

42% of veterinary medicine assessments are not completed on time

Animal Medicines Australia* (AMA) 5-Point Plan for APVMA improvement

Today's Australian Pesticide and Veterinary Authority's (APVMA) assessment figures showing 42% of veterinary medicine assessments are not completed on time is evidence a strategic plan is needed.

"These assessments are on veterinary medicines that our pets, livestock, pet owners and farmers need to keep our animals healthy and happy," Executive Director, Ben Stapley said.

These statistics show a continuing decline in APVMA performance as the agency continues to lose key staff in advance of its move to Armidale.

"APVMA performance at this level puts at risk AMA member investments in newer, innovative products. This will hinder farm livestock productivity and profitability, put Australian farmers at a competitive disadvantage to international competitors, and preclude access to the latest innovations for our pets."

Targeted intervention needs to happen, and happen now," Mr Stapley said.

AMA is urging the Government to implement targeted reforms to reverse the current trend in APVMA assessment performance. AMA is urging the Government to:

(1) Commit to investment in a digital strategy to update APVMA's systems

- The digital strategy will provide for a greater level of automation of current APVMA processes, reducing resource requirements within the agency;
- New IT capability underpins the capacity for remote work by APVMA regulatory scientists;
- Successful implementation is expected to reduce APVMA decision making timeframes.

(2) Recognise the outcomes of international assessments for Australian regulatory decision making

- In circumstances where is very little difference in risk profile between Australian uses and those in comparable overseas markets, the APVMA should be able to recognize that decision and immediately make a comparable decision for Australia.

(3) Invest in regulatory science capability in Armidale (in partnership with local universities and industry)

- Development of a local regulatory science capability needs to urgently be ramped up in preparation for agency relocation.

(4) Implement targeted regulatory and administrative reform that will improve APVMA processes,

- APVMA business process mapping should identify duplicative and inefficient processes. These must be urgently addressed;
- Development of guidance material that to develop mutually agreed requirements for the most frequent applications. This should result in APVMA being able to assess applications faster through clear agreement on what information and data is necessary for a successful application;
- A better balance between pre-market approval and compliance and enforcement activity.

(5) Streamline the APVMA by allowing it to focus on its core business of standard setting and compliance

- Many APVMA back office functions (such as HR, finance, legal advice etc) could be outsourced to enable the APVMA to focus on its core functions and assessment objectives including meeting timeframes

"The assessment figures show a comprehensive intervention is needed if there is to be an improvement," Mr Stapley said. "AMA wants to work with both the Government and APVMA to deliver a superior regulator that facilitates our members' contribution to farm profitability, productivity and animal health and welfare."

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*[Animal Medicines Australia](#) is the peak body that represents the leaders of the animal health industry in Australia: Boehringer Ingelheim, Bayer, Elanco, Jurox, Phibro, MSD Animal Health, Vetoquinol, Virbac and Zoetis

11 May 2017