To: All veterinarians and equine role-players

CERTIFICATION OF VACCINATION AGAINST AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS
FOR AFRICAN HORSE SICKNESS MOVEMENT CONTROL PURPOSES

Veterinary certification of any vaccination must be compliant with the provisions of Rule 5 "Issuing of Veterinary Certificates" of the "Rules Relating to the Practising of Veterinary Professions GNR.1082 of 9 November 2015".

State veterinary authorities have noted incidences where the veterinary certification of vaccinations in an equine passport has been considered non-compliant with Rule 5 "Issuing of Veterinary Certificates" and therefore invalid as the vaccinations were performed without any way of linking the vaccination to the particular horse. Usually this occurs when there was no recorded microchip number or no completed and certified ID diagram in the equine passport to identify the horse at the time the vaccination was performed.

Veterinary certification of African horse sickness (AHS) vaccination in terms of Rule 5 "Issuing of Veterinary Certificates" is required for equines subject to AHS vaccination control in terms of Table 2 of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84) or subject to AHS movement control in terms of Regulation 20 of the Animal Diseases Act 1984 (Act no 35 of 84).
For the AHS control purposes listed above, it is important that the horse is positively identified at the time of AHS vaccination by a veterinarian in order that such vaccinations can be correctly certified in an equine passport in compliance with Rule 5 “Issuing of Veterinary Certificates”. In addition to difficulties with regard to AHS movement control, discrepancies regarding the certification of vaccinations can lead to challenges in instances when certification of vaccination is required such as with export certification and in some cases may lead to investigations into the conduct of the veterinarian. A veterinarian must be able to demonstrate that any AHS vaccinations entered into an equine passport prior to the date of completion and certification of the ID page in the passport, are correct according to Rule 5 “Issuing of Veterinary Certificates” and were performed with a positive identification for the horse on record. As an example, consider a horse that was demonstrably, positively identified (e.g. with a microchip and the microchip number was recorded at the time of AHS vaccination) but the ID page and AHS vaccinations were completed in a passport on a later date. The entry of AHS vaccinations performed before the date of completion and certification of the ID page, but with positive identification of the horse, should be indicated as such in the passport. Similarly, if Rule 5 compliant AHS vaccinations are transcribed from an old passport, there should be an indication that the AHS vaccination certification has been transcribed; otherwise it would appear the vaccinations were done before the horse was identified.

For the AHS control purposes above, we therefore suggest the following:

1. If the date of the ID page certification in the passport is after the date of AHS vaccination, the veterinarian who enters the vaccination into the passport should indicate if the horse was positively identified at the time of AHS vaccination and explain the manner of identification. It is suggested that the veterinarian writes a short note in the margin of the AHS vaccination page at the time the vaccination details are recorded in the passport or just below the entry in the passport to indicate this, e.g. “vaccination certified based on ... (microchip no/ freeze brand/ tattoo)” or “transcribed from previous passport no. XYZ with compliant ID.” This must be supported by the veterinarian’s/practice’s records.

2. When completing and certifying an ID page in a passport that the veterinarian check the AHS vaccination pages for vaccinations already entered in the passport that in all probability may have been recorded without positive
identification. Vaccinations recorded without positive identification will not be compliant with Rule 5 “Issuing of Veterinary Certificates” and cannot be certified, so they could be marked “entered prior to certified identification in this passport” in the margin.

While there may be instances where vaccinations may be given without a passport it must be noted that for any vaccination certification in a passport, e.g. AHS vaccinations for AHS movement control purposes or for AHS vaccination control purposes within the controlled area (or any other situation where vaccination certification is required), the certification of the vaccinations in the passport must comply with Rule 5 “Issuing of Veterinary Certificates”.

In the interest of the animal health status of South Africa, the continued co-operation of all veterinarians is much appreciated.

/Signature/
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