It is with a measure of disquiet that I reflect on matters deliberated upon by NSW Division in recent weeks. The nature of these matters is typical of the issues arising each month and once more identifies the importance of your representatives’ diligent attention to state issues affecting veterinarians in NSW.

The first and, I think, most important item under discussion has been the Veterinary Practice Act. In June, 2009, the NSW DPI contacted all registered veterinary practitioners seeking comments relating to the statutory review of the NSW Veterinary Practice Act 2003. The Review Group undertook to consider stakeholder input in its preparation of the report to Parliament.

Well, our Division prepared a range of comment on this review, as did other groups and individuals with an interest. In our response to the Review Group, NSW Division represented the majority view of members that control of Veterinary Practice should remain with the profession. We noted the standards required for acts of veterinary science and queried what checks and balances obtained for those procedures removed from veterinary exclusiveness and now in the hands of laymen. We questioned privacy issues with medical records and disciplinary action, suggesting sunset clauses to avoid the lifelong stigma from an event early in a professional career.

None of our submissions nor any similar input from others saw daylight. What was the point? I guess it complied
with “due consultation” We’ve had further discussion on member input regarding vaccination protocols in dogs. There is controversy over blanket recommendations about protective immunity and what constitutes a safe routine. Members should adopt a vaccination policy that they’re happy with and make sure that clients are informed of alternative routines.

This informed consent is important in defending an annual vaccination policy against a complaint of self-interest from a member of the public to the VPB

I am retired now, but still undertake some locum work. However, when immunising canines, I always outline the alternatives of annual vs 3-yr interval vaccination, then give my preference. It’s surprising how few people disagree with my point of view – none.

AVA national has sent a renewed warning on handling bats, especially in the absence of prior immunisation against Lyssavirus. If you're presented with a fruit bat by wildlife carers, and if you don’t have complete protection by rabies immunisation, don’t touch it. The risks are too great.

Branch Liaison Officer Report – Tara Cashman

As we go to press, Tara is awaiting the arrival of her brand new son or daughter. Tara has worked tirelessly over the past 12 months as Branch liaison officer and has ensured the revitalisation of a number of branches in the southern regions.

She has helped open communication channels, worked on major sponsorship deals and organised a speaker database for branches to utilise. A great effort for her first year!

Tara will be back on deck sometime soon and we wish her and her and her family all the very best.

A Word From The Executive Officer – Mark Fraser

Hi all! Welcome to the 4th edition of E-Ructations for this year.

The Pan Pacific Conference is drawing closer, winter is sneaking up and before we know it the regional conference at Bateman’s Bay in September will be upon us. Make sure you keep September 11 & 12 free if you’re heading down.

The Sydney Royal Easter Show has just ended and a crew from the national office had the opportunity to get up close behind the scenes thanks to Michelle Cotton and Chief show vet Peter Higgins who both happily showed us the ins and outs of what goes down at the show. 25 vets over two weeks are responsible for the health and welfare of hundreds of animals…the days are long and the rewards are few…a true labour of love.

Mark Lawrie & Jane Barry (EVA) were back at the office of Minister Steve Whan this week, discussing many issues including Equine Influenza & biosecurity.

To celebrate the life and work of the late Kath Farr, NSW Division will be implementing a scholarship at Sydney Uni and organising the hanging of a memorial portrait in the AVA National office board room.

Recently you would have received a survey to do with future training needs in the industry. It is crucial that your needs and comments are heard. Please respond before April 28 if you get the chance. Until next time…

If you have an article or an idea for the next newsletter, drop me a line. execnsw@ava.com.au 02 9431 5000

Committee Spotlight – Tim White
I am extremely pleased to be able to represent veterinarians as a new NSW AVA committee member. Last year the committee achieved a great deal and I am optimistic for the year ahead. The AVA does a great job of providing a network and voice for veterinarians.

I am currently the veterinary manager at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research which has around 500 staff exploring various human diseases. My background has involved a year at the RSPCA in Melbourne, a year of locum work in various country small animal practices in England, a year of locum work in various small animal practices across the states of Australia and a year as a sole charge small animal veterinarian in the remote Pilbara region of Western Australia.

I hope to utilise knowledge from these experiences plus the insight from our diversified members to promote our great profession.

**Investec Experien Offer**

**Finance and “flip”**

As an AVA NSW member simply settle a finance contract with Investec Experien from 1 - 31 May 2010 and receive a **Flip Video Camcorder**. Terms and conditions apply. Click here for more information.

**Vet 2011- 250 Years of Veterinary Science**

The world's first veterinary school was founded in Lyon, France, in 1761, shortly followed by the Alfort veterinary school, near Paris, in 1764; both of them at the initiative of French veterinarian Claude BOURGELAT. This means that 2011 will mark the 250th world anniversary of veterinary education.

By setting up the world’s first veterinary training institutions, BOURGELAT created the veterinary profession itself. Thus, 2011 will also mark the 250th world anniversary of the veterinary profession.

Bourgelat was also the first scientist who dared to suggest that studying animal biology and pathology would help to improve our understanding of human biology and pathology. 2011 will also mark the 250th anniversary of the concept of comparative Pathobiology, without which modern medicine would never have emerged.

Therefore, it is not just the anniversary of the creation of veterinary training that will be celebrated in France in 2011. The entire world will join in celebrating the veterinary profession, which has been working to improve both animal and human health for the past 250 years. The AVA is a proud associate partner of Vet 2011. We are currently working on promotional material to be distributed at the National conference. Stay tuned for events and initiatives.

For more information log onto [www.vet2011.org](http://www.vet2011.org)

**World Veterinary Day 2010**

**World Veterinary Day** 2010 takes place on 24 April and this year will focus on the link between animal diseases and human health.

This year's theme One World, One Health: more cooperation between veterinarians and physicians recognises the fact that around 75 per cent of recent emerging animal diseases originated in animals.

The World Veterinary Association is calling for adaptations to the existing systems of animal and public health governance at world, regional and national levels.
As part of the celebrations the **World Veterinary Association** is also launching the World veterinary Day Award, aimed at rewarding the most successful celebration of the veterinary profession by national veterinary associations.

Further information about World Veterinary Day 2010 is available online at: [http://www.worldvet.org](http://www.worldvet.org)

### AVA PetPEP – new kids activity booklet now out– Mark Fraser

[Image of AVA PetPEP]

As noted last issue, the **AVA Pets and People Education Program** has been completely revamped and now offers an easy to access and implement program that not only spreads the AVA PetPEP Key Messages, but can also prove an excellent marketing tool for your practice. With a wealth of information on the new website ([www.ava.com.au/petpep](http://www.ava.com.au/petpep)) and over 60 worksheets and related lesson plans, it’s now easier than ever to get involved.

To further enhance the **AVA PetPEP** offering we now have two children’s activity booklets (junior & primary). The booklets are based on the key messages and contain catch cries, activities and information.

[Image of PIAS]

A huge thank you to Tim Adams and **PIAS** for their kind sponsorship of the initial 20 000 booklets. These have now been distributed to all states.

**AVA PetPEP**…educating the pet owners of today and tomorrow.

### Workplace Bullying – AVA Members HR Advisory Service

[Image of STOP bullying]

In February a Melbourne Magistrate handed down fines totalling $335,000 to a business in relation to an employees' persistent bullying at the hands of her colleagues. The court found that the employee, who tragically committed suicide, did so as a result of the bullying she continually experienced in their workplace.

**Developing a Policy**

In order to help prevent any such situations in your workplace, your business should design and implement a formal policy on workplace bullying and harassment. Employees should be involved in the drafting and implementing of this policy. The policy should show that the business is committed to preventing bullying, encouraging cases of bullying to be reported to managers and also outline the methods of investigation and how claims of bullying will be dealt with. Employers need to ensure employees are aware of this policy and how it operates.

**Responding to Incidents**

If a claim is reported then it should be treated seriously. Any report should be dealt with in a fair manner and anyone who makes a bullying claim should not be victimised for doing so. Once reported all parties to the claim should be interviewed and the investigator should be impartial.

All parties should be allowed to have an independent support person present in all meetings. Both parties need to have their side of the story heard and they should also be informed of how long the investigation process will take and what steps will be followed. All details of these meetings should be formally documented and should remain confidential.

Once the information has been collected the investigator should assess the reported claims' merits based on the facts provided by both parties and provide recommendations on how to move forward and decide whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

If bullying in the workplace has become an issue for you or if you would like a sample bullying policy please contact the AVA HR Advisory Service on 1300 788 977 or email [avahrhotline@whr.com.au](mailto:avahrhotline@whr.com.au)
EMAI Update - Mark Fraser

Following on from our visit to Minister Steve Whan and the tireless work of many others, there are now 2 new pathologists at EMAI. They are also recruiting 2 new trainees, with a 2 year commitment to their training. This now brings the total number of pathologists to 11. The job now is to ensure that commitment extends beyond the two year period.

The facilities are currently in the middle of a multi-million dollar upgrade. Mr Whan visited EMAI recently and said the biosecurity upgrade would bring the 20-year-old EMAI facility up to the latest international laboratory standards and prepare NSW for the future.

"We have some of the world’s leading scientists based at the Institute, who diagnose, control and prevent animal and plant diseases, and improve Australia’s agricultural competitiveness.

"This upgrade will provide them with the technology and facilities they need to keep our agricultural industry as protected from disease as possible."

On the Lighter Side! – Trivia & Funnies

A veterinarian was feeling ill and went to see her doctor. The doctor asked her all the usual questions, about symptoms, how long had they been occurring, etc., when she interrupted him:

"Hey look, I'm a vet; I don't need to ask my patients these kinds of questions. I can tell what's wrong just by looking. Why can't you?"

The doctor nodded, looked her up and down, wrote out a prescription, and handed it to her.

He then said, "There you are. Of course, if that doesn't work, we'll have to have you put down."

A man took his Rottweiler to the vet and said to him; "My dogs cross-eyed. Is there anything you can do for it?"

“Well,” said the vet “let's have a look at him” So he picks the dog up by the ears and has a good look at its eyes.

“Well,” says the vet “I'm going to have to put him down.” “Just because he's cross-eyed?” say's the man. “No, because he's heavy,” says the vet.