 & 2 August 2014
Preliminary Programme

Organised by Vetlink Conferences
www.vetlink.co.za
Tel 012 349 1580
conferences@vetlink.co.za

Friday 1 August
8:00 Dehorning of Rhinos - practical approach - Joseph van Heerden
8:45 Topic to be confirmed - Tony Shakespeare
9:30 Forensic post-mortem in Rhino poaching - Johan Steyl & Dinamarie Stolz. SAFCV standards and the manner in which vets may practice
10:15 Tea
11:15 Thelphusia in Roan and Sable - Johan Steyl
12:00 Haemorrhagic septicaemia in Buffalo - Johan Steyl
LUNCH
13:30 Topic to be confirmed (Cattle) - Tony Shakespeare
14:15 Presentation on veterinary dispensing: Can certain medication only be dispensed by a person with a license? - Joseph van Heerden
15:00 Tea
15:30 Proposed changes to outdated rules, including minimum standards and the manner in which vets may practice - Dinamire Slotz, SAVC
16:15 AGM, SAVA, SAVC Council
18:00 for 19:00 Dinner: Sponsored for delegates by Hills

Saturday 2 August
7:00 Registration
8:00 The ABC of cytology - Amelia Goddard. Sponsored by Pethcare
8:45 Diagnostic approach to liver disease using laboratory assays - Amelia Goddard
9:30 The sore cow: Revisiting analgesics and NSAIDs - Lerica le Roux
10:15 TEA
11:00 Topic to be confirmed - Tanya Schoeman. Sponsored by Hills
11:45 Feline Urinary disease - Tanya Schoeman. Sponsored by Hills
12:30 LUNCH
13:30 Off-lable drug use: The do’s and don’ts - Lerica le Roux
14:15 Overview of anaesthetic drugs - Lynette Bestor
15:00 TEA
15:30 Caesarian section (Anaesthetic and neonate management) - Lynette Bestor
16:15 Brucellosis - Petra Kithoff (Speaker TBC)

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN VETERINARY COUNCIL

Transgressions

TRANSGRESSIONS IN TERMS OF THE VETERINARY AND PARA-VETERINARY PROFESSIONS ACT

Name | Address | Found guilty of improper conduct | Penalty enforced
--- | --- | --- | ---
D0/0146 Dr AJ Lewis | Plot 6, Moepel Road Hoedspruit Limpopo 1380 | In contravention of the Veterinary and Para-Veterinary Professions Act, Act No 19 of 1982 on the charges three, four, five and six as set out in the summons, and below, in that he:
Date found guilty | 28 May 2014 | Charge 3: On or about the 22nd, 23rd and 24th August 2012 he failed to maintain the prestige, honour, dignity and interests of the veterinary profession and its members as required by Rule 4(1)(a) by using inappropriate and/or lewd language when addressing the media on his arrival at Monate Lodge.
Penalty enforced | | 1. A warning and discharge.
| | 2. To review and critically evaluate the Act and Regulations and make recommendations as regards to the improvement of the Act to accommodate wildlife veterinarians which must be submitted to Council within six months [Due 30 November 2014].

D68/0786 Dr AE Riley | Cornwall View Shopping Centre Cnr Boeing & Piering Streets Elandskuspark Pretoria, 0075 | In contravention of the Veterinary and Para-Veterinary Professions Act, Act No 19 of 1982 on the charges one and three as set out in the summons, and below, in that he:
Date found guilty | 6 June 2014 | Charge 1: On or during the periods between November 2012 and March 2013, he acted in contravention of Rule 5(5) and/or Rule 5(7) of the Rules relating to the practising of the veterinary profession promulgated in terms of section 30 of the Act, in that he required and/or allowed a registered student, namely Ms M Kruger to render veterinary services by issuing veterinary certificates to Mr Gilder, subsequent to vaccinating his dogs and by not signing the said certificates personally; and
Penalty enforced | | 1. A fine of R2000-00 (Two thousand Rand), suspended for three years on condition that he is not convicted of a similar offence during the period of suspension; and

| | | 2. He is ordered to submit an article of at least 500 (five hundred) words to be published in the South African Veterinary Council’s newsletter with regards to the duties and responsibilities of veterinary professionals in respect of student employed at their practices and the requirements of submitting records to the Council when so requested.

VETERINARY NURSES WELCOME - R780 for full programme, Paralleled programme offered on Saturday (Dr Bestor & Schoeman)

Register now and benefit from the early bird discount! First 20 Branch members register at no cost!

PLEASE NOTE: ALL EARLY BIRD PRICES EXPIRE ON 15 July 2014

Organised by Vetlink Conferences
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Tel 012 349 1580
conferences@vetlink.co.za

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17
WHERE TO ATTEND PRESENTATIONS

Branch Meetings and Mini Congresses 2014
(All registered members of the Veterinary professions are invited)

- Please register
- Contact SAVA (marketing@sava.co.za), SAVETCON (petrie@savetcon.co.za) and Vetlink (info@vetlink.co.za) for details of registration.

Free State & Northern Cape
1-2 August 2014, Emoya Estate, Bloemfontein

Mpumalanga
9-10 August 2014, Pine Lake Inn, White River

World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA)
16-19 September 2014, Cape Town ICC
Regrettably the SAVC will not present there

Western Cape
17-18 October 2014, venue to be confirmed

Pig Veterinary Society
5 November 2014, SAVA, Monumentpark

Natal/Midlands
22-23 November 2014, Mont Aux Sources

Control of scheduled medicines
Presented by Prof V Naidoo, SAVC
For members of the veterinary profession, held at SAVA 2014 branch meetings

Review of the Rules for the Veterinary and Para-Veterinary professions
Presented by Ms D Stoltz, SAVC
For members of the veterinary profession, held at SAVA branch meetings
every breath counts with

Finadyne®

+ Fast
+ Long acting
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Why Finadyne®?

One treatment of Finadyne® helps minimize production erosion 1 achieved by:

+ a drop of fever within 24 hours which...2
+ brings the animal back to feed due to...3
+ relief from inflammation for...4
+ up to 72 hours.4, 5

Worldwide, there are no reports of any side effects in consumers if the withdrawal period of 36 hours (milk) and 5 days (meat) is adhered to.

References:

5. SPAH Study C99-4750-01

Further safeguards, the veterinarian has to submit his/hers side under oath in the form of an answering affidavit.

The screening process of the complaints is conducted by the IC, which considers all relevant facts and documentation. In taking the decision whether to refer a matter to an inquiry, the IC takes cognisance of the founding affidavit by the complainant, the answering affidavit of the respondent, the replies affidavit of the complainant, the veterinarian’s clinical records and any other documentary evidence as may have been provided in any of the affidavits.

It should be borne in mind that Council has a legal duty to investigate each and every complaint in accordance with the rules of natural justice, however weak the complaint may appear, as it is required by the Act. The profession was granted the privilege of self-regulation and peer-assessment and the privilege should not be abused, as it may be revoked.

The independence to self-regulate places a responsibility on the Council to protect and balance the interest of the veterinary professions, the public and the animals. The administration (as opposed to the IC) can thus not tell a complainant at the outset that a complaint is frivolous and would not be entertained by the Investigation Committee (IC).

Continued on page 22
The disciplinary process in the veterinary profession

be considered. The complaint must be investigated and both versions placed before the IC to make an informed decision.

Screening of complaints also provides for a decision to mediate. Complaints have in the past been mediated. Experienced veterinarians, both in practice and in mediation are involved in the mediation of matters. Complaints may be put on hold if a request is received from the legal representative to mediate between the parties. Such a request will be considered if the request has merits and is not merely an attempt to draw out the disciplinary process.

The IC (all members are experienced veterinarians) has been tasked by the Council to consider each matter on its own merits, as they stand at the time, in deciding whether to refer a matter to an inquiry or not. If the IC is convinced that a prima facie case is prevalent or that the two versions in front of it are convoluted and need to be clarified during an inquiry, an inquiry will be scheduled. It would be better to say that a great many complaints, if not most, do not survive the screening process. Should the veterinarian cooperate and provide an adequate explanation, backed up by his/her records it is the end of the road for most complaints.

The process to convene a disciplinary inquiry is not in itself an arduous process. It is however an onerous and difficult process to synchronise the diaries of all involved, as all participants are professional people with schedules to match. The minimum of people involved are seven, excluding witnesses. It is also an unfortunate fact that some veterinarians and/or their legal representatives attempt to frustrate the process by not cooperating and avoiding themselves. If therefore is very difficult to see a time limit within which the process has to be concluded.

Once the IC made the decision to refer a complaint to an inquiry, the charge sheets are drafted and approved by the IC. The respondent is then informed as to who will chair the Inquiry Body (IB), who will be the Committee members and what the charges are. The respondent will also be requested to indicate what dates are suitable to him/her and his/her legal representative (if one is appointed – it is the choice of the respondent as to whether he/she wishes to appoint a legal representative with the concomitant costs).

Should the respondent be able to show that any one of the Committee members may be prejudiced against him/her, a substitute will be appointed.

Concerns, other than possible prejudice by a Committee member, should be addressed at the inquiry through the Chairperson. The reason for that is to not contaminate the process.

The inquiry itself is the process through which to exonerate the respondent by taking part in the inquiry and placing his/her version in front of the IB whether by written plea explanation or giving oral evidence and calling witnesses, if applicable.

Neither party is allowed to discuss the matter in any manner at all with the members of the IB or the Council prior to the inquiry in order not to prejudice them against the respondent. It is for this reason that the charge sheet and the bundle of documents are only provided to the IB at the time of the inquiry.

The IB will only decide whether a veterinarian is guilty of the conduct alleged of in accordance with the charges in the charge sheet, once the pro forma complainant and the respondent’s versions have been heard and both have been given the opportunity to present a closing statement (if they wish to do so). Council further appoints a legal person to assist the IB to ensure that the proper procedure is followed and that the process conforms to the rules of natural justice, in the event that the Chairperson is a Council member who does not have legal knowledge. If the Chairperson is an IB Council member who has legal knowledge, a further legal person is not appointed.

If the respondent is found not guilty, that is the end of the process. Should the respondent be found guilty, both the pro forma complainant and the respondent will be requested to submit aggravating and mitigating circumstances for the IB to consider when assessing a proper sanction. Once these were considered, the IB will pronounce on the sanction and communicate it to both parties.

The process in the last two paragraphs is from time to time combined in an effort to save time and costs. The pro forma prosecutor and the respondent may be requested to submit or may agree to submit their respective closing arguments at a date to be agreed on and to submit their respective arguments in regard aggravating and/or mitigating circumstances simultaneously. Should there be a finding of not guilty in such an event the arguments in aggravation and mitigation will be disregarded.

Should the finding be one of guilt, the finding and the sanction will be communicated to both parties.

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Maintenance fees 2014

Invoices for the Maintenance fees for 2014 were issued on 1 April 2014 and posted by surface mail.

Members had 90 days, until 30 June 2014 to make payment of the fees.

- The maintenance fee for veterinarians is R 3164.
- The maintenance fee for para-veterinarians is R 969.

Please note that we are unable to allocate payment if we cannot identify your payment by your invoice- or registration numbers.

Members who wish to make a down payment of the maintenance fees before the deadline of 30 June 2014 may submit a motivation to the Registrar at savc@savc.org.za.

If you have not received your invoice please contact Ms Monalisa Mameane for a copy of your invoice at:
- email address: debtorclerk@savc.org.za or
- tel: 012 345 6347

If you provide us with your correct email address then the invoice will, in addition to surface mail, be emailed to you.

PLEASE FAX PROOF OF PAYMENT TO FAX NUMBER: 086 767 1404
In this regard please take note of Rule 4.(5) “The place at or from which a person practises a veterinary profession shall comply with the applicable minimum standards for a consulting room, or an animal hospital, as the case may be, which are specified in these Rules, and be registered with the Council.”

Please be reminded that you may only render veterinary services (e.g. chemically immobilise animals, give veterinary advice and/or make a diagnosis, or dispense medicine) if you operate from a facility registered with Council.

Please contact Ms C Block at facilities@savc.org.za to register a facility or to confirm that your facility is registered.

The place at or from which a person practises a veterinary profession shall comply with the applicable minimum standards for a consulting room, or an animal hospital, as the case may be, which are specified in these Rules, and be registered with the Council.

Registration of facilities

The South African Veterinary Council (SAVC) shall not be liable for any loss due to advertisements published in its Newsletters. The advertisements represent the products of the advertisers only. The SAVC does not accept liability for the information or advice contained in the advertisements or for any loss arising from the use of the products advertised.

By placing the advertisements the SAVC does in no way endorse the product or content of the advertisement.

Confirm that your facility is registered.