

# Survey of Oregon Licensed Veterinarians Final Report

November & December  
2004

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Survey tools were mailed to veterinary licensees along with 2005 renewal forms. Prepaid envelopes, addressed directly to Performa Consulting, were included for return of the survey.

## Purpose

The purpose of the survey was to:

- evaluate effectiveness and responsiveness of the Board in responding to its licensees' requests for information and assistance;
- evaluate accomplishments in regard to Performance Measures;
- receive and evaluate suggestions from licensees to improve effectiveness;
- evaluate the Board's role in enforcing veterinary enforcement laws;
- determine interest level in limited licensure specialties.

This survey of Licensed Doctors of Veterinary Medicine, in Oregon, was conducted during the months of November and December, 2004.

## The Instrument

The survey instrument was a one page questionnaire consisting of five sections.

Section One of the Survey contained seven questions. Responders were asked to circle the number that best described their response to a statement about the performance of the Board.

The choices were:

- 1 – Definitely Agree;**
- 2 – Agree;**
- 3 – Neutral;**
- 4 – Do Not Agree; and**
- 5 – Strongly Disagree.**

Section Two contained six (6) questions; again, focusing on the performance of the Board. Answers were in a “YES/NO” format.

Section Two also included the specific question:

**“Have you ever had to respond to OVMEB because of a complaint for a service you provided?”**

Section Three asked if the Board should consider moving towards Limited Licensure in the following areas:

**Small Animals**

**Large Animals**

**Exotic Animals**

**Small Animal Dentistry  
Large Animal Dentistry or  
Alternative or Complimentary Methods**

Respondents could choose to check “YES” or “NO.”

Section Four asked respondents:

**In general how would you rate the overall services of OVMEB?**

Answers were circled on a scale of 1 (highest) to 5 (lowest).

Section Five consisted of the following questions:

**What suggestions do you have to improve the services of OVMEB?**

**Are there additional services you would suggest OVMEB provide? Please use the back of this survey to respond.**

You will find the comments in response to these two questions in the COMMENTS section of this report.

**Methodology**

The surveys were included in the renewal applications mailed to the 1,700 licensed veterinarians in this state. A stamped, addressed envelope for returning the survey was also included. Survey envelopes were mailed to the consultant to be tabulated and analyzed. This provided the respondents with some assurance of confidentiality. Licensed veterinarians were advised to expect the survey along with their renewal forms.

The renewal forms, along with the survey, were mailed from the Board office the first week in November, 2004. For the purposes of this survey, returns were accepted up to December 15, 2005. Seven hundred and eighty-nine (789) or 46% of the surveys mailed were returned in that time period.

Given the professional investment of Oregon’s veterinarian population, a return greater than the average 2% was predicted. The return of 46% of the surveys, however, far exceeded expectations. A random sampling of 33%, or 1/3 of the 789 returns were analyzed for this report. All comments, on all returns, were tabulated and summarized. Comments will be found in the COMMENTS section of this report.

## Analysis of Results

In general, the survey results show a clear understanding and appreciation for the work of the Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board. A large majority of survey respondents believe the Board is doing a good job, is providing information in a timely and appropriate manner, and provides the services they expect from the Board. In addition, the Board handles complaints and disciplinary decisions in an appropriate manner.

- 70% believe the Board responds to requests in a timely manner.
- 95% believe the process for license renewal is easy to understand and 88% believe the time to issue renewals is appropriate.
- 61% believe the average time to issue a new license is reasonable
- 86% agree that complaints sent to the Board are handled in a timely manner and that the Board works to ensure customers are provided with appropriate veterinary care.
- 87% agree that the Board provides information for compliance with the Veterinary Practice Act.

Board Responds in a Timely and Appropriate Manner		
Yes	1,233	92%
No	66	5%
No Response	41	3%

When asked to respond to similar questions in a yes or no format, the results were equally positive. In response to the questions regarding timely responses for license renewal

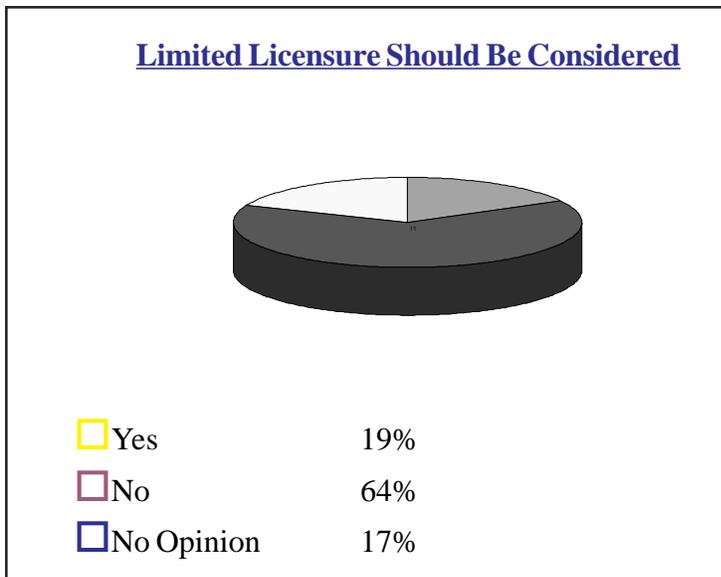
- 95% checked YES.
- 93% responded YES when asked if the Board provided useful information in a timely manner
- 81% believe the Board works to ensure clients are provided with appropriate veterinary care.

The Board responds to complaints from the public in accordance with their mission to maintain a high quality level of veterinary services throughout Oregon. Several questions focused on the timely and appropriate manner in which the Board responds to, investigates and settles complaints.

- 24% of the respondents say they have responded to the Board concerning a complaint about their services

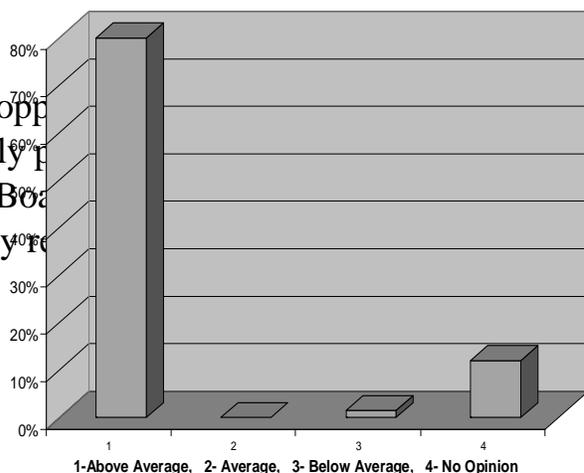
- 95% checked YES to indicate that the Board responds to complaints in a reasonable and timely manner
- 65% Agree or Strongly Agree that the process is clear and understandable

The question of providing limited licensure in each of the specialty areas listed was rejected by the majority of respondents. In each area the results were NO by a solid percent of respondents.



Several respondents commented that the Board should not differentiate specialties until or unless the veterinary schools began separate educational programs for each specialty. There were several comments concerning the need to monitor the practice of animal care entities by nonprofessionals.

Through out the survey respondents we given the opportunity to provide feedback on the information provided by the Board. Responses were consistently positive. Overall, more than 75% of Oregon's veterinarians find the Board's information, support and investigative services they receive to be above average.



## Survey Comments

### General Statements:

- You do a good job! Nice publications
- They do a great job.
- After dealing with the CA Vet Bd. I am even more impressed with Oregon's.
- The board has always been very responsive to me.
- Thanks for the work you do and thanks for injecting your occasional humorous comments. It certainly reminds me there are real people on the board.
- To date I am pleased with services provided.
- Unless you've had any complaints against you it is hard to know how well the board works. I guess that's good!
- Luckily I don't have very much contact with the board since I do not have complaints filed against me.
- Once I had a complaint filed against me and the board was professional, respectful and just. I felt very supported!
- Great service!
- You need more strict guidelines and enforcement.
- My experiences with the OVMEB have been terrific—I'm always handled with courtesy and professionalism, my requests are dealt with in an efficient and timely manner and my questions are either answered immediately by the well-informed staff or I am referred to the appropriate agency.
- I am still displeased with the way the board handled the rabies vaccination/administration changes this past year.
- The board was extremely helpful when I renewed my license, straight forward, efficient and pleasant to deal with.
- Office seems understaffed. Staff is cordial and helpful once they can be reached.
- Follow-up has always been excellent and prompt.
- The board seems to be only self-serving.
- When I moved to OR I had to call the board several times to get them to send me a Newsletter with the current jobs and materials for state licensure.
- Excellent!
- The board serves us well!
- No suggestions. You do a great job.
- The times that I have dealt with the board they have been fair and straight forward.
- You do a good job that no one else wants to do.
- Excellent work!

### Ideas and requests:

- I wish we could have more "teeth" to deal with Equine Lay Dentists, Boarding facilities w/o veterinarians vaccinating animals and Lay Chiropractors and Massage Therapists working on animals.
- How about sending OR Vets a copy of the Practice Act that can be updated and includes an index that is user friendly so we can easily find answers to questions? (Example: client requests for radiographs)
- Office needs to be more available to vets.
- Eliminate the probational license period in Oregon.
- Maybe provide us with an anonymous list of the complaints you get from clients so we can see where we, as a profession, can improve our client service and communication.
- Need to be pro-active in facility and records inspections. Too many practices with substandard facilities and equipment and records.
- Consider a FAQ section on your web page. It can save some redundant phone calls.
- I do not see a link in the OVMA web page to the OVMEB web page—something to consider.

- Find a way that your action or inaction is not controlled by the Board bank account; the e-board may be an option.
- More timely mailings for renewals and issues.
- Move towards reciprocal licensure.
- How about moving towards electronic license renewal via the web page?
- The board has now defined what a “timely manner” is considered to be in regards to copying and sending records. That is a good step.
- Have a separate/partial licensure for low cost spay/neuter clinics.
- Information on how complaints are handled and outcomes of particular complaints (with out names of course) so that we can understand the process and the thinking. Like PLIT sends us occasionally...descriptions of cases and resolution.
- More organization for new licensee applications.
- Overall service is good.
- I would rate them as pretty good.

#### About the Practice Act:

- I have some concerns regarding provisional licensure for disciplinary punishment for things like drug abuse. I am also concerned about vets still being able to practice if they are accused of animal abuse.
- Wish the board could define the standard of care for discharge instructions for surgical, medical, dental and other therapies/treatments.
- Please act more quickly and decisively against the few rotten apples in our field. Cover-ups make the whole profession look shady. Enforce the Practice Act when egregious misdeeds are clearly brought to your attention.
- Many things in Practice Act need further definition and clarification.
- Enforce the Practice Act against non-veterinarians providing chiropractic services.
- Just because the OVMEB office is not flooded with complaints from the public doesn't mean unlicensed individuals are not doing harm to animals, owners or the professions. Why have a Practice Act if you can't enforce it?
- It is pathetic that OVMEB cannot protect/enforce the Practice Act by unlicensed individuals specifically equine dentistry.
- It would be great if we could receive a copy of each current year's veterinary practice act in the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of every year...all new changes high lighted.
- I really appreciate your memorandums indicating interpretations of the “act.”
- Eliminate outside work by lay folks.
- I don't understand why the board doesn't remove licenses of veterinarians with chronic problems/frequent serious complaints. These people reflect badly on all veterinarians and they create problems for many of us. I don't think the board is doing its job.
- I don't think the board is strict enough with its definition of standard of veterinary care, especially regarding alternative therapies and pain management.
- Guidance on interpreting the Practice Act, what constitutes “standard of care”

#### In regards to moving toward Limited Licensure:

- One license is enough.
- I'd love to see Vet Techs have licenses in special areas.
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- Only if the schools begin to teach this way. Definitely a yes for techs.
- I am unsure of what you mean by limited licensure.
- Limited licensure for Vets will open a HUGE can of worms.
- The general public will not get it.

- Limited licensure of already practicing veterinarians is fine with periodic proof of competency and staying up to date.
- Suggest competency exam for limited licenses.
- What does limited licensure mean exactly?
- Limited licensure for Vets only, no Techs or lay workers.

#### About the Newsletter:

- Quarterly informative newsletter. Thank you. The last one was very good and funny.
- The tone of the 2004 newsletter from the board was sarcastic and negative which I considered highly unprofessional and immature.
- Recent newsletter that was sent was useful – this was the 1<sup>st</sup> one I received in 15 months—publishing this type of info more often would be helpful.
- Move to monthly newsletters for updates.
- Communication directed to large animal veterinarians could be increased.
- Keep up the communication. 2-3 newsletters a year would be nice.
- Bi-annual newsletter is a good idea.
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#### About Fees:

- There should be a graduated scale for payment of partial year licenses.
- How about reduced fees for inactive licenses?
- Reduce licensing fee for practicing veterinarians with 50 years of continuous licensing.
- Please convey my thanks to OVMEB for not raising licensure fees. I appreciate agencies like OVMEB who realize that Veterinarians are not made out of money.

#### About CE:

- Possibly consider starting a service to inform veterinarians of where they can find approved CE in Oregon.
- More local CE Lectures.
- Requirements for qualifying CE should be sent with each license renewal.
- Make the certification of CE more broad. i.e. not limit it to only large well known institutions like, WSU etc.

**Oregon Veterinary Medical Examining Board  
Licensee Survey**

Please take a few minutes to complete our survey and return it in the confidential envelope provided. Thank you.

Please circle the number that best describes your experiences with OVMEB:

**1=Definitely agree    2= Agree    3=Neutral/Not sure,    4=Do not agree,    5=Strongly Disagree**

**The responses to requests were done in a timely manner:** 1    2    3    4    5

**The process for license renewal is easy to understand.** 1    2    3    4    5

**The average time to issue a new license from activation request to completion is reasonable.** 1    2    3    4    5

**The time it takes to renew a license from application to completion is reasonable.** 1    2    3    4    5

**OVMEB provides information and guidance for compliance with the Veterinary Practice act.** 1    2    3    4    5

**Complaints are handled in a timely manner.** 1    2    3    4    5

**The Board makes sound disciplinary decisions using appropriate remedial or disciplinary action.** 1    2    3    4    5

**I renewed my professional license in 2003**  YES     NO

**The renewal process was completed in a timely manner.**  YES     NO

**Information provided by OVMEB is timely and useful.**  YES     NO

**OVMEB works to ensure customers are provided with appropriate veterinary care.**  YES     NO

**The process for dealing with customer complaints is clear and understandable.**  YES     NO

**Have you ever had to respond to OVMEB because of a complaint for a service you provided?**  YES     NO

**The Board should consider moving towards Limited**

**Licensure in:**  YES     NO

Large Animals  YES     NO

Small Animals  YES     NO

Exotic Animals  YES     NO

Small Animal Dentistry  YES     NO

Large Animal Dentistry  YES     NO

Alternative or Complimentary Methods  YES     NO

1=Excellent    2= Very Good    3=Average    4=Below Average    5=Poor

**In general how would you rate the overall services of OVMEB?** 1    2    3    4    5

**What suggestions do you have to improve the services of OVMEB? Are there additional services you would suggest OVMEB provide? Please use the back of this survey to respond.**

