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Dear Consultee,

Consultation on a proposed Legislative Reform Order to amend the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966

I am writing to invite views on a proposal to make a Legislative Reform Order (LRO) to amend the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 that will enable the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) to change the constitution of its Disciplinary Committee (DC) and Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC).

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) governs the veterinary profession through its Council and system of committees. This includes the two statutory committees that deal with disciplinary proceedings – the Preliminary Investigation Committee (PIC) and Disciplinary Committee (DC). RCVS Council both sets the standards for the profession and, through these statutory committees, deals with any possible breaches of those standards, thus there is an overlap of functions. This system is now considered to be inflexible, insufficiently impartial and out of date when compared to the 'best practice' seen in other comparable professions. The proposed amendment to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 will separate this overlap of functions thus reflecting better the role of RCVS in balancing public and professional interests. In addition, the current legislation restricts the size of the committees making it difficult for them to manage the caseload, a situation which is unsustainable for the future.

The consultation documents can be found on Defra's website at:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/consult/2012/01/16/veterinary-surgeons-1201/>

- Consultation Document
- Impact Assessment
- List of consultees

We welcome your views and comments on the proposals. If you wish to obtain a hard copy of this consultation. Please contact Aroon Korgaonkar, Veterinary Surgeons Act Team, Defra, Area 5D Nobel House, London SW1P 3JR; telephone 0207 238 5592.

Responses

Please send responses by email to vsa.consultation@defra.gsi.gov.uk or by post to



Aroon Korgaonkar
Veterinary Surgeons Act Team
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Responses should be received by **10 April 2012**.

This consultation is in line with the Code of practice on Consultations. This can be found at <http://www.bis.gov.uk/files/file47158.pdf>

When this consultation ends, we intend to put a copy of the responses in the Defra library at Ergon House, London. This is so that the public can see them. Also, members of the public may ask for a copy of responses under freedom of information legislation.

If you do not want your response - including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please say so clearly in writing when you send your response to the consultation. Please note, if your computer automatically includes a confidentiality disclaimer, that won't count as a confidentiality request.

Please explain why you need to keep details confidential. We will take your reasons into account if someone asks for this information under freedom of information legislation. But, because of the law, we cannot promise that we will always be able to keep those details confidential.

We will summarise all responses and place this summary on our website at www.defra.gov.uk/consult. This summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not people's personal names, addresses or other contact details.

To see consultation responses and summaries, please contact the library at:

Defra
Information Resource Centre
Lower Ground Floor
Ergon House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

Telephone: 020-7238-6575
Email: defra.library@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Please give the library 24 hours' notice. There is a charge for photocopying and postage.

If you have any comments or complaints about the consultation process, please address them to Defra Consultation Co-ordinator, Area 7B Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London SW1P 3JR, or email consultation.coordinator@defra.gsi.gov.uk.

Thank you for your help in this matter. If you have any queries please contact us as above.

Yours faithfully,

Aroon Korgaonkar