



ASSURING THE SAFETY, QUALITY AND EFFICACY  
OF VETERINARY MEDICINES

# ***Communications Strategy 2010-2011***

## Executive summary

- This document describes a strategy for **internal and external communications** and focuses on activity over the period 2010-2011. It sets out key steps which the VMD will follow to develop an effective communications delivery platform during that period.
- It is important that the document be seen by all staff as an **overarching document** on communications and that all other projects and working practices (online, media, annual communications, internal) should follow these key principles so that they exist within a complementary and coordinated framework.
- The VMD is now a mid-sized complex agency operating with a strong EU focus. In order to ensure that it remains a respected leader in its field it must handle its communications in a **strategic and proactive** manner.
- **The Image statement**

The two sections, vision and image, should be kept linked:

### **The VMD Vision:**

Our vision is the responsible, safe and effective use of veterinary medicinal products. We will achieve this by providing regulatory services that meet the needs of Industry, Consumers and Government that operate in an efficient and sustainable manner, whilst providing value for money.

### **The VMD's Image will be promoted as:**

- an efficient organisation that is effective in delivering its vision.
- a point of reference for authoritative and objective information about veterinary medicines in the UK, providing information in an open and approachable way.
- an organisation that is seen to foster scientific and regulatory excellence.
- an organisation committed to providing information, education and better regulation.
- an organisation that can convincingly demonstrate, through the content and presentation of information, that it is open, transparent and accountable.

- **The target audience groups will vary depending on the message content and will include:**

- Internal
- [Pharmaceutical Industry] – lots already in place, maintain and refine this
- Vets
- The Public (2 sub sets: consumers and animal owners)
- Farmers
- Other Government Organisations
- International groups.

A more detailed analysis is provided further on in this document, grouping audiences by the amount of communications work each requires:

- **Key messages for 2010-2011**

## **External**

### **Vets & public**

- **The value of reporting to the Serious Adverse Reactions Surveillance Scheme**
- **Responsible use of Veterinary Medicinal Products** (especially antimicrobials and anthelmintics)
- **Benefit: risk assessment** underpins the authorisation of veterinary medicines
- **Vaccines issues** – VMD position that Duration of Immunity can be extended given adequate data submission and encouraging vets to make informed clinical choices regarding vaccination schedules whilst taking account of the details of the Summary of Product Characteristics.
- **Horse Medicines issues** – VMD position that veterinary medicines used in food producing horses should be properly recorded in the passport and that only products containing actives for which Maximum Residues Limits and appropriate withdrawal periods have been determined should be used in food producing horses. Phenylbutazone cannot be used in food producing horses.

### **Industry & Distributors**

- **E-submissions** – VMD is ready and has led the way in the EU and wants to encourage applicants to submit electronically (applies to vets as well as industry).
- The VMD has good **capability and capacity** to deliver efficient authorisation services.
- **Enforcement activities** - The enforcement action taken by VMD will be in compliance with the VMD's Enforcement Strategy - graduated and proportionate to the perceived risks associated with an activity and the frequency of non-compliance.

PLUS for both sectors, topical issues as they arise / require response e.g. 28 day shelf life

## **Internal**

- **Communicating effectively** is important and **cultural change** is required.
- Individuals, teams and project groups **all must engage**.
- The VMD **communications staff can help** you to do this, but individual staff, as specialists in their areas, will be responsible for all content.
- Communications will be delivered within current commitments and by considering how savings can be made elsewhere in the business, and **not at the expense of hard targets**
- The key recommendation from the original Quality project, that all information relating to work at the VMD will be made **available via the Intranet** will be implemented throughout the organisation.

A note of all potential messages identified can be found in annex 2

## **Approach to delivery**

- Each year an **annual communications delivery plan** will be developed setting out topic-based, scientific based and policy based communications activities focussed around key messages and prioritised according to target audiences.

- Applying a 'blanket' target audience to all of the VMD's communications activities is inappropriate and ineffective. Each activity requires analysis to deliver **appropriate information** to the appropriate target audience in a **suitable format**.
- The VMD does not have the budgetary or staff resources to communicate directly with all of its stakeholders. In addition Government messages are better received if routed through professional bodies and groups. It should therefore **target 'multipliers'**, such as Veterinary professional bodies, consumer groups and other Government Departments, who can reiterate VMD messages in appropriate formats with regard to their specific audience representation.
- Delivering appropriate communications activities will require budgetary and staff **resources**. The VMD will meet these needs from within current commitments and resources and in line with the **Business Plan**.
- VMD staff need a better understanding of the importance of communications in helping the organisation to achieve its aims and vision. There needs to be a **cultural change** across the organisation to accept the need for, plan and deliver effective, consistent communications.
- A **delivery action plan** will set out how this strategy will be delivered. A key part of this will focus on improvements to **internal communications**, including making effective use of the Directors communications tool and considering how this might be more widely applied across the VMD.

## Introduction

An effective communications strategy removes uncertainty, underpins planning and involves the whole business in focusing on its aims and targets. The key to a good communications strategy is to fully understand the main challenges, pressures and opportunities faced by the organisation, and then to develop communications activities to minimise their impact or ideally to turn them into positive gains. A SWOT analysis is included in annex 3 to this end.

It is vital to remember that communicating is a two-way exercise and the VMD needs to remain committed to listening to the opinions of its customers and stakeholders and responding proactively.

This strategy sets out our key communication aims, principles and audiences. It is important that it be seen as an overarching document impacting upon most if not all areas of the business. All communication in projects and work streams should follow these key principles, so that they function within a consistent and coordinated framework.

This strategy document is not solely based within the limits of external communications e.g. press, marketing, events and web. It touches upon the way in which the VMD 'formally communicates' on a daily basis, through e-mail etc., with business partners such as the pharmaceutical industry, other Government Departments, producers, the public and veterinarians. Its intention is not to dictate how teams should communicate but to lay down principles within an overarching structure for managers to adapt to individual and changing needs.

Although VMD is highly regarded within its own professional sphere, it is a consequence of having done our job so effectively that we are not perhaps as well known outside of that sphere as we would wish to be. This lack of familiarity could

negatively impact on our ability to communicate key messages to those Departments and elsewhere.

Clearly, the VMD does not want to create or attract unnecessary media attention or alienate its partners. The character of its communications should, therefore, be modest. Activities recommended for the delivery of the communications vision are not intended to promote the Agency at the expense of other relationships, but would be embedded within the current environment. They should be intended to showcase existing activities.

To remain at the forefront of EU veterinary medicines regulation we need to optimise our effectiveness in delivering our responsibilities both nationally within the EU and Internationally. We can greatly aid achievement of this by increasing our profile and engaging more effectively with all of our stakeholders through successful communication, alongside continuing to provide high quality scientific and regulatory advice and service.

The purpose of this new communications strategy is to identify and prioritise the VMD's varied target audiences and the key messages which we wish them to understand. In order to deliver an effective and efficient communications plan the strategy will also discuss corporate structure and tools required.

The separate delivery action plan will then define key roles and responsibilities within the VMD in order to achieve this in a practical and consistent way that ensures value for money.

This strategy does not discuss good practice in communicating generally. This has already been well defined within the VMD and the principles involved are available on #191721 and are also included in annex 1 of this report.

### **What do we need a communications strategy to achieve?**

We are aiming to attain a communications culture in the VMD which will enable us to:

- Provide clear, accurate, balanced and easily accessible information, in a timely manner presented in an open and transparent manner, while respecting rights to confidentiality
- Facilitate consistency of communications across the VMD and also over time and staff changes
- Enable the VMD to interact in a pro-active and positive way with a wider range of our stakeholders engaging in bilateral and multilateral communications with our international partner organisations and other Government departments
- Empower staff to take correct well informed decisions where needed and appropriate
- Distribute the delivery of communications across the VMD so that advice comes from those best placed to provide it and to ensure that this happens in a coordinated fashion
- Define our wide range of stakeholders into audience sets with similar needs
- Identify efficient and effective methods of communication for each stakeholder group (including the internet) which demonstrate good value for money and sustainable working practices
- Identify what our key messages are to each audience set and to keep these up to date and relevant
- Deliver our key messages in an effective manner, in line with overarching Defra requirements, to the relevant stakeholder groups and actively listen to their concerns
- Raise awareness both across the organisation and outside of the VMD of the diverse roles which we fulfil

- Ensure that the voice of the VMD is heard and recognised as having significant weight across Government on issues related to Veterinary Medicines
- Continue and build upon our effectiveness in influencing decisions related to Veterinary Medicines in the EU forum and in the wider international setting.

Integral to these objectives is the aim of engaging all VMD staff in the importance of good communication linked to high internal quality standards and nurturing a culture of open and effective communication between all who work for or with the VMD.

## Who are our key audiences?

VMD has many different types of 'audience'. These audiences have grown organically over time. Stakeholder mapping was used to develop the diagram shown below. Stakeholders are grouped within each division to show areas of similar interest, and the quadrants reflect their current levels of influence over and interest in the VMD.

### High Influence / Low Interest

#### "VMD Involved"

EU / International Committees:  
SAGAM  
Codex

The Commission  
UK Rep

Animal Health.  
Scientific specialists in academia  
The Environment Agency  
CEFAS  
National Bee Unit  
FERA

The Veterinary press  
NFU

### High Influence / High Interest

#### "VMD Active"

VMD staff

The pharmaceutical industry  
(inc. consultants + CROs)  
NOAH

Veterinarians in practice  
Veterinary nurses  
Veterinary students  
RCVS

BVA + associated bodies  
SCOPS / RUMA / AMTRA

Defra (inc. DARC)  
Meat Hygiene Service  
Food Standards Agency  
Devolved administrations  
GVS  
VRC / VPC

EMA / IFAH  
Other EU Regulatory bodies for VMPs  
HMA / CMDv  
CVMP (+WPs)

Manufacturers  
Wholesalers + Distributors (inc. AHDA)

#### "VMD Dormant"

The Public  
Department of Health  
MHRA

Animal insurance companies

Veterinary CPD providers

The Home Office

The Farming press

#### "VMD Aware"

RPSGB

Food industry  
Health Protection Agency  
Farmers  
Slaughter houses  
Egg marketing board

Active lobby /consumer groups  
Universities and Colleges of animal care  
Animal keeping associations e.g. KC

Health and Safety Executive (biocides)  
DARD  
VLA  
ETPGAH

### Low Influence / Low Interest

### Low Influence/ High Interest

The red group or **"VMD Active"** represents our **highest priority** audiences and these should be actively targeted and their need carefully addressed. These audiences are directly affected by VMD work and communications on a continual basis. Conversely the VMD is affected by their activities too. This group needs to be constantly engaged with strong relationships being fostered and developed. It is however important to recognise that they still represent a diverse group and the relevant key messages to deliver will differ significantly within the group. It is important to note that VMD staff sits within this group and their communications needs must be recognised and addressed.

The top yellow section or **"VMD Involved"** represents audiences which we should keep engaged or consider for further development. They have a **medium priority** level. The VMD is interested in these groups as they may develop initiatives which impact on the work of the VMD, or provide valuable conduits of information sharing. It is important to maintain engagement with these groups although perhaps not on the regular basis which the red group demands. Again there are large differences in the audiences present in this group and key messages will require careful targeting.

The lower yellow section or **"VMD Aware"** represents audiences which have a passing interest in the work of the VMD and perhaps do not always fully recognise the relevance of the VMD's work to them. It is likely that although this group has limited input into the VMD, they may have sporadic interactions and need to access information in intense bursts. It is important to recognise and to cater for this more occasional demand for information. They too have a **medium priority** though this may fluctuate from high to low more frequently than the VMD involved.

The grey section or **"VMD Dormant"** represents audiences who have a need to remain informed of key developments which relate to them but do not require in depth involvement in VMD work. They are a **lower priority** and do not need to be targeted for individual delivery of key messages but information must still be readily available for them should they need it e.g. via the internet site. The focus in these areas should be for clarity and plain English, not technical jargon. There may be some groups in this sector which we do wish to target with a view to increasing their involvement and moving them to one of the yellow groups in the future.

These audiences are useful for prioritisation of activities and resources but should not be confused with **'target' audiences**. Target audiences are groups of people, often drawn from across these prioritisation groups, that an organisation proactively engages with, using tailored messages to achieve specific results and convey key messages.

With such a wide set of audiences, and as VMD performs many complex technical roles, it is not appropriate to apply a blanket 'target audience' over the entire communications strategy. To be effective, the communications needs of each target audience must be analysed individually to determine the correct messages to focus on and the media through which to deliver them. The level of language and the technical content of the resulting communications output may then be set appropriately.

### **The target audiences for 2010/11**

- Internal
- [Industry] – lots already in place, maintain and refine this
- Vets
- The Public (2 sub sets: consumers and animal owners)
- Farmers
- Other Government Organisations
- International groups.

There are many subsets within each of these overarching groups but in overview the situation is as follows:

| More Work to do             | Maintain what we do                 |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| VMD Staff                   | Pharmaceutical Industry             |
| The Public - Consumers      | Vets                                |
| The Public – Animal keepers | International Groups (HMA, AU, NZ ) |
| <b>Farmers</b>              | Other Government Organisations      |

### What are our key messages for each of the audiences targeted?

The process of surveys, workshops, internal and external feedback on VMD's performance and communications has identified a large number of potential key messages to deliver. These are available to view in Annex 2. However to be effective the VMD must select a specific few upon which to focus its efforts and these are as follows:

#### **External**

##### Vets & public

- **The value of reporting to the Serious Adverse Reactions Surveillance Scheme**
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- **Benefit: risk assessment** underpins the authorisation of veterinary medicines
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##### Industry & Distributors

- **E-submissions** – VMD is ready and has led the way in the EU
- The VMD has good **capacity and capability** to deliver efficient authorisation services
- **Enforcement activities** - The enforcement action taken by VMD will be graduated and proportionate to the perceived risks associated with an activity and associated with an activity and the frequency of non-compliance and in compliance with the VMD's Enforcement Strategy.

PLUS for both sectors, topical issues as they arise / require response e.g. 28 day shelf life

#### **Internal**

- **Communicating effectively** is important and **cultural change** is required
- Individuals, teams and project groups **all must engage**
- The VMD **communications staff can help** you to do this, but individual staff, as specialists in their areas, will be responsible for all content
- Communications will be delivered within current commitments and by considering how savings can be made elsewhere in the business, and **not at the expense of hard targets**

### The annual communications delivery plan

It is not realistic to expect all delivery measures to be implemented in the short term given limited resources and the current diverse workflow surrounding the VMD's communications. An annual communications delivery plan will be developed to define and prioritise the measures required to deliver this strategy.

During the course of any year, the VMD will need to communicate on a specific issue or activity. Planning for these events where possible is important to ensure that the communications activities are effective and can be adequately resourced. Therefore, VMD teams would be required during the fourth quarter of each financial year to provide a calendar of 'events' and related topics for the following year. This could encompass emerging and developing issues which are likely to come to fruition as well as those more firmly identified. These would then be consolidated by the communications staff and discussions held to measure them against the overall VMD communications image statement, to ensure consistency with that statement, and included in the annual communications action plan.

The timing of the development of the new delivery plan should coincide with the development of the **Business Plan** and **Budget** and run from 1<sup>st</sup> April – 31<sup>st</sup> of March annually.

There is also an ongoing need for the VMD to respond to unforeseen developments in an appropriate manner, consistent with the vision for the image of the Agency and its published aims and objectives. Therefore sufficient resource and time needs to be built into the annual delivery plan to accommodate these unknown factors.

### How will we monitor the effectiveness of our communications?

The VMD already has many tools in place to monitor the effectiveness of our communications

- Staff surveys
- Customer surveys
- Customer care visits
- IT tools (hits on website pages, surveys)
- Complaints log
- Feedback on requests for information
- Questionnaires used at events
- Requests to participate in or contribute to external bodies' work
- Investors in People accreditation
- In year and annual reports provide an opportunity for managers to receive feedback on their communication performance (as confidential it is difficult to make formal use of this data though).
- Requests to provide speakers
- IFAH feedback.

There are areas which could be added to this list to gather more evidence on how our communications are actually functioning:

- Annual survey placed on website
- Uptake of and feedback on any VMD funded or delivered communications training
- Monitoring hits on intranet pages
- Feedback and relations with Defra's press office.

There are also areas in which we can build upon the systems we have, to communicate more effectively, while enabling us to monitor this activity more accurately:

- Better use of IT systems to keep a record of the content of / log telephone calls
- Better systems for assigning queries to the correct areas
- Better system for tracking queries and referencing past responses.
- Better monitoring of behavioural changes e.g. anthelmintic / antimicrobial sales data or attitudes to annual vaccination protocols.

Although much of these data are already generated within the VMD it is aimed that they would be consolidated into a single document reviewing VMD communications and this would be used to feed into the annual communications delivery plan and to update this communications strategy as required.

## **Aim, values and corporate positioning**

### **Aim**

The aim of the VMD is to protect public health, animal health, the environment and promote animal welfare by assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines.

We will meet this aim through proportionate regulation, providing high quality services to our stakeholders and clear agreements with service providers.

### **Strap Line**

Assuring the Safety, Quality and Efficacy of veterinary medicines.

### **VMD's Guiding Principles to meet our Image statements**

1. We are firmly committed to remain (one of) the premier Regulatory Agency for veterinary medicines in the EU
2. We are strongly committed to public and animal health and welfare and to protecting the environment.
3. We make independent recommendations based on evidence
4. We support research and innovation to stimulate the development of better veterinary medicines and to improve surveillance / monitoring methods related to the use of veterinary medicines.
5. We value the contribution of our partners and stakeholders to our work.
6. We assure continual improvement of our processes and procedures, in accordance with recognised quality standards.
7. We adhere to the highest standards of professional and personal integrity.
8. We communicate in an open, transparent manner with all of our partners, stakeholders and colleagues.
9. We are firmly committed to providing excellent value for money.
10. We promote the well-being, motivation and ongoing professional development of every member of the VMD.

## 1. Introduction

The aim of the VMD is to protect public health, animal health and the environment and to promote animal welfare by assuring the safety, quality and efficacy of veterinary medicines in the UK. This brings with it the need to ensure effective communication and information-sharing with all those involved; VMD and Defra colleagues, those in other regulatory authorities and Government Departments, individual animal keepers and owners, specialists in the veterinary field (vets, pharmacists, nurses) and consumers of animal produce and the wider public. Clear communication is an essential element in the work of the VMD.

## 2. Principles

The following principles apply to all types of communication: Internal (within VMD), and External (Defra and independent committees run by the VMD and the remainder):

- communications should be clear and accurate, respectful, polite and helpful;
- correspondents should be treated fairly;
- information should be up-to-date. Obsolete information should be brought up to date or replaced;
- Information should be provided externally either routinely or in accordance with the FOI Act and Environmental Information Regulations;
- advice and information should be consistent;
- information should be easy to access;
- the main VMD contact point should be easy to identify;
- the most appropriate medium should be selected (e.g. oral or written);
- where important decisions are reached orally between parties, these should be summarised and confirmed in writing in a timely manner;
- relevant parties should be involved and kept updated;
- every time we should consider – who else needs to know, who does this affect, do we need to consult with anyone, can we publish the information;
- phone messages and emails should be dealt with by the individual receiving them or passed to an appropriate person, advising the person who left the message of the change;
- communications should be as brief and succinct as possible;
- a summary should be included when complex issues are discussed;
- communications should have meaningful headers and paragraph numbers;
- communications should give the name of the person dealing with the matter and use language suited to the audience;
- communications should say where to go for further information, if appropriate;
- communications should be accessible to those with disabilities;
- the Out-of-Office-Assistant in Outlook should be used positively giving adequate information;
- responses should be timely (as per published service standards) - for written enquiries *we will answer your written enquiries (including faxes and e-mails) within 15 working days of receipt. If we cannot provide a complete answer within that time, we will let you know why, and provide you with the name and telephone number of someone you can talk to about your query.*

External written communications should usually include the writer's title (Prof, Dr, Miss, Mr, Mrs) and official position (Director, Head of Team, Assessor etc) unless previous correspondence has been more informal.

Internal communications should use first names.

### **3. VMD Communication Systems**

In the following sections some of the current communication systems are listed.

#### **3.1 Internal Communications**

These include:

- Face to face
- Phone
- Email
- Written correspondence (e.g. minutes)
- Office Notices
- Team meetings (including project teams, business teams, etc.)
- Grade meetings
- Information sharing meetings
- CEO annual address
- VMD Business Plan
- Team/Division works plans
- Team Delivery Plans (if applicable)
- Personal Development Plans
- Lines-to-take document (# 178143)
- CEO Newsletter.

The VMD Intranet site acts as the gateway for access to VMD internal documents, such as policies, procedures, monthly performance reports and office notices. It is intended to give easy access to relevant legislation and guidance notes, and to be a Who's Who of the VMD with information about colleagues and their teams. Via a direct link to the Product Information Database, it gives details of authorised products and also has other useful links, e.g. the VMD website, the Defra intranet site and the EMA website.

#### **3.2 External Communications**

These include:

- Face to face
- Phone
- Email
- VPC website
- MSP website
- AP website
- VPC special meeting
- VPC open meeting
- VRC website
- Written correspondence (e.g. letters)
- Company meetings
- Meetings with representative bodies
- Meetings with other member states (e.g. CVMP)
- Customer Care visits
- Consultations
- VMD open meeting
- VRC open meeting
- Consumer meetings.

The VMD Internet site acts as a source of information primarily for the pharmaceutical industry, but it also contains information that may be accessed by other groups, including the VMD staff. Within the website is the Product Information Database, which includes SPCs and public assessment reports, as well as information on applying for special import certificates, including on-line applications. There are also:

Business Plan (BP) (April of each year)  
Communication plan for the BP (April of each year)  
Annual Report and Accounts (June of each year)  
VMD annual open meeting  
VMD annual meeting for consumers  
Licensing/liaison/SARs meetings with NOAH.

MAVIS is published quarterly on-line and a summary of its contents is sent within an alerting email to recipients who request this. Its target audience is primarily the pharmaceutical industry and vets.

Other important contacts are through:

Veterinary Medicines Regulations  
Guidance notes and clarification papers  
Formal Consultations  
Access to Information requests  
Customer Survey (Licensing) (usually every 2 years)  
Publications (e.g. VMD annual report to SARs in the Veterinary Record).

## Annex 2 – Key messages identified and potential delivery options

NB: Not all of these potential options will be used in delivery – many are subject to obtaining suitable exemption from the current spending freeze on Marketing and Advertising.

### “VMD Active”

| Audience Groups  | Key Messages   | Engagement / delivery options   |
|--|--|---|
| VMD staff  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective communication matters.</li> <li>• It will help you to do your job better and save you time.</li> <li>• The aim is to make resources available to develop more joined up consistent communication between teams and over long time periods to inform and empower staff.</li> <li>• This will be achieved within current contracts and by considering how savings can be made elsewhere in the business, and not at the expense of hard targets.</li> </ul> | <p>Develop communications culture and controlled. documented channels</p> <p>Develop a DVD of overview of VMD for induction + refresher training. Chapters on each team / area could expand on the subject and be used as Line managers require for each individual (adjunct to personal training: not to replace 100%)</p> <p>VMD Intranet</p> <p>Consolidated monthly priorities update</p> <p>“Lines to Take” document</p> <p>Staff update meetings</p> <p>Grade based meetings</p> <p>Information sharing meetings</p> <p>CEO’s annual address</p> <p>VMD policy development in a more project based format with expertise drawn from across the VMD in a flexible manner</p> <p>Job shadowing / swap</p> |
| The pharmaceutical industry<br>(inc. consultants + CROs)<br>NOAH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice and guidance on new variations regulations.</li> <li>• The VMD delivers a high quality, efficient, value for money service.</li> <li>• Advice and guidance</li> </ul>  | <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>VMD links on their websites</p> <p>Direct mailing to non-NOAH companies</p> <p>MAVIS</p>   |

| Audience Groups  | Key Messages   | Engagement / delivery options   |
|--|--|---|
|  | <p>on e-submissions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice and guidance on exceptional authorisations esp. Limited markets and other initiatives to increase the availability of veterinary medicines.</li> </ul>  | <p>Group meetings / CPD events (inc guest speakers)</p> <p>Company meetings (inc questionnaires)</p> <p>Company care visits</p> <p>Specialist conferences and congresses (TOPRA)</p> <p>Simplistic start up guides (How to get an authorisation etc)</p> <p>Training provision</p> <p>NOAH meetings</p> <p>Open meetings (VMD/VPC)</p>                        |
| <p>Veterinarians in practice<br/> Veterinary nurses<br/> Veterinary students<br/> RCVS<br/> BVA + associated bodies<br/> RUMA<br/> AMTRA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality, safe and effective VMPs.</li> <li>• Benefit:risk assessment underpins the authorisation of veterinary medicines</li> <li>• Help vets deliver clinical excellence through availability of VMPs.</li> <li>• Responsible use of VMPs in particular antimicrobials and anthelmintics.</li> <li>• Importance of engagement in SARSS.</li> <li>• Controlled drugs issues.</li> <li>• Potential POM-EA development.</li> </ul> | <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>Conferences/ congresses/literature</p> <p>Increased presence in Veterinary Press (monthly "VMD corner")</p> <p>Lectures, stakeholder open meetings / CPD based events</p> <p>Personal communication over SARs by (? Letter / telephone / email)</p> <p>Surveys and consultations</p> <p>VMD section / links on each body's website</p> |
| <p>Defra (inc DARC)<br/> Animal Health<br/> Meat Hygiene Service</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VMD's post marketing surveillance helps to protect user and consumer safety, while providing</li> </ul>   | <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>VMD links on their websites</p> <p>SciSec / Bio / VPC / VRC</p>  |

| <b>Audience Groups</b>  | <b>Key Messages</b>   | <b>Engagement / delivery options</b>   |
|---|---|--|
| Food Standards Agency<br>GVS<br>VRC   | <p>excellent value for money.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VMD actively contributes to EU policy related to veterinary medicines (antimicrobial / anthelmintic resistance).</li> <li>• The VMD uses emerging technology sustainably and effectively to achieve its aims.</li> <li>• VMD uses risk based targeted surveillance.</li> </ul>         | <p>DARC, Zoonosis and others</p> <p>Staff interchange</p> <p>GVS activity</p> <p>Policy meetings/<br/>Submissions / briefings / liaison groups</p> <p>Specific project meetings (e.g. nicarbazin)</p> <p>CVO / CEO one to one sessions</p> <p>Joint conference initiatives+ literature (AMR / Defra)</p> |
| <p>EMEA<br/>Other EU Regulatory bodies for VMPs<br/>HMA<br/>CMDv<br/>CVMP (+ all WPs / WGs)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality scientific + regulatory work of the VMD.</li> <li>• Availability of VMD to work share / lead on joint tasks.</li> <li>• VMD regulatory and assessment training / interchange potential.</li> <li>• VMD is at the forefront of new initiatives, implementing change and is a leader in EU telematics.</li> </ul> | <p>Central communications point - Better use of 24 hour reports</p> <p>Involvement in COT, COM, COC on specific issues where useful</p> <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>Active involvement in specific groups meetings</p> <p>Inter-agency interchange / visits/ training programmes</p>                          |

### **“VMD Involved”**

| <b>Audience Groups</b>                                    | <b>Key Messages</b>  | <b>Engagement / delivery options</b>  |
|---|--|---|
| <p>EU / International Committees:<br/>Codex<br/>SAGAM</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD is a premier regulatory agency in the EU.</li> <li>• VMD is a centre of / has access to scientific excellence.</li> <li>• VMD is committed to contribute to EU and Global positions on key</li> </ul> | <p>Central communications point - Better use of 24 hour reports</p> <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>VMD links on and to their websites</p> <p>Active involvement in specific groups meetings</p> |

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|  | <p>issues e.g.<br/>Antimicrobial resistance<br/>and will take<br/>appropriate action.</p>  | <p>Targeted bilateral human<br/>medical / veterinary<br/>meetings</p>  |
| <p>The Commission<br/>UK Rep</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD is an active and effective regulator within the UK.</li> <li>• VMD is keen to contribute to and influence the review of the Veterinary Medicines Directive.</li> <li>• VMD is committed to contribute to EU positions on key issues.</li> </ul>   | <p>Active involvement in<br/>specific groups meetings</p> <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>Central communications<br/>point</p> <p>Build / maintain personal<br/>links</p>   |
| <p>Animal Health<br/>Scientific specialists in<br/>academia<br/>The Environment Agency<br/>CEFAS (+ devolved)<br/>National Bee Unit<br/>FERA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD's aims to achieve environmental protection, public and animal safety and welfare related to veterinary medicines in partnership with OGDs.</li> <li>• VMD is a centre of / has access to, scientific excellence.</li> <li>• VMD will listen to the needs of niche groups and take appropriate action where needed.</li> </ul> | <p>Active involvement in<br/>specific groups meetings</p> <p>GVS involvement</p> <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>Targeting specialist media<br/>publications as and when<br/>required</p> <p>Defra sponsored<br/>conferences</p> <p>VMD literature</p> <p>SciSec/Bio /VPC</p> |
| <p>The Veterinary press<br/>NFU</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD position on emerging issues is available and will be clearly and quickly communicated as needed.</li> <li>• The VMD checks at authorisation and monitors post authorisation that veterinary medicinal products used according to the labelling instructions are safe and effective.</li> </ul>                                | <p>Pro-active article<br/>placement in relevant<br/>publications (Vet Rec,)</p> <p>Availability for comment<br/>with prepared lines on<br/>emerging issues</p> <p>Build links to Defra's Press<br/>Office</p> <p>VMD Internet</p>                                    |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD advice and positions are consistent and accurate.</li> </ul> |  |
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**“VMD Aware”**

| <b>Audience Groups</b>   | <b>Key Messages</b>  | <b>Engagement / delivery options</b>  |
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| <p>Manufacturers<br/>Wholesalers<br/>Distributors (inc AHDA)<br/>RPSGB</p>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VMD is keen to promote the availability of veterinary medicines in the UK.</li> <li>• The VMD is committed to tackling the issue of illegal veterinary medicines at supply, but we need the help of the industry to achieve this.</li> <li>• The VMD wishes to ensure best practice in the supply and distribution of veterinary medicines in the UK.</li> <li>• The VMD is keen to work with responsible bodies (e.g. AMTRA) to promote training of SQPs.</li> </ul> | <p>Use of multipliers<br/>(Insurance companies, vets, nurses, OGDs)</p> <p>Personal liaison with LAB</p> <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>Inspections</p>   |
| <p>Food industry<br/>Health Protection Agency<br/>Farmers<br/>Slaughter houses<br/>Egg marketing board</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using Authorised medicines correctly and keeping good records will allow you to avoid residues in food.</li> <li>• Reporting adverse events to VMPs will help improve the safety and efficacy of veterinary medicines.</li> <li>• Sharing information up and down the food chain helps ensure consumer confidence.</li> </ul>   | <p>Pro-active article placement in relevant publications Farmers Weekly etc)</p> <p>Use of multipliers (producers, insurance companies, vets, nurses, OGDs)</p> <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>Better use of post marketing surveillance data – consider review of MAVIS</p> <p>Distribution of relevant leaflets to markets + slaughterhouses</p> <p>Speakers to local authorities</p> |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public and consumer</li> </ul>  | <p>Considered reactive</p>  |

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| <p>Active lobby /consumer groups<br/>Universities and Colleges of animal care<br/>Animal keeping associations e.g. KC</p> | <p>safety are at the forefront of VMD's actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VMD is committed to the three Rs.</li> <li>• Animal welfare is a major focus for the VMD.</li> <li>• The VMD is an independent organisation making scientific evidence based decisions.</li> <li>• The VMD wishes to promote the availability of veterinary medicines.</li> </ul>                          | <p>placement in relevant publications (Vet Rec / Vet Times)</p> <p>Availability for comment with carefully prepared lines on emerging issues</p> <p>Build links to Defra's Press Office</p> <p>Provision of speakers to / attendance of conferences / congresses</p> <p>VMD Internet (three Rs area)</p> |
| <p>Health and Safety Executive (biocides)<br/>DARD<br/>VLA<br/>ETPGAH</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VMD's post marketing surveillance helps to protect user and consumer safety, while providing excellent value for money.</li> <li>• The VMD actively contributes to EU policy related to veterinary medicines (antimicrobial / anthelmintic resistance).</li> <li>• The VMD uses emerging technology sustainably and effectively to achieve its aims.</li> </ul> | <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>VMD links on their websites</p> <p>DARC, Zoonosis and others</p> <p>Staff interchange</p> <p>Policy meetings/ Submissions / briefings / liaison groups</p> <p>Specific project meetings (e.g. nicarbazin)</p> <p>Joint conference initiatives + literature (AMR / Defra)</p>      |

**“VMD Dormant”**

| <b>Audience Groups</b>                          | <b>Key Messages</b>  | <b>Engagement / delivery options</b>   |
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| <p>The Public Department of Health<br/>MHRA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD independently assures public and animal safety and welfare related to veterinary medicines use in the UK.</li> <li>• All veterinary medicines have inherent risks involved in their use,</li> </ul> | <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>Use of multipliers (Insurance companies, vets, nurses, OGDs)</p> <p>Direct communications, email / phone/ letter on specific issues</p> |

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|                            | <p>just like human medicines. Follow the label and your vets advice to use them safely and effectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VMD contributes to government policy on issues of public health concern e.g. AMR and advocates responsible use of veterinary medicines.</li> <li>• The VMD is open and approachable and effective in answering queries and needs the public to tell us about SARs.</li> </ul>                              | <p>Defra working groups (DARC / MRSA/ESBL etc)</p> <p>Open meetings</p>   |
| Animal insurance companies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD sanctions the use of authorised veterinary medicines used responsibly in the UK and in accordance with the cascade.</li> </ul>   | <p>VMD Internet</p> <p>Veterinary conferences and congresses</p>  |
| Veterinary CPD providers   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The VMD has a body of scientific expertise relevant to vets and nurses available for use.</li> </ul>   | <p>Direct approach</p> <p>Deliver CPD independently</p>   |
| The Home Office            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD's aims to achieve public and animal safety and welfare related to veterinary medicines use in the UK.</li> <li>• The VMD will act in concert with the HO to promote animal welfare in particular in the use of the ATC and promotes the three Rs.</li> <li>• The VMD is keen to work to improve the veterinary regulations pertaining to controlled drugs by embedding and implementing the agreed changes.</li> </ul> | <p>Direct communications, email / phone/ letter on specific issues</p> <p>VMD Internet (three Rs)</p> <p>More project based development of policy and regulations</p> |
| The Farming press          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD position on emerging issues is available and will be clearly and quickly communicated as</li> </ul>  | <p>Pro-active article placement in relevant publications (Vet Rec/ Vet Times/ Farmers Weekly)</p>   |

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|  | <p>needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VMD advice and positions are consistent and accurate.</li> <li>• The VMD checks at authorisation and monitors post authorisation that veterinary medicinal products used according to the labelling instructions are safe and effective.</li> <li>• Benefit:risk assessment underpins the authorisation of veterinary medicines</li> <li>• Farmers can report SARs</li> </ul> | <p>Availability for comment with prepared lines on emerging issues</p> <p>Build links to Defra's Press Office</p> |
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**Annex 3 - VMD “SWOT analysis”: Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats**

| <b>Strengths</b>  | <b>Opportunities</b>   |
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| <p>The VMD is a recognised expert body in its field in the UK</p> <p>The VMD staff are committed and engaged in delivering a high quality service</p> <p>The Directors provide effective leadership for change where it is needed</p> <p>Good links with the pharmaceutical industry</p> <p>Strong scientific and regulatory reputation in Europe</p> <p>Independent IT team enables some latitude from Defra requirements and a more focused service</p> <p>Good service providers already in place for publicity work</p> <p>Good links with universities and academia</p> <p>Pockets of excellence in communication to be drawn upon</p> | <p>Anderson review: opportunity to review all guidance and ensure that it is clear, appropriate and user friendly</p> <p>Increased demand for VMD training of industry due to regulations changes</p> <p>Increased / ongoing demand for VMD training of vets and nurses</p> <p>Publicity work already initiated- can be built upon</p> <p>Annual updates are already used (Regs, SARRS etc) This could be expanded upon</p> <p>Work is already under way to redevelop the Internet site</p> <p>Possibility of new sources of revenue</p> <p>Review of Directive 2001/82/EC as amended by 2004/28/EC expected in the future</p> <p>Ability to raise profile with OGDs by positive interaction</p> |
| <b>Weaknesses</b>   | <b>Threats</b>   |
| <p>VMD needs to further develop the openness of internal communication</p> <p>Some VMD areas are weak in aspects of communication to all stakeholders</p> <p>Silo mentality still pervades some sectors of VMD</p> <p>Communications often an after thought, not an integral step</p> <p>Communication chain is not firmly established / utilised “Top to bottom”</p> <p>Tendency for Authorisations and Operations to function independently of one another on a daily basis</p> <p>There is no coordination of communications to ensure a consistent approach over impinging / overlapping issues or over time and staff changes</p>      | <p>Reduced funding across Defra</p> <p>Push to centralise IT and other core services</p> <p>Limited staff resource to commit to effective communications</p> <p>Adverse reporting of ongoing legal issues could damage the VMD’s reputation – damage limitation needed (could be an opportunity too!)</p> <p>Need to engage all staff in communicating more effectively; weakest link principle</p> <p>Damage to VMD from incorrect information / decisions being made due to lack of cross cutting knowledge base</p> <p>Restriction of activities - close links with core Defra</p>  |