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## ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT VETERINARIANS

(A Specialist Division of the British Veterinary Association)

### CONSTITUTION

(Amended November 2022)

1. The title of the Association is “The Association of Government Veterinarians<sup>1</sup>” (formerly the Association of State Veterinary Officers), hereinafter referred to as the Association.
2. The Association is a Specialist Division of the British Veterinary Association (BVA).
3. The Mission of the Association is to ensure its members are represented and supported in delivering government veterinary work including ‘One Health’, improved animal health and welfare outcomes and international trade.
4. The Aims of the Association are to:
  - a. Promote professional relationships between veterinarians in different branches of government service within the UK and Europe and with other members of the veterinary profession.
  - b. Represent the views of members to relevant organisations such as BVA, RCVS and EASVO and present an authoritative opinion on matters affecting vets in government and seeking to ensure that their position takes into account the perspective of government veterinarians.
  - c. Advance veterinary science, in particular relating to the theory and practice of government veterinary work.
  - d. Support continuous professional development appropriate to veterinarians working in government.
  - e. Promote and support good veterinary workplaces for veterinarians working in government.
5. Membership of the Association is open to:
  - (i). All veterinarians employed in any Government Department, or their Executive Agencies in the United Kingdom and all veterinarians engaged in the delivery of official veterinary services for any Government in the UK. Members shall be entitled to membership on secondment, retirement, or on departure from government employment.
  - (ii). Current veterinary students.
6. Membership shall be of two kinds:
  - a. Full membership for those who are members of the BVA
  - b. Associate membership for those who are not members of the BVA.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Veterinarians’ are the Members and Fellows of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.



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In addition, and at the discretion of the Council:

c. Honorary life membership for members of the Association who have rendered distinguished service to the Association.

d. Honorary membership for non-members of the Association who have rendered distinguished service to the Association or to the veterinary profession.

e. Affiliate membership for holders of veterinary degrees who are not members of RCVS

7. A candidate for membership shall submit an application to the Honorary Treasurer. Nominations for honorary life membership and honorary membership should be proposed to the Council and shall be submitted by the Council for approval at the Annual General Meeting. A member may terminate membership at any time by notice in writing to the Honorary Secretary. The Honorary Treasurer shall report to the Council any member who has failed to pay his subscription for the preceding financial year and at the discretion of the Council, such person shall cease to be a member.

8. All members shall be entitled to vote on all matters relating to the Association. However, in matters specifically relating to British Veterinary Association policy, only members of BVA shall be entitled to vote.

9. The affairs of the Association shall be conducted by Officers and a Council which has authority to act in the name of the Association. The Council offices of President and Vice President must be members of the BVA.

10. The Officers shall be appointed by vote at the Annual General Meeting and shall take office at the termination of the Annual General Meeting.

11. The Annual General Meeting shall be held annually. At least 21 days' notice of the Annual General Meeting shall be given. Ordinary general meetings shall be called at the discretion of the Officers. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be called on receipt by the Honorary Secretary of a written request, stating the object of the meeting, signed by any ten members. Notice of meetings shall be sent in writing to all members at least seven days prior to the meeting.

12. The funds of the Association shall be administered by an Honorary Treasurer appointed at the Annual General Meeting. They shall have authority to open the Association's bank account and to draw upon it over their signature alone. The President and Secretary shall be alternative signatories. The Association's financial year shall end on 31 March. The Treasurer shall submit an examined statement of accounts to the Annual General Meeting. Full and Associate members shall pay an annual subscription, due on the first day of May, in advance, the amount to be determined at the Annual General Meeting.

13. A quorum at a general meeting shall be ten members or 5% of the membership if that is less, and at a council meeting, six.

14. Rules of the Association shall not be amended except by a two-thirds majority at an Annual General Meeting, due notice of the proposed amendment having been given in the papers summoning the meeting.



## 15. CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

The President shall be Chair at all meetings. In their absence one of the Vice Presidents shall so act, or, failing them, the members present shall appoint a Chair from among their number. The Chair shall have a casting vote at all meetings. Voting at meetings shall be by acclamation or show of hands except that the Chair may order a ballot. Matters voted shall be decided by a simple majority of the members present and voting. It shall be recognised as within the province of the Chair to allow, limit or exclude discussion as they think fit in the interests of the Association.

## 16. OFFICERS

The Officers shall consist of a President, up to two Vice-Presidents, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer. An exceptional vacancy shall be filled by nomination by the Council. An Honorary Treasurer so nominated shall have the authority given in Rule 11.

## 17. COUNCIL

Council shall consist of the Officers and up to eight members to be elected from Members of the Association. The Council offices of President and Vice-President must be members of the BVA. Any member may propose or second a Member for election to Council. The election shall be held at the Annual General Meeting. Members of Council shall be elected to serve for a period of three years, and are eligible for re-election. Council shall have the authority to co-opt a maximum of two additional members in exceptional circumstances.

## 18. PRESIDENT

The President shall act as lead spokesperson for AGV, representing the views and interests of AGV members to all relevant parties and maintain good relationships with all bodies concerned with the work of veterinarians in government. Specific tasks include chairing AGV Council meetings, chairing and presenting a review of the year at the AGM and ensuring that AGV Council views are presented at BVA Council by the AGV representative.

## 19. VICE PRESIDENTS

A Vice President shall be responsible for collaborating and working with the VPHA in the development and running of the AGV/VPHA joint conferences. In the event of the absence of the President a Vice President will act on their behalf to carry out their duties and tasks as outlined above.

## 20. HONORARY SECRETARY

The Honorary Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the Association's records, arranging meetings relevant to the working of AGV and conducting all necessary correspondence. The Secretary may incur such expense as is needed for the proper conduct of the Association's business and shall submit a report of the year's proceedings to the Annual General Meeting.

## 21. HONORARY TREASURER

The Honorary Treasurer shall be responsible for collecting, holding and expending of the funds. The Treasurer shall be deemed to have authority to make all usual payments but shall refer to the President of the Council for authority to discharge accounts which are unusual in their nature or amount.



## 22. HONORARY ACCOUNTS EXAMINERS

Two members shall be elected as Honorary Account Examiners and shall be responsible for examining the Annual Statement of Accounts of the Association and verifying its accuracy. The Honorary Account Examiners shall be appointed by vote at the Annual General Meeting.

## 23. REPRESENTATIVES

The Association's representative to serve on the Council of the British Veterinary Association shall be elected each year at the Annual General Meeting. Members required to represent the Association on other bodies shall normally be appointed at the Annual General Meeting, but, where exceptional vacancies occur or the particular circumstances demand, the Council may nominate members so to act. The representative for AGV at the BVA Council meetings must be a BVA member.

## 24. VISITORS

Members may introduce non-members to general meetings with the prior consent of the Chair, but not otherwise.

## 25. COMMUNICATIONS

The Council will keep members informed of AGV activities through the AGV website and periodic emails. Proceedings of relevant meetings should be presented in a suitable format on the website or other suitable publications. Members are welcome to contact the Council directly by emailing the Secretary.

Revised November 2022