



## **ACVO role description 2018**

The Australian Government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources develops and implements policies and programmes to ensure Australia's agricultural, fisheries, food and forestry industries remain competitive, profitable and sustainable. The department is responsible for facilitating the development of national policies and strategies and the provision of scientific advice to minimise the potential impacts of diseases on Australia's animal health.

The Australian Chief Veterinary Officer (ACVO) is the pivotal leader, primary representative of, and advisor to, the Australian Government on matters relating to the maintenance and improvement of Australia's animal health status and the systems that support it. The ACVO mitigates threats to the Australian economy, and the productivity of Australia's animal-dependent industries, by supporting and enhancing trade and market access for animals and animal products, and representing the Australian Government on animal health issues of national interest. The ACVO is supported by teams of scientists and policy makers and works directly with other senior officials across government to deliver these objectives.

### **Characteristics of the Australian Chief Veterinary Officer**

- **Leader and strategist:** Determines the national need and strategic direction. Provides definitive advice and direction to stakeholders – especially states and territories - on what the Australian animal health system requires to maintain our animal health status, market access and future trade opportunities.
- **Displays personal credibility and gravitas:** Can quickly gain the trust and successfully influence senior officials and stakeholders in support of the department's, and Australia's, strategic animal health and biosecurity interests.
- **Technical expert:** Leads the provision of technical expertise on animal health issues to provide confidence and competence in Australia's animal health systems. Participates in, and contributes to, relevant scientific discussions and encourages the development of technical excellence within DAWR. Principle advisor (and 'confidence in a crisis') to the Australian Government on animal health and emergency disease outbreaks.
- **An objective advisor:** Independently identifies areas of concern, provides advice to the Australian Government and champion improvements to the national animal health system and performance of veterinary services.
- **Innovator:** Drives reform and innovation – both in systems and policy development – so that new opportunities are harnessed and flawed systems are challenged.
- **Communicator and spokesperson:** A skilled communicator who engages with and applies different approaches to significantly impact the conversation with all stakeholders. This includes the ability to liaise and negotiate, deliver advice and provide authority to achieve positive outcomes for the national animal health and biosecurity system.
- **Displays foresight:** Drives and oversees strategic foresight and horizon scanning activities that assist the department to identify emerging animal health threats and negotiates organisational reform or implementation of strategic mitigation measures as needed.
- **Professional leader:** Fosters the development of veterinary and animal health staff within the department and ensures sufficient succession planning.
- **Delivers assurance:** Represent Australia's animal health status and deliver international reporting obligations to provide confidence to trading partners and the international community on the integrity of Australia's animal health systems, standards and claims.



The ACVO's responsibilities include:

1. Providing **strategic analysis** of, **influencing** and **championing** Australia's collective animal health systems and services, through;
  - adopting an objective and overarching view of Australia's animal health systems to identify potential weaknesses and strengths;
  - undertaking and promoting strategic intelligence gathering and horizon scanning activities to identify and analyse potential/emerging animal health risks and opportunities;
  - influencing the national animal health agenda, and providing strategic national leadership and other support, including during responses to animal disease incidents;
  - promoting the achievements of the animal health sector within Australia, and development opportunities for government veterinary and animal health officers;
  - fostering collaborative relationships with stakeholders within Australia, and utilising domestic networks to support intelligence gathering and horizon scanning activities;
  - facilitating the sharing of information between the domestic and international animal health communities
  
2. Providing **international representation** of Australia's animal health status and systems and **influencing international policy and standards** in accordance with Australia's national animal health, biosecurity and trade objectives, through;
  - representing Australia's animal health status to the international community and providing definitive advice to Australian stakeholders;
  - fulfilling Australia's obligations as a member of the OIE, including providing the official declaration of Australia's animal health status;
  - providing international leadership and influence, through the OIE Presidency, on global animal health issues
  - representing Australia's interests in the development of international standards for animal health;
  - utilising international networks to support intelligence gathering and horizon scanning activities.
  
3. In collaboration with and support from other departmental areas, representing the Australian Government on **animal health issues of national significance** such as antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and public health and zoonoses, through;
  - contributing to the development of policies and practices in accordance with the One Health approach, thereby enhancing the health of humans, animals and the environment,
  - maximising the ability of Australian producers to prepare for, take advantage of, the emergence of new trade rules around AMR,
  - reducing the risk to producers of the introduction of onerous or detrimental international standards and trade policies,
  - representing the efforts of Australian producers on AMR at national and global levels,
  - reducing the risk of Australian producers contributing to the growth and spread of resistant organisms,
  - ensuring the Australian animal sector is well represented in local and global discussions with the health sector on AMR, and contributes effectively to the combined national strategy.