

7 July 2020

Australian Veterinary Association

Supporting letter for residents travelling across NSW/Victorian state borders to access essential veterinary services; and for veterinarians travelling across state borders for any work purposes.

The Australian Veterinary Association (AVA) is the national organisation representing veterinarians in Australia. Our 9000 members come from all fields within the veterinary profession. The AVA advocates to various levels of government, including state veterinary boards, as well as industry stakeholders, on behalf of our members. As part of the current COVID-19 pandemic response, AVA has lobbied the states and federal governments to have veterinary services recognised as being “Essential Services” during the various stages of lockdown. The Federal Minister for Agriculture David Littleproud confirmed this on Friday, 27 March 2020.

Given the essential nature of the services provided by veterinarians, the AVA fully supports the following during the current lockdown:

- (i) Animal owners crossing state borders with their animals in order to access essential veterinary services;
- (ii) Veterinarians travelling across state borders to provide essential treatments to livestock and other animals that cannot be transported to the vet practice;
- (iii) Veterinarians crossing state borders to attend their place of work.

Of course, the AVA expects veterinarians and animal owners to undertake appropriate infection risk management procedures during all such physical interactions.

The AVA’s definition of an essential veterinary service during the COVID-19 situation is:

“Any veterinary service that is essential to ensuring animal health, welfare and biosecurity, as well as human health and mental wellbeing, food safety, food supply chain integrity and continuity. Any service that, if not allowed to be carried out will impact animal welfare, food safety and/or security of food supply.” <https://www.ava.com.au/coronavirus/vets-an-essential-service-during-the-covid-19-crisis/>

The Premier of NSW has advised that special arrangements will be in place for essential services.

The AVA supports the bearer of this letter’s application to cross the border of New South Wales and Victoria for the purposes described above.



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