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# AVA QLD DIVISION EXECUTIVE, STANDING & SUB-COMMITTEES & OTHER HONORARY POSITIONS 2009

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Ear Tattoos

By Law all Cats and Dogs Desexed in Queensland from 1 July 2009 must be tattooed to indicate they are desexed (Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) ACT 2008).

This symbol placed inside the left ear allows simple and rapid identification of desexed animals. The tattoo is performed under general anaesthesia and is painless and non-disfiguring.
President’s Word

Darwin provided the ultimate top-end experience for our conference destination and the new convention centre offered a facility with space and infrastructure very suitable for our national convention.

Many meetings associated with the AVA were conducted prior to and during the scientific programme. Policy Council met over the first weekend leading into the programme. Final drafts included electro-immobilisation, fish welfare, branding of horses, castration of horses and donkeys, electronic identification of animals, mulesing, responsible use of veterinary vaccines in dogs and cats and the benefits of pets and the human animal bond. These drafts were ratified by the Council members and once approved by the AVA Board will be published in the Members Directory and Policy Compendium. There were nineteen new drafts and five general issues for discussion. General Issues included a discussion on cane toad euthanasia, an update on fires in Victoria, Infection Control Workshops in Queensland, and AVA representation to government. A further eleven policies were tabled for revision.

Some emerging issues due for consideration included equine dentistry and lay person operators. Undergraduate teaching of dentistry, screening for anabolic steroids in racing greyhounds, small animal vaccinations, sale of small animals via pet shops, pet food irradiation with possible consequences and evidence based medicine in relation to acupuncture were also discussed. There was also some discussion on influenza strategies for clients and veterinary staff.

Following on from Policy Council was an energetic scientific programme with a focus on One Medicine One Health.

There was a strong stream on zoonosis and virology in the public health sector. The take home message was that Hendra virus is present in the upper respiratory tract of infected horses prior to those animals exhibiting clinical signs of the disease. Hence the importance of infectious disease control precautions. The rest of the programme had a very good practical application for all veterinarians. Those members who could not attend will receive their proceedings shortly.

Past President Dr Sue Fowkes showed foresight in conducting a microchipping seminar for attending Queensland delegates. The main focus of this workshop was to view and understand the Queensland Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Act 2008 as a requirement for State accreditation.

The AGM was held on Wednesday afternoon. A proposal by the Board to change membership fees for Life Members was defeated. I would encourage all delegates to attend and actively participate in their AGMs so that a broad range of views can be expressed.

All members are reminded to attend the next Infection Control Workshops in Rockhampton or Brisbane as issues discussed will benefit the health and safety of your working environment.

May everyone enjoy a healthy flu free season.

Dr Bruce Pott
Birds are the most common companion animals in Australia. Most are bred, raised, sold and kept by breeders, retailers and owners with little or no knowledge of their management or care. There has been no firm structure to educate breeders and owners on the management, care or training of these birds. Hence, the primary reason for the rehoming, abandonment or rescue of companion birds is the result of behavioural problems. Many of these problem behaviours are preventable with effective education.

The formation of an abnormal human-bird bond is the primary cause of many of these behaviours.

Firstly, let us overview normal bird social development. I will focus primarily on psittacines (parrots). Most companion birds are altricial, they are hatched dependent on their parents and require intensive nurturing until fledging. Fledging is when the young birds leave the nest for their first flight. These birds are still dependent on their parents for food and protection for varying periods of time from weeks to months after fledging. When the birds are independent from their parents they are deemed to be weaned. After the breeding season, most species of parrots form large family groups or flocks. They will remain in the flock until the following breeding season when adult pairs will again leave the flock for breeding. Non breeding birds will remain in the flock until maturity and breeding opportunities arise. Some parrots do not reach sexual maturity for up to five years and socialisation continues through this adolescent flocking period. When a bird reaches sexual maturity and chooses a mate, an extremely strong, long term monogamous relationship develops. Bonded pairs are always by each other’s side 24/7 for their entire lives. This bond has enormous implications for companion birds. When a breeding pair finds a suitable nesting location, generally a tree hollow, they will defend their nest from all other intruders. The innate drive to breed is very strong and considering that most of our companion birds are sexually entire, this also has behavioural implications. If there is nest failure (loss of chicks) then the parents will generally have another breeding attempt.

Now, let’s look at the companion bird market.

Most companion birds reaching the pet market are hand raised. This implies that the birds have been taken from the nest at an early stage of development and raised in brooders and fed hand raising formulas from a spoon, syringe or crop needle. Most birds are taken from the nest at approximately two weeks after hatching. This is about the time that the eyelids open but some are taken as eggs, artificially incubated and raised from hatching. This is akin to nest failure in wild birds where the birds are lost due to predation or other causes. Hand raising birds often allows the parents to double or triple clutch in a season. This greatly increases the financial return from a pair of breeding birds. Hand raising also produces birds that are tame and trusting of humans. The hand raised baby birds are kept in brooders, in tubs, either singly or in small clutches and are fed until weaning. This definition of weaning is very different to that which occurs in the wild. Chicks are forced to wean at a very early age, sometimes months earlier than would occur naturally. Weaning of hand raised birds generally starts at the time when the birds fledge and is often completed after two weeks. After fledging, the birds are more difficult to control and often have their wings trimmed prior to developing adequate flight skills. Sale of the birds occurs as soon as weaning has been achieved (and often before). Birds are often sold prior to weaning so the birds can “bond to the new owner”. This is extremely detrimental, as I will explain. These birds have essentially been raised in isolation from the time that they can visualise. They have only seen humans providing a food source and there is minimal socialisation for any of these birds with other birds. They are then sold into generally a single bird household.

So what happens? Many of these birds have not developed an appropriate sense of self. Although not the same as imprinting, these birds often have a human self orientation. As a result an abnormal human- bird bond develops which produces many problem behaviours:

- Separation anxiety. The new human family becomes the bird’s flock. The bird does not understand why the flock leaves it alone all day, defenceless. If this was a wild scenario, then a lone bird would be predated upon. This situation causes severe anxieties for many companion birds.
- Aggression. The new owners generally have no
Continued from pg. 2

real understanding of the techniques required to discipline or train their bird, as would naturally occur in the flock situation. This is why you will hear of many birds becoming “feral” and aggressive after being cuddly babies.

• Sexually fuelled separation anxiety. Before maturity the bird will choose a mate from the human flock. The bird has the same expectations as the wild breeding pairs. The bird expects to never be more than a few metres from its breeding mate. It does not understand the need for us to enter another room without it, go to work or leave for holidays. Again, extreme separation anxieties occur, resulting in screaming, feather plucking and other self mutilation, stereotypic behaviours, aggression and destructive behaviours.

• Mate aggression occurs. The bird will adore one family member (its breeding mate) but attack all others which come close.

• Territorial aggression. These birds will defend their cage from other flock members, biting anyone which ventures too near the nest site (cage). Often birds will develop a predilection for other sites around the house for nesting and defence e.g. behind kitchen appliances, in drawers, behind cushions, under beds or other furniture or inside the owners clothes whilst being worn!

• Sexual frustration. Aggression is not an uncommon result of failure to provide gratification.

• Excessive egg production. Female birds (hens) breed as a result of several external factors. The primary factors are generally long day lengths, a high energy diet and a stable mate and nest environment. Birds with an abnormal human-bird bond, kept under artificial light after dusk and on a seed based diet have all the prerequisites for egg laying. These birds generally lay large numbers of eggs. This excess production has a dramatic impact on the hen's nutritional status and often results in osteopaenia, fractures and reproduction complications. When laying, most birds will display territorial aggression around the nest site.

Birds learn to be birds in this initial social development window and once this abnormal human self identification occurs, it is essentially impossible to reverse. Many owners consider getting another bird to alleviate the anxiety but without the skills of social interaction they often appear to live like “two lamps on a shelf” with no recognition of each other.

It is difficult to completely eliminate these problem behaviours once this abnormal bond develops but they can be ameliorated with education and training.

Of course, prevention is better the cure. For example:

• Educating breeders about the detrimental effects that the present method of hand raising has on birds is a start.

• Encouraging breeders to crèche weaned birds for a period of time after weaning to allow socialisation with other birds ensuring a “bird self orientation” develops.

• Banning the sale on unweaned birds and promoting the benefits of multiple bird households, and

• Educating potential owners about what to look for in a new bird prior to its purchase.

We must continue to educate breeders and future companion bird owners of the potential problems that can result from the development of abnormal human bird bonds. We can encourage new bird owners to seek education through a new bird examination by an avian veterinarian. Further education can be sought through parrot preschool and training workshops provided by the larger bird societies.
Selenium Causes Death of Polo Horses in USA

The New York Times
Katie Thomas

An overdose of selenium most likely caused the death last week of 21 polo horses at the United States Open Polo Championship, Florida’s state veterinarian announced Tuesday.

“Signs exhibited by the horses and their rapid deaths were consistent with toxic doses of selenium,” Thomas J. Holt, the state veterinarian, said in a statement. Although Holt did not specify the source of the selenium in the horses, a Florida pharmacy acknowledged Tuesday that it had mixed an incorrect dosage of selenium in a supplement given to the horses before their deaths. In a statement, Jennifer Beckett, chief operating officer for Franck’s Pharmacy in Ocala, said the company was cooperating with investigators looking into the incident.

The polo team, Lechuza Caracas, has said that the horses were injected with a vitamin mixture containing selenium, vitamin B, magnesium and potassium before they were due to compete on April 19, and died within three hours of being treated. The mixture was similar to Biodyl, a supplement manufactured by the drug company Merial that is not approved for use in the United States.

Selenium, a trace mineral, is often included in small quantities in supplements and feed for horses, according to the Florida department of agriculture. But large doses can be fatal to animals.

In the wake of the horses’ deaths, the United States Polo Association voted on Saturday to establish a committee to look into horse safety in the sport, including the possibility of banning the use of certain substances. The sport currently does not test horses for the use of performance-enhancing drugs.
Biosecurity Queensland, Chief Veterinary Officer Communiqué

Hendra Virus – 3 April 2009

Dr Deborah Middleton of the Australian Animal Health Laboratory in Geelong has provided a comprehensive report which can be emailed to interested members who ask avaqld@ava.com.au. The following summary is courtesy of Dr Ron Glanville.

This report adds important information to our current knowledge of Hendra virus and will be used to update relevant areas of the Hendra virus guidelines for veterinarians.

This report outlines the findings from experimental infection of horses with the Redlands isolate of HeV as conducted at AAHL.

Significant points include:

- The Redlands isolate is very close in structure to the original HeV virus isolated from Hendra.
- It is suggested that the different symptoms associated with the Redlands outbreak may be part of the “normal spectrum” of signs associated with HeV and that the signs expressed may be more related to route of infection and size of infective dose than change in virus structure. However it should be noted that in this study, for animal welfare reasons, horses were euthanased before full clinical expression of disease developed.
- In 2/3 horses, nasal swabs were PCR positive from Day 2 post infection, possibly due to local virus replication. At this time the horses still appeared clinically normal and did not show an increased temperature or increased heart rate. This indicates that early detection of cases is possible through nasal swabs but still very difficult as no clinical signs were demonstrated at this point that would indicate the need for nasal swabbing.
- It also indicates that transmission could occur while no demonstrable clinical signs are observed. The fact that only nasal swabs were positive during the pre-clinical phase could indicate that any procedures involving nasal or oral procedures present the highest risk on apparently normal horses and so these procedures should be targeted by infection control procedures.
- However, increased body temperature and elevated heart rate may provide the earliest clues to higher risk horses noting that by the time these are demonstrated, expression of virus through nasal discharge is likely to have already begun.
- The study confirms that by the time severe clinical signs are demonstrated, systemic infection is in place and virus is present in many tissues and body fluids.

From a practical point of view, this study reinforces the need for infection control procedures to be widely adopted, and in particular for those procedures in horses involving nasal or oral exposure.

Message from your Executive Officer

Hello to all

As the newly appointed Executive Officer I remain conscious of how time flies as it seems like only yesterday when I walked through the doors of AVA House to assume the Executive Officer role for AVA Queensland and in fact it was almost 3-months ago.

My background is in both Science and Business with many years in the Pathology industry. From a Pathology perspective I have worked in both Biochemistry and Microbiology/Immunology both on the bench and in the corporate world. Although my past has primarily focused on the human world, I can assure you the principles remain the same across other species albeit with different reference ranges or target pathogens. In fact as those who have attended our Infection Control Workshops can testify, the practices for good infection control apply equally to both industries especially where Zoonoses are concerned.

A key aspect of my role is to represent our members and maintain the lines of communication with our local and State Governments so the voice of the Veterinary profession is heard. This is challenging however our profile continues to improve at each meeting. If you are aware of any issues, please bring them to the attention of the Queensland Office so we can ensure the appropriate communication is undertaken.

On a final note, please remember, I am employed to support AVA Vets in Queensland and would like to encourage you all to contact me at any time if there is anything you would like to discuss or if there is any news or event that you think would be of interest to myself or members of the Veterinary profession.

Take Care

Steve McMaster – Executive Officer (AVA QLD Division)
AVA PetPEP has had a great response to the promotional material sent to schools in Semester One. All schools around our supporting veterinarians were contacted by mail and then follow-up phone calls were made to further explain the program to schools.

To date we have 250 AVA PetPEP School Visits booked for the year. All schools hosting a visit will receive a complimentary AVA PetPEP Resource Pack. This pack includes outcome linked classroom activities (for teachers to use following a School Visit) that reinforce the messages of the AVA PetPEP presenters.

During Semester One we will educate approximately 12,000 students about responsible pet ownership. Quite an achievement!

In recent years, AVA PetPEP has received an enormous increase in interest from the public and animal care professionals in the community. It is clear that many see education as key to reducing the numbers of dog attacks on children and as a vital way to promote responsible pet ownership in local communities. The AVA appreciates the great community support that AVA PetPEP receives.

We would especially like to thank the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries and the RSPCA for their continued support in 2009.

The ongoing support from our committed AVA PetPEP Veterinarians is also greatly appreciated. Our vets and vets nurses are the heart and soul of this education program.

During first semester, trips have been made to the Sunshine Coast, Logan and South West and North Queensland. There is also an upcoming trip planned to Far North Queensland. These trips incorporate visits to Vets, Councils and RSPCA and provide an opportunity to discuss AVA PetPEP with the program supporters.

Some words of encouragement from our audience:

“The children were very engaged. Use of visual cues was excellent and presenters were just brilliant. Look forward to seeing them all again next year. Thanks for organising such a wonderful incursion for us. Our students loved it and so did we.”

St Francis Xavier School, Goodna

“The students have been learning about pets for two weeks and this was a culminating task for the unit to focus on safety around pets. The most effective element of the presentations was the visual aspects i.e. collars, tags, place cards.”

Bargara State School

“The presentation was engaging and well-ged at the children’s level, props were well used and presenters interacted well with the children. Students gave the presentations a rating of 10/10”

Kin Kora State School
AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SCIENTISTS

COLLEGE SCIENCE WEEK CONFERENCE
2nd to 4th JULY 2009

at the GOLD COAST INTERNATIONAL HOTEL, Surfers Paradise

A great opportunity exists for you to be part of an integrated multi-stream programme, with ample time to interact socially and scientifically with members of the profession from Australia and New Zealand in the following disciplines:

Small Animal Medicine  Small Animal Surgery
Equine
Animal Welfare
Epidemiology
Zoo and Wildlife Medicine
Vet. Anaes. and Emergency Medicine

If you want to find out what's happening at the CUTTING EDGE or get a clinical update from Australian, New Zealand and overseas experts, this is both the time and the place to be.

This meeting is NOT RESTRICTED to College Members. Details of the full programme and registration packets are available from Mrs. Elaine Lowe (telephone  (07) 3423 2016 fax  (07) 3423 2977 or email admin@acvs.org.au

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For practices with an annual turnover of under $2 million, the Federal Government has proposed a TEMPORARY 50% tax allowance on eligible, new business cars and equipment purchases.

To qualify, there's a short window of opportunity - you must make your purchase prior to December 31st, 2009.

Want more information?
Talk to your Medfin Relationship Manager on 1300 361 122 or visit medfin.com.au.

Consider it done!
AVP Queensland News - June 2009

Presidential Report for 2008
Dr Sue Fowkes BVSc., Dip ED., BEd
President AVA QLD Division 2008

AVA QLD Division has continued to meet the needs of members and other stakeholders by addressing the objectives adopted by the Board in June.

When I look back on what has happened in Queensland since the beginning of my Presidency, it is obvious the vital role our organisation has for our profession. We have a fabulous team in Queensland and I wish to thank Gill and Camilla in our office for their untiring support of our executive and Amanda, our legendary PetPEP education officer, her trusty assistant, Wendy and Mark Stallwood for his input into the business management of the program. Thanks to the ongoing support of all the branch executive and to the division executive. Division achievements couldn’t have been accomplished without substantial work from Past Presidents, Andrew Easton and Rob Hedlefs. Thanks also to Bruce Pott for stepping up to the mark of President-Elect following the unfortunate resignation of Evan Fisher. Bob Rees has yet again done a fabulous job of keeping the financials in order.

Obviously the big news item for Queensland this year was the outbreak of Hendra virus and the subsequent death of one of our colleagues and the infection and recovery of a veterinary nurse. It is doubtful that any member is not familiar with this situation, but the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries has ample information on their website http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/cps/rde/dpi/hs.xsl/27_2900_ENA_HTML.htm

The DPI&F is to be congratulated on its management of this disaster and at all times, keeping the AVA informed and consulted where necessary.

Inspired by this incident and subsequent report by Nigel Perkins, our Division is in the process of delivering a series of seminars on Infection Control – not specifically for Hendra Virus, but looking at infection control guidelines across our profession. By the time this report is published, there will have been at least three of these, the first being in Malanda in North QLD in February and the second in Toowoomba. Biosecurity Queensland is partly funding this continuing education along with a bequest from G.C Simmons and sponsorship from REM Systems and Guild. We are also targeting veterinary nurses and veterinary students.

The Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Bill 2008 was presented to Parliament in December and accepted unopposed. Before the Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Bill 2008 received Cabinet Authority to prepare, there was (allegedly) extensive public consultation about the issue of unwanted cats and dogs. On 4 July 2007, the then Premier released for public comment a paper titled Managing Unwanted Cats and Dogs. The majority of the 5,300 responses received indicated dissatisfaction with Queensland’s system of dealing with unwanted cats and dogs, which had failed to reduce the number of unwanted cats and dogs being euthanased. The responses supported mandatory registration and identification of cats and dogs and responsible pet ownership education.

Stakeholder representatives from the RSPCA, the Animal Welfare League, the Canine Council of Australia, the Australian Veterinary Association, the Local Government Association of Queensland, the Australian Pet Industry Association and officers from the Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation and the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries met and unanimously agreed that a Queensland Companion Animal Management Group (QCAMG) be established, with a State-wide focus and joint participation by stakeholders. There was (allegedly) continuous consultation with QCAMG throughout the drafting process. A consultation draft of the Bill was made available to key stakeholders. We were given very little time to comment on the draft and our comments were largely ignored. The framework of the Bill was based to a large extent on the system already in place in Victoria. The largest impact on vets is the legislation’s requirement to take a course, run by AVA, to become an authorised implanter. This emphasises the legislation as well as addressing the AVA Guidelines for accredited microchippers.

QLD Division’s biggest issues are:-

- Working dogs being exempted from compulsory microchipping
- The age at which microchipping must be done
- That lay people may perform the procedure – with our focus on infection control this year, exempting this procedure from aseptic technique is an oxymoron. We also believe a veterinarian is the best person to decide if pain control is necessary.
- It will be an offence for both owners and veterinary surgeons to fail to ensure that an animal is
tattooed at the time of desexing. Exemptions are provided if tattooing is likely to threaten the animal’s health and for show animals.

- The Bill includes a provision that local governments cannot require that a greyhound be muzzled when in a public place if the dog has undergone Greyhound Queensland’s Greyhound Adoption Program (GAP) training.

- The Bill proposes that provisions relating to compulsory registration, microchipping and tattooing be introduced progressively across the State, commencing on 1 July 2009 for South East Queensland (SEQ) councils. Implementation dates for other local governments will be declared by proclamation following consultation.

Also part of this animal management plan was the development of a Code of Practice for Pet Shops. Unfortunately the government saw fit to rush this through, and whilst many of its aspects are to be congratulated, it is a shame it did not provide for wider and more thorough consultation. As only 15% of dogs and cats are sourced from pet shops, it is unlikely to make much of an impact.

Logan City Council obtained “Pilot Program” funding from the State Government to set up a “community desexing clinic” for the financially disadvantaged, which begins operation in March 2009. Its operation has been outsourced to the Animal Welfare League, who will also be performing “minor consultations” to make the operation of the clinic sustainable.

So we have quite a long way to go to succeed in our mission of “providing leadership and expert scientific advice in animal health, welfare and conservation”, as it is obvious that the community and government see the animal welfare societies as leaders for advice on anything to do with animal welfare. This is something we hope will be addressed more consistently with the employment of an Executive Officer. By the time this report is published, this person’s appointment will have been completed.

The Agrifoods Skills Council has written draft qualifications for lay equine dental workers and farriers (there has been a farrier apprenticeship for several years, so it is not new). The Equine Veterinary Association made representation to this group, however, they are determined to provide a qualification for lay dentists. There has been mixed feedback from members about this in that rural practitioners may see this as alleviating their problem of not being able to attract vets to work in the country, but we need to be careful how much of our profession we give away, and what is best for the welfare of the animal. In the least we hope that their practice must be under the direct supervision of a veterinarian.

2008 was a great year for AVA PetPEP in Queensland. The program was responsible for educating 26,829 students about responsible pet ownership and safe behaviour around animals. The program has continued to see huge growth thanks to continued financial and active support it receives from individual Veterinary Practices, Local Councils, RSPCA Qld, DPI&F and a number of other animal care groups in Queensland. Achievements include operating within budget - no additional funding was required from AVA Qld Division, and also, PetPEP received Education Queensland Accreditation until 2012.

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**Policy Advisory Council Report for 2008**

*Dr Robert Hedlefs*

During 2008 the usual two policy council meetings were held. The first meeting of the year coincided with the AVA conference in Perth and the second meeting in October was held in Canberra.

Policy continues to be an active forum for debate on veterinary issues. The wide diversity of the professional interests, evident in the Special Interest Groups, mingles with the needs and concerns of Division. Queensland profits from the experience of other Divisions lobbying for a better deal for members and the profession generally.

During the year Division has used policies on early age desexing, sale of pets from pet shops and material from the UAM files to respond to requests for guidance from government and members.

Division introduced a policy on drought and drought management to include recognition of animal health and welfare in government strategies as well as sustainable agricultural resource management. This was supported by members’ comments and will be published in the compendium.
The governance of AVA is always under consideration at PAC meetings. Certainly under the guidance of CEO Graham Catt the AVA is moving towards keeping pace with contemporary not-for-profit management. The changes reflect the need for improvements in communications between the various sections of the Association as well as maintaining the relevance of the organization to members and external parties such as animal welfare organizations and governments.

Significant policy issues to be resolved in the coming year include a policy statement on the use and management of wildlife. This activity is being led by Professor Tony English and is in part motivated by the recent publicity on the subject. Humans seem to have an unquenchable desire to create problems for wildlife and humans by interfering with the natural state. This ability is accompanied by a boundless desire to complicate the available solutions with emotion and unrealistic expectations. Developing this policy should be an interesting debate. All members are encouraged to read the consultation drafts and add information or opinion to ensure the final result reflects the professional preference and is useful for government regulators.

There was an interesting presentation at the October Policy Advisory Council on the spread of Rabies in Indonesia. It is a timely reminder for Australian vets visiting overseas and for awareness in your practice.

The first Policy Advisory Council for 2009 will be in Darwin. If you have comments on the policies published in the AVJ or any of the online policies please send them to me at robert.hedlefs@dpi.qld.gov.au

**Standing Committee on Veterinary Education**

*Dr Michael O’Donoghue - Convener*

The Committee members for 2008 were Drs Trish Clarke, Sue Lapham, Sue Fowkes, Phil Summers and Michael O’Donoghue. One committee meeting was held in July. Sue Lapham has retired from the committee to run her own practice, thank you Sue.

**The University of Queensland – School of Veterinary Science**

2008 has been a very busy and exciting year for the School of Veterinary Science at the University of Queensland. The year culminated with the graduation of 101 final year veterinary science students in December. The AVA Dux for the year, Dr. Gerardo Poli, delivered the valedictory speech at the UQ graduation ceremony.

School staff numbers were expanded by nine new academic appointments, including Dr Tim Olchowy, Senior Lecturer, Ruminant Medicine and Production; Dr Ristan Greer, Senior Lecturer, Veterinary Biosecurity and Epidemiology; Dr Malcolm Jones, Associate Professor, Veterinary Biology and Parasitology; and Dr Helle Bielefeldt-Ohmann, Senior Lecturer in Infectious Diseases and Immunology. Other recent appointments were Dr. Daniel Schull, Lecturer in Veterinary Professional Studies; Dr. Steven Kopp, Associate Lecturer in Veterinary Clinical Pathology; and Ms. Mary Thompson, Lecturer in Companion Animal Medicine. Additional Senior Lecturer positions were filled by Dr. Fiona Campbell in Veterinary Cardiology and Dr. Lisa Kidd in Equine Surgery and Lameness.

The year was also a time for the School to engage with the veterinary community, particularly those veterinarians who have supported the School in so many ways. With this in mind, a very successful evening seminar titled, ‘Mentoring and Inspiring our Future Veterinary Leaders’, was hosted by the School and attended by over 70 veterinarians from South-East Queensland and Sydney. Keynote speaker, Dr. Jodie Wilson, launched her vision of the Cenvet AVA Student Mentoring Scheme, a new collaboration with the School. The scheme, which is aimed at assisting veterinary students in their clinical years and the first two years after graduation, is warmly welcomed by the School.

Other innovations in 2008 were the inception of two new veterinary student groups, the Veterinary Business Management Association (UQ Chapter) and the Australasian Veterinary Students Association. These groups, supported by the Australian Veterinary Association, have energized the School and enhanced its engagement with the AVA and the professional community. Additionally, the University of Queensland Veterinary Students’ Association continued to be a pivotal student body within the
School, providing social and educational activities for all students.

A highlight of the year was the commencement of construction of facilities for the new Veterinary School at Gatton on September 29, with the re-location of the School from St. Lucia being scheduled for semester 1, 2010. The recent commitment of $47.2 million in funding by the Australian Government, announced in December, was a very welcome boost to these new School facilities.

The Bachelor in Applied Science (Veterinary Technology)

Highlights included very good employability for the class of 2008 with the majority of graduates taking up positions in a range of specialist and general veterinary practices throughout Queensland. The AVA Veterinary Technology Dux for 2008, Mrs. Sue Duggan, gained employment as an animal technician at a UQ Animal Research facility, a new employment field for these graduates. 2008 also saw innovation in curriculum development with work beginning on the integration of the Certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing with the degree in anticipation of the dual qualification being offered in 2009.

UQ Veterinary Technology graduates continued to excel in 2008 with a 2007 graduate gaining recognition as a veterinary nurse by the RCVS, and the Head Nurse of the UQ Veterinary Teaching Hospital, a 2004 graduate, completing a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (Clinical). Both achievements were a ‘first’ for graduates of this degree program. Additionally, Natalie Harvey, the 2007 AVA Veterinary Technology Dux, commenced her appointment as a Clinical Nutrition Veterinary Technician, a position fully sponsored by Hill’s Pet Nutrition; another ‘first’ for the degree program and the Veterinary School.

Animal Care and Management Training Package Review

There has been a meeting between the consultant from the Agri-foods Skills Council and the AVA regarding the incorporation of a Certificate IV and Diploma in Equine Dentistry and Certificate III in Farriery into the Animal Care and Management Training package. The push for development of nationally Endorsed Qualifications is “to provide necessary standards to assess the competency of practitioners and in turn provide standards by which suitably trained and qualified practitioners could be registered/regulated”, as a result of the 2006 review of the NSW Veterinary Practice Regulation to which various equine dentist associations (not veterinary) and the NSW Department of Primary Industries made submissions. AVA QLD Div was not aware of this at the time. As there are developments, they will be published in the newsletter.

Almost all of the inaugural group of full time veterinary nursing students, finishing this month, have gained employment, thanks to the support of the veterinary community. There will be another intake next year, with most sourced through QTAC.

Continuing Education

The Continuing Education Calendar has been a great success with many people commenting on its usefulness, helping people to become aware of the range of continuing education events. Please advise AVA QLD Division if you know of any event that is not on the calendar.
Honorary Historian’s Report
Dr Malcolm McLennan
January 2009

1. Office staff changes

As previously reported, Gill Arnold assumed the role of office manager in September 2007 and Gill is now ably assisted by Camilla Broughton who started as part-time administration assistant to help with office duties in October 2008.

2. Executive 2008-2009

Dr Sue Fowkes has been Divisional President for 2008-2009, however the position of President-Elect is currently vacant.

North Queensland is still strongly represented on Divisional Committee with Andrew Easton as Vice-President, Bruce Pott as an executive member and Robert Hedlefs as Policy Councillor.

Regrettably, Allan Baker resigned as Honorary Secretary during the year and Dr Fred Managhan assumed the role for a brief period. Currently the position of Hon Secretary is also vacant.

The Division again hosted its annual Strategic Planning weekend at Bribie Island in September 2008 and the weekend was facilitated by Graham Catt, AVA National CEO.

Members will be interested to know that the Division is about to appoint a fulltime Executive Officer with interviews for the position to be held at the time of writing (early January 2009)

3. Property at 70 Station Road, Indooroopilly

Members might also be interested to know that the former AVA House is now being redeveloped as a ten storey commercial property and is due for completion sometime during 2009.

This historian somehow preferred the original AVA House precinct!

4. University of Queensland School of Veterinary Science

Professor Jonathan Hill assumed duties as Head of School in January 2008, following the retirement of Professor Neil McMeniman who leaves the school to attend, among other things, to the demands of 10 grandchildren.

Professor Hill has been busy with a successful VSAAC accreditation visit in August 2008, led by Professor Reuben Rose and with preparing the school for a move to Gatton scheduled for the beginning of 2010.

In preparation for this move, new facilities are under construction at Gatton, and Professor Hill has overseen and increase in staff numbers (see below) and extra resourcing for the school.

Staff changes

Incoming staff 2008

- Dr Tim Olchowy from Canada arrived in September as a senior lecturer in Livestock Medicine
- Dr Andrew Ferguson, a 2007 UQ graduate, has been appointed as an associate lecturer in Ruminant Medicine and Production
- Dr Fiona Campbell was appointed as a senior lecturer in Cardiology
- Dr Helle Bielefeldt-Ohmann; senior lecturer in Tissue and Cell Biology
- Dr Malcolm Jones; senior lecturer in Biology and Parasitology
- Dr Dan Schull; lecturer in Professional Studies
- Dr Ristan Greer; lecturer in epidemiology and public health.

Retiring staff:

Dr Bob Pym, a senior lecturer in poultry nutrition, retired in December 2008 and will be sadly missed.

5. James Cook University, Townsville

Forty eight students will enter fourth year in 2009 while the first year intake will be 72 students, with an expected intake of around 20% male students.

The JCU Veterinary Teaching Resource Centre at Malanda was officially opened by Senator Jan McLucas on 27 October 2008, with about 100 people attending the opening.

This facility is adjacent to the Tableland Veterinary Service private practice on Atherton Road, Malanda.

The construction of the Veterinary Emergency Centre and Hospital in the precinct of the School
of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences was completed just prior to Christmas 2008 but, at the time of writing, is yet to be handed over to the University by the builders.

Incoming staff 2008:
• Mr Chris Gardiner, lecturer in livestock production systems
• Dr Janice Lloyd, lecturer in animal behaviour and welfare
• Dr Tony Parker, senior lecturer in animal nutrition
• Dr Rachel Tan, senior lecturer in large animal medicine
• Dr Philip Judge, senior lecturer in veterinary emergency and critical care
• Dr Lisa Chilton, lecturer in physiology
• Dr Sandra de Cat, lecturer in small ruminant medicine and production
• Dr Robert Kinobe, lecturer in veterinary pharmacology and
• Dr Vaughan Seed, senior lecturer in veterinary anatomy.

6. B.Applied Science Course (Vet Technology) at UQ

Executive member Trish Clarke reported that there were 12 graduates in 2008, with 10 of the 12 having employment ahead of graduating. Employment areas included specialist and general veterinary practice, an animal research facility at UQ and possibly one to be employed by the Queensland Government.

Trish also reports that there are at least 20 enrolments for year one of the Course in 2009.

7. AVA PetPEP

Staffing for 2008
• Amanda Pollard has continued as Education officer throughout 2008 working four days a week, while Wendy Humphrey has been employed as part-time Administration and Bookings officer
• During 2008 the Administration Assistant’s position has been shared between Brodie Lees, Leah Begley and Camilla Broughton
• Casual assistance, when required through the year, has also been provided by Megan Caldwell-Cook and Rachel Parker.

Activities
• During 2008 there have been around 400 visits to schools in Queensland, educating >26,000 students about responsible pet ownership
• In addition there were 61 subscribing veterinarians plus 16 Councils on board for 2008-2009 with increased funding secured from the Councils
• Increased funding has also been secured from RSPCA for 2008-2009.

Budget
Final figures are not available at the time of writing, however it appears that there will be minimal or no deficit for 2008. Amanda and the PetPEP team are to be congratulated for their efforts over the past year.

8. Branch Meetings and Conferences

• South East Queensland Branch
The South East Queensland Branch held four meetings during the year at ARI, Yeerongpilly, with the last meeting on 18 December including the annual barbecue.

Dr Ron Glanville, President of the Branch and Chief Veterinary Officer in Qld, addressed the third meeting of the year on the latest Hendra virus outbreak in Queensland. Ron and fellow DPI vets are to be congratulated on their enormous workload in helping to contain the EI and Hendra virus outbreaks during 2007-2008.

• Sunshine Coast Branch
The Branch hosted a successful Divisional Conference at Sheraton Noosa on 28-30 March 2008 with over 100 delegates attending, with another 40 trade delegates present during the weekend. Congratulations to Dr Peter Beck for his efforts in helping organise this Conference.

The Branch also held a meeting on 15 August with Brett Stone as the guest speaker, while the success of the annual golf day held on 5 September reflected the excellent organizational skills of Kim Evans.

• Central Queensland Branch
The Central Qld Branch Conference was held at on 24-25 October with over 20 vets attending the weekend.

The Branch will also host the Divisional Conference in Yeppoon in March 2009.
Darling Downs and South West Queensland Branch
The Darling Downs Branch held its annual branch meeting in May 2008 at the DPI centre in Toowoomba with Dr Bob Doneley as the guest speaker. Dr Alistair Webb was returned as Branch President and Nadia Sternberg as Secretary/Treasurer.

North Queensland Branch
The North Qld Branch has actively supported students at JCU School of Veterinary and Biomedical Sciences throughout 2008 and has encouraged student AVA membership. The Branch held its AGM at the ASAVA Conference in Cairns in August 2008 and also held a meeting at JCU in late September 2008 with >20 attendees and several CE presentations being offered.

Brisbane Veterinary Practitioners Branch
The BVP continues to be active socially and held its annual conference at Novotel Twin Waters Resort. The branch plans to absorb members from the now defunct Gold Coast Branch and is planning to hold its 2009 Conference at Thunderbird Park in Mount Tamborine.

Student Branch (UQ and JCU)
It is pleasing to report activities for both student branches as follows:
1. James Cook University Branch
   AVA Student Rep Stacey Rae reported on several activities during the year as follows:
   • A welcome barbeque for new students at the beginning of first semester
   • A parents dinner held in April 2008
   • A reciprocal exchange program organized with the Sydney veterinary school whereby 15 JCU students visited Sydney and subsequently a similar number of Sydney students traveled to JCU and Cairns
   • A field trip to Longreach, a ‘half way day’ lunch and a first ever vet camp
   • Historian’s comment: JCU students could learn a thing or two from students at UQ who have the most amazing half-way dinners!
   • The vet ball was held in late September, while several JCU students helped out at the official opening of the Veterinary Teaching Resource Centre adjacent to the Malanda Veterinary Practice in late October 2008
2. UQ Branch
   AVA Student Rep Hannah Armstrong reported on the following activities during 2008:
   • Hannah spoke to first year students at UQ encouraging them to become AVA members
   • Hannah reported that an equine dentistry lecture delivered by Dr Gary Wilson was enthusiastically received, while she also organized a day therapy session for AVA student members which included a practical component on equine physiotherapy
   • Hannah attended the AVA Conference and Policy Council meeting in Perth in May 2008
   • Second semester activities included an holistics lecture, a Hendra virus open forum, the Rural Practice weekend held at Pinjarra Hills from 12-14 September (organized in conjunction with the UQ BAG group) and the official launch of the mentorship scheme for students on 15 October 2008 (see separate item later)
   • The new UQ AVA Student Rep for 2009 will be Anita McNamara who hails from Hughenden
   • Historian’s comment: Both JCU and UQ student reps for 2008 have been very pleasant and hard-working young women.

9. Animal Welfare issues
Animal welfare issues discussed during the year included puppy farms, AVA representation on AWAC, greyhound muzzling, the AVA Code of Practice for Pet Shops, the AVA draft cat Policy and bat care and handling.

Executive member Carmel Kerwick attended the International Animal Welfare Conference in Cairns in August.

Members should also note that in December 2008, the Qld Government introduced a bill entitled “Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) Bill 2008” with compulsory registration and microchipping provisions, although the regulations associated with this bill have still to be finalised.
10. Equine Influenza and Hendra virus outbreaks

There have been no further cases of EI in Queensland or Australia since 25 December 2007 with the result that Australia has recently been classified as free of EI and trade with New Zealand in horses can resume.

Two outbreaks of Hendra virus occurred in Queensland in 2008: one at the Redlands Veterinary Clinic in Brisbane and the other near Proserpine. The strain of Hendra virus involved in these outbreaks is genetically different to the original 1994 strain.

Regrettably, the outbreak at the Redlands Veterinary Clinic resulted in the death of veterinarian Ben Cunneen and in serious illness to a veterinary nurse employed at the clinic.

11. Student and New Graduate Mentoring scheme

A student mentoring scheme was launched by Dr Jodie Wilson at a function at the Queensland Veterinary School, St Lucia on 15 October 2008. Cenvet has agreed to sponsor the program with matching funds from AVA National. Mentors will have interaction with fourth and fifth year students at UQ and the mentoring will also embrace new graduates. Approximately 30 veterinarians attended the launch and more vets signed up as mentors later.

The aims of the program include ensuring new graduates have an awareness of what rural practice is like before they are placed in jobs, providing a network to ensure that new graduates in rural placements do not feel isolated and to develop solidarity in the veterinary community.

12. Deaths

The Division notes with regret the death of Dr Ben Cunneen, a veterinarian who was employed at the Redlands Veterinary Clinic. Dr Cunneen contracted Hendra virus infection and died in August 2008.

The Division also notes with regret the death of Bunty, wife of former Hon Secretary Allan Baker, in March 2008 after a short illness.

13. Awards and Honours

Former AVA National President and Qld Division member Dr Di Sheehan was elected to the Board of the World Small Animal Veterinary Association in August 2008. Di will finish a long association with the Board of AVA National in May 2009.

Another former AVA National President and Qld Division member Dr Jo Toia received the Division’s Distinguished Service Award at the Division’s annual conference in Noosa in March 2008.

Congratulations are due to both of these former Qld Division Presidents.

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Clean hands are life savers

- Hand Hygiene is the most effective and least expensive measure in the prevention of healthcare-associated infections.
- Health-Associated Infections (HAIs) pose a serious threat to all who are admitted to hospital. On average, infections complicate 7% to 10% of hospital admissions with 10% - 70% of these infections being preventable.
- Hand hygiene guidelines are well established but evidence shows that compliance is significantly low (under 50%).
- Clean Hands are Life Savers is Queensland Health’s initiative to focus attention on improved hand hygiene practices in wards and departments that provide clinical care to patients.
- Research has shown the hand hygiene issue is about human behaviour, organisational culture and leadership and requires a systematic, multifaceted and centralised approach to reduce the cost and service demands.
- Although success in this area has been difficult both internationally and within Australia, the Centre for Healthcare Related Infection Surveillance and Prevention (CHRISP) believes an innovative approach, which focuses on understanding the core beliefs underlying behavioural change as the basis for driving engagement and cultural transformation, will result in a successful implementation strategy.
Superannuation - Common Issues

The HR Advisory Service regularly gets calls from members in regards to superannuation. Below are some common issues which are raised by members about superannuation and employer and employee responsibilities.

Question: Is it possible to salary sacrifice an entire salary (100%) into superannuation?

Answer: Yes. An employee may choose to salary sacrifice their entire salary into superannuation. It is recommended that employers speak with the employee and discuss on what amount the pre sacrifice salary or post sacrificed salary the employer’s 9% contribution will be made. An issue to consider is that if the employee salary sacrifices 100% of their salary, effectively their salary is $0, and therefore the employer is not obligated to pay any further superannuation. It is also important to remember that only entitlements which have accrued after the agreement to sacrifice has been made can form part of the arrangement. This would mean that any annual leave which has accrued prior to the agreement to salary sacrifice into superannuation will not be able to be sacrificed into superannuation when the employee takes the leave.

Question: My employee is about to turn 70. I have been told that I no longer need to make superannuation contributions for this person. Is this true?

Answer: Employers must make compulsory Super contributions up until the employee turns 70. From the 1st of July 2007 an employer may make deductible contributions up until the employee turns 75. If an industrial instrument which covers the employee prescribes a minimum superannuation contribution amount, then the employer is required to continue making this minimum contribution no matter how old the employee is.

Question: When do I need to make my superannuation payments?

Answer: Super contributions need to be made by the employer at least quarterly. The ATO sets the dates for payments to be made in each quarter. These dates are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Payment cut-off date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 July – 30 September</td>
<td>28 October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 October – 31 December</td>
<td>28 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1 January – 31 March</td>
<td>28 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 April – 30 June</td>
<td>28 July</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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However, if an employee requests to pay superannuation from their after-tax salary, these contributions must be paid more frequently. That is, you must make the payment within 28 days of the contribution being made by the employee.

For more information, contact the team at the AVA Members HR Advisory Service on 1300 788 977 or email avahrhotline@whr.com.au.

The Hotline is open from 8.30am - 5.00pm Mon - Fri AEST.
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Ear Tattoos

By Law all Cats and Dogs Desexed in Queensland from 1 July 2009 must be tattooed to indicate they are desexed (Animal Management (Cats and Dogs) ACT 2008).

This symbol placed inside the left ear allows simple and rapid identification of desexed animals. The tattoo is performed under general anaesthesia and is painless and non-disfiguring.
Join the AVA
and see the difference

The vision of the Australian Veterinary Association is for a global community that respects and values the benefits of enhanced animal health, welfare and production.

The Queensland Division mission is to be the state organisation representing and serving the interests of the veterinary profession in Queensland to act and speak with a single voice on matters of importance to our members. Why not spread the word about the benefits of AVA membership to your non member colleagues?

AVA membership provides:
- Substantial discounts for AVA annual conference registration
- Subscription to the monthly Australian Veterinary Journal
- AVA eLine – monthly electronic newsletter
- Access to AVA Online, our extensive website
- A special bond with your professional peers
- Access to local branches and Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Pets & People Education Program
- Practice Rewards
- Practices of Excellence Award in community service
- Accredited Microchip Centres
- National Cattle Pregnancy Diagnosis Scheme
- Hospital Accreditation Scheme
- New Graduate Friendly Practice Scheme
- AVA Vet Ed – Continuing Education Scheme

The AVA also provides free telephone helplines:
- HR Advisory Service
- Telephone Counselling Service
- Accounting, Finance and Superannuation Helpline
- Legal Helpline

With added benefits such as:
- GE Money CareCredit Client Finance Plans
- Manchester Unity Health Insurance
- British Veterinary Association Journals – In Practice and The Veterinary Record
- New Zealand Veterinary Association Journals – NZVJ and VetScript
- Diners Club
- Mitsubishi Motors Australia
- Qantas Club
- Car rental with Thrifty, Hertz and Avis

For more information contact AVA member services on 1300 137 309 or email members@ava.com.au