

Definitions of Veterinarians, VPP and other paraveterinary roles

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What are VPPs?

- Definition of a VPP?
- Roles, activities, responsibilities, expectations?
- Difference to veterinarians?
- Difference to other animal health workers?
- Where to from here?
- Especially for ASEAN

Short Answer 1 - OIE Definitions

OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* Glossary

○ VPP:

- *"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 for each category of veterinary paraprofessional should be defined by the veterinary statutory body depending on qualifications and training, and according to need"*

○ Veterinarian:

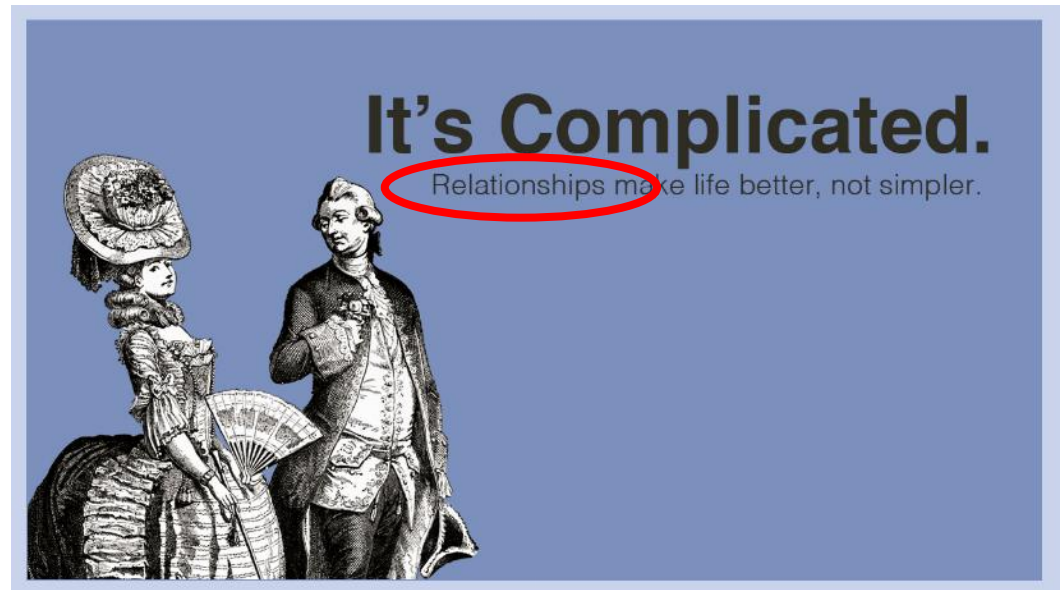
- a person with appropriate education, registered or licensed by the relevant *veterinary statutory body* of a country to practice veterinary medicine/science in that country.

Short Answer 2

- There is no reliable definition
- It's complicated...

Historical perspectives

- Withdrawal of funding for public veterinary services
- Lack of vets graduating
- Limited incentives for rural practice
- → Vet void filled by VPP



OIE Definitions

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○ VPP:

- “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 for each category of veterinary paraprofessional should be defined by the veterinary statutory body depending on *qualifications and training*, and according to need”

○ Veterinarian:

- a person with *appropriate education*, *registered or licensed* by the relevant *veterinary statutory body* of a country to *practice veterinary medicine/science* in that country.

Related OIE Definitions

○ Veterinary Authority:

- the **Governmental** Authority of a Member Country, **comprising veterinarians, other professionals and paraprofessionals**, having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of animal health and welfare measures, international veterinary certification and other standards and recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* in the whole territory.

i.e. a team approach

○ Competent Authority:

- the *Veterinary Authority* or other **Governmental Authority** of a Member Country having the responsibility and competence for ensuring or supervising the implementation of animal health and welfare measures, international veterinary certification and other standards and recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* and in the OIE *Aquatic Animal Health Code* in the whole territory.

i.e. may not be vet specific

○ Official Veterinarian:

- a *veterinarian* **authorised by the Veterinary Authority** of the country to perform **certain designated official tasks** associated with animal health or public health and inspections of commodities and, when appropriate, to certify in accordance with Chapters 5.1. and 5.2.

i.e. duties beyond regular "Veterinary Acts"

“Acts of Veterinary Science”

- Australian Veterinary Association:
 - the diagnostic confirmation of, treatment of, and provision of management advice for infectious disease, physiological dysfunction, psychological dysfunction and injury in animals;
 - performing invasive or surgical procedures on animals;
 - administering anaesthetics to animals;
 - the exercise of prescribing rights for veterinary chemicals, medicines or poisons which may be restricted by scheduling or registered label; and
 - the provision of veterinary certificates.
- What is not an act of veterinary science?
 - Routine husbandry/management procedures
 - Dentistry?
 - Reproductive technologies, e.g. AI?
 - Etc...

Not always well defined, or enforced

More OIE Definitions

○ Veterinary Services:

- the **governmental and non-governmental** organisations that implement animal health and *welfare* measures and other standards and recommendations in the *Terrestrial Code* and the *OIE Aquatic Animal Health Code* in the territory. The Veterinary Services are **under the overall control and direction of the *Veterinary Authority***. **Private sector organisations, *veterinarians, veterinary paraprofessionals*** or aquatic animal health professionals are normally accredited or approved by the *Veterinary Authority* to deliver the delegated functions.

○ Veterinary Statutory Body (VSB)

- An **autonomous** regulatory body for *veterinarians* and *veterinary paraprofessionals*.

○ “Veterinary Nurse”?

Other Definitions



- Main page
- Contents
- Featured content
- Current events
- Random article
- Donate to Wikipedia
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Paraveterinary worker

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Paraveterinary workers are those people who assist a [veterinary physician](#) in the performance of their duties, or carry out animal health procedures autonomously as part of a veterinary care system. The job role varies throughout the world, and common titles include **veterinary nurse**, **veterinary technician**, **veterinary assistant** and **veterinary technologist**, and variants with the prefix of 'animal health'.

The scope of practice varies between countries, with some countries allowing suitably qualified paraveterinary workers a scope of autonomous practice, including minor surgery, whilst others restrict their workers to simple assisting of the veterinarian.

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Veterinary technicians of the [US Army](#) assist in an operation on a military working dog.

These terms tend to relate to:

- Industrialised countries
- Clinical practice

But...wide variety of terms used globally

Community Animal Health Workers (CAHW)

- Various names
- Usually educated/experienced farmers
- Number and other details unknown
- Training, qualifications, roles, etc. vary widely
- Locally available, relatively cheap, culturally/regionally aware
- VSB registration variable:
 - official (7 countries), informal (6), none (6)
- Income sources highly variable (depending on legal status),
 - Farmers (17 countries), State (9), NGO (8); private veterinarians (6)
- Note: Veterinary medicines can also be sold by pharmacists (12 / 16 countries) and illegal actors (18 / 19 countries)

Herve Petit & Margot Galière, Agronomes et Vétérinaires sans Frontiers. Bangkok 2016 OIE meeting

OIE Efforts on VPP Definition

- OIE's 6th Strategic Plan for 2016-2020
 - Unanimously adopted by Member Countries in May 2015
 - One of the several outcomes expected under Strategic Objective 3:
 - Ensuring the Capacity and Sustainability of Veterinary Services is "a better definition of the role of paraprofessionals and non-veterinary specialists, including their education and training"
- OIE Regional Conference in Africa, October 2015
- Regional Conference on VPP in Asia - Bangkok, Dec 2017
- Regional Workshop for Veterinary Education Establishments (VEEs) & Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSBs) – Tokyo, Nov 2018
- But, VPPs are really defined based on what they do...

VPP Roles, Activities

- Vaccination, disease surveillance & reporting, basic medical and surgical treatments, advice (e.g., nutrition, hygiene, good practices, biosecurity), drug sales, extension, lab Dx, vector control, animal welfare, research, AI etc, meat inspection...
- Potential/opportunities
 - Enhancing female participation for workforce boosting & diversity
 - Emergency surge capacity and response



OIE WAHIS data via S. Adediran, et al., Linking VPP with Veterinarians OIE Conference, Pretoria, South Africa. Oct 2015.

Relationships

- Between vets & VPP vary greatly
 - VPPs' position can be weak when perceived as threat by vets
- Vary with public vs. private veterinary services
- Lack of clarity of roles, rights, career progression
- Need to:
 - Clearly define VPP and their relationship with vets
 - Incentivise private vets for VPP supervision
 - Standardise education and competencies

Numbers
Training (inverse)
Authority (inverse)



14 countries in Africa and southern Asia

Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed) & Benson Ameda (African Veterinary Technicians Association)

Bangkok, 2016 OIE meeting

OIE/IIAD Survey Data

- 31 questionnaires provided to OIE Member Countries
 - All OIE regions represented
 - 77% respondent rate
- Survey questionnaire included 6 questions related to VPPs in the following categories
 - Roles
 - Recognition
 - Education and training
 - Experts



Heather Simmons, Institute for Infectious Animal Diseases (IIAD). Global Analysis of VPP from WAHIS, PVS Pathway, and VPP Curricula (Bangkok OIE meeting, 2016) – reproduced with permission.

Roles

Are VPPs functional members of Veterinary Services?

- Do VPPs participate in Veterinary Services?
 - Public sector (100%)
 - Private sector (96%)
- Areas most likely to work

Table 1: Roles of Public vs. Private Veterinary Paraprofessionals by Category

<u>Category</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Private</u>
Animal disease control activities including surveillance and vaccination	96%	83%
Clinical care such as administering drugs, caring for wounds, castration, etc	71%	92%
Veterinary public health activities (e.g., slaughterhouse inspections)	79%	33%
Disease diagnosis at a laboratory including sample handling, testing, and protocols	79%	50%
Other	-	-

OIE Survey of Roles

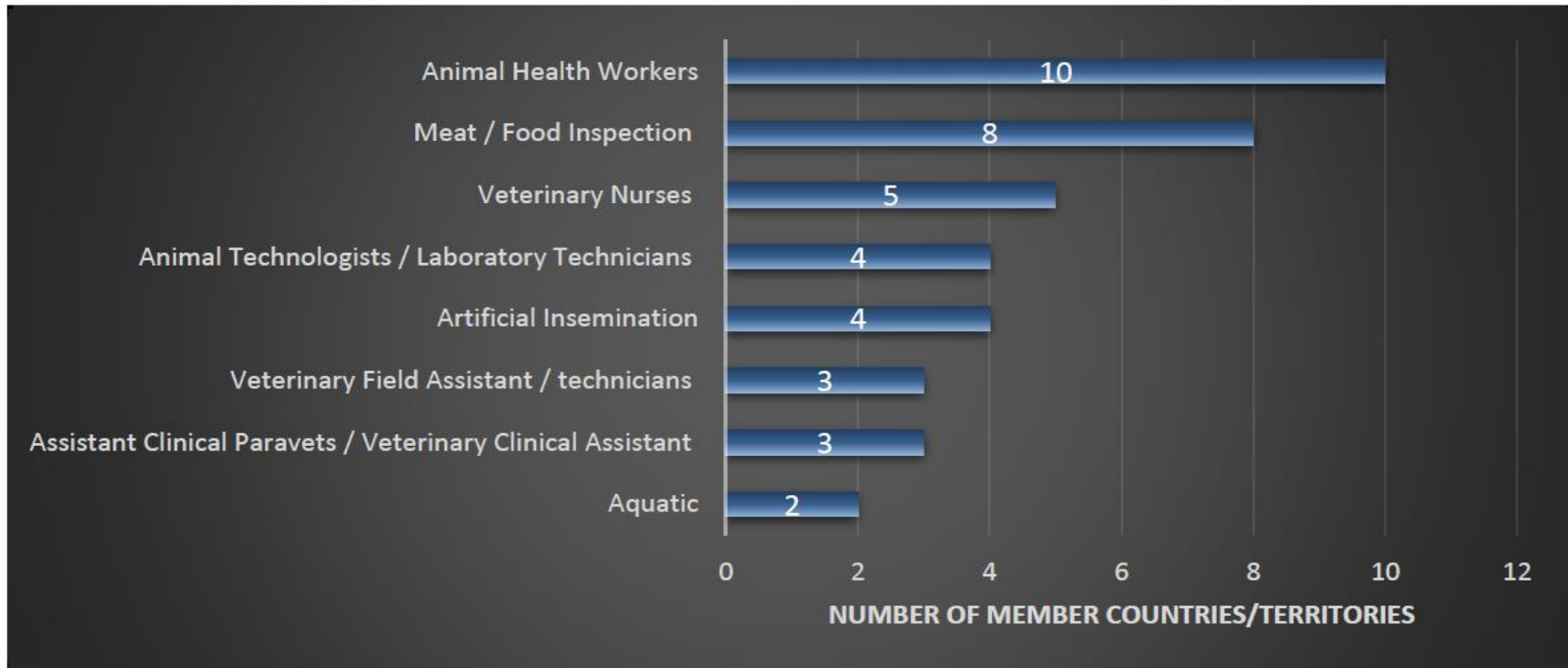


Figure 16: Major VPP types in Member Countries/Territories (n=18)

OIE Regional meeting, Tokyo.

Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China (P.R.), Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong SAR, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea (R.O.), Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Definition based on Training

- VPP are in many ways defined by their:
 - Training
 - → Qualification(s)
 - → Competencies: knowledge, skills, attributes (what can they do?)
 - → Registration, where applicable
- 4th OIE Global Conference on Veterinary Education, Bangkok, 22-24 June 2016
 - recommendation to “consider expanding work on the quality of Veterinary Services to better cover veterinary para-professionals working in Veterinary Services, by **identifying minimum competencies** for various categories of veterinary para-professionals and developing **guidelines on core training curricula**”.
 - → OIE development of VPP Competency and Curricular Guidelines
 - ---→ implications for VSB establishment and application to VPPs

Training Approval Survey Results

What types of VPP programmes exist for VPPs?

- Is there a responsible party for certifying curriculum and facilities?
 - Yes (83%)
- Are veterinary faculties directly involved in training of VPPs including laboratory technicians?
 - Yes (58%)

Heather Simmons, IIAD. Bangkok OIE meeting, 2016

Discussion Points

- Workforce surveillance & rationalisation
 - Usable data on current capacity and needs: vets v VPPs v CAHW, etc
 - Sectors: animal health, public health, lab, etc.
- Use OIE definition?
 - Need VSB: recognition, registration, management
 - Define “Acts of Veterinary Science”: definition, roles, legal boundaries
 - Need effective relationships between vets and VPPs
- Regionalisation?
 - Common ASEAN definition, registration, etc.?
- Training?
- Goal oriented approach may be a solution
 - Response to a specific problem or national emergency (ASF?)
 - Ebola example for medical assistants in Africa



Overview of VPPs in Australia

- Definition of VPPs in Australia:
 - No fixed definition – depends on context
 - Wide variety of roles, category, position terminology, etc.
- Categories:
 - Animal Health: veterinary technologist/nurse; livestock officer
 - Laboratory: Laboratory technicians, scientists
 - **Veterinary Public Health (VPH): Meat Inspectors**
 - No Community Animal Health Workers (in an OIE context)

OIE Definition of VPP

A person who, for the purposes of the *Terrestrial Code*, is **authorized 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 for each category of veterinary paraprofessional should be defined by the **veterinary statutory body** **depending on qualifications and training**, and in accordance with need.

Numbers of VPP & Employment

VPP Category	VPP Title	No.	Typical Employers	Responsibilities & Activities
Animal Health	NSW	80	State Departments of Agriculture	Stock inspectors, biosecurity officers, auditors, scientific assistants, environmental officers, animal attendants, engagement, licensing, surveillance, investigations, industry development, agricultural economists
	Vic	30		
	SA	16		
	Tas	7		
	NT	6		
	Qld & WA	?		
Laboratory	State based	? (Qld ~30)	State Dept. Agriculture (& Health, Envir.)	Livestock disease investigation, routine diagnostics, epizootics, zoonoses investigations (incl. AMR)
Veterinary Public Health	Australian Government Authorised Officer (AAO)	650	Federal Dept. Agriculture & Water Resources	Employees of their company or of a department approved 3 rd party service provider
	Food Safety Meat Assessor (FSMA)	276		Department employed officials
	Scientific officers	?	State depts.	Food industry development, auditing

Total of 1152 VPPs estimated across categories (AHA, 2016)

VPP Qualifications

VPP Category	Position Title	Qualification	Training Duration	Training Institutions
Animal Health	Veterinary Nurse	Cert. IV Vet Nursing	18m (comp.)	Vocational Education & Training (VET) by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
	Veterinary Technologist	BVetTech or Bioscience	3y (+1y Hons)	3 universities with BVetTech: UQ, CSU, LaTrobe. 5 with B Anim/Vet Bioscience.
	Livestock / Sci. Officer*	BSc, BAg, BEc, BApplSc	3-4y	Most Australian universities, depending on specific program (BSc, etc.)
Laboratory Technician	Technical Officer*	Diploma Lab Tech	12-24m	RTOs
	Professional Officer*	Bachelor +/- post-grad	3-4y. +2y (Masters)	Many Australian universities: 2-3 per state.
Veterinary Public Health	Meat Inspector	Cert 3 up to Grad Dip. in Meat Processing (meat safety)	Minimum 500h theory & 400h practical	VET through RTOs. Certification managed by MINTRAC
	Meat QA Officer			

* *Specific title varies, usually by State*

Australian Context



- Very highly developed country (“Lucky country”)
 - High OECD rankings for education, health, science, etc.
 - GDP 16th ranked (USD1205b), member of G20

- Importance of animal production – export markets
 - 58% of Australia’s total food production exported
 - Exports worth 70% of Agricultural sector
 - Particularly meat: \$14b total value, export \$8.6b + live export

- Disease status
 - Freedom or low levels of transboundary & emergency animal diseases
 - High quality & safety reputation – market access and value returns
 - Control of major diseases – biosecurity imperatives
 - Stringent animal health, biosecurity regulations and drivers
 - Good cooperation between government & industry