

AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

FOR THE FISCAL YEARS 2013 – 2017

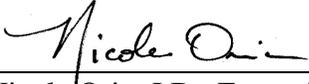
BY

TEXAS BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS



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Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners

STRATEGIC PLAN, FISCAL YEARS 2013-2017

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I. Statewide Vision, Mission, and Philosophy

The Vision of Texas State Government

We must continue to adhere to the priorities that have made Texas a national economic leader:

Ensuring the economic competitiveness of our state by adhering to the principles of fiscal discipline, setting clear budget priorities, living within our means, and limiting the growth of government;

Investing in critical water, energy, and transportation infrastructure needs to meet the demands of our rapidly growing state;

Ensuring excellence and accountability in public schools and institutions of higher education as we invest in the future of this state and ensure Texans are prepared to compete in the global marketplace;

*Defending Texans by safeguarding our neighborhoods and protecting our international border;
and*

Increasing transparency and efficiency at all levels of government to guard against waste, fraud, and abuse, ensuring that Texas taxpayers keep more of their hard-earned money to keep our economy and our families strong.

— Governor Rick Perry

The Mission of Texas State Government

Texas state government must be limited, efficient, and completely accountable. It should foster opportunity and economic prosperity, focus on critical priorities and support the creation of strong family environments for our children. The stewards of the public trust must be men and women who administer state government in a fair, just, and responsible manner. To honor the public trust, state officials must seek new and innovative ways to meet state government priorities in a fiscally responsible manner.

Aim high . . . we are not here to achieve inconsequential things!

The Philosophy of Texas State Government

The task before all state public servants is to govern in a manner worthy of this great state. We are a great enterprise, and as an enterprise, we will promote the following core principles.

- First and foremost, Texas matters most. This is the overarching, guiding principle by which we will make decisions. Our state, and its future, is more important than party, politics, or individual recognition.
- Government should be limited in size and mission, but it must be highly effective in performing the tasks it undertakes.
- Decisions affecting individual Texans, in most instances, are best made by those individuals, their families, and the local governments closest to their communities.
- Competition is the greatest incentive for achievement and excellence. It inspires ingenuity and requires individuals to set their sights high. Just as competition inspires excellence, a sense of personal responsibility drives individual citizens to do more than their future and the future of those they love.
- Public administration must be open and honest, pursuing the high road rather than the expedient course. We must be accountable to taxpayers for our actions.
- State government has a responsibility to safeguard taxpayer dollars by eliminating waste and abuse and providing efficient and honest government.
- Finally, state government should be humble, recognizing that all its power and authority is granted to it by the people of Texas, and those who make decisions wielding the power of the state should exercise their authority cautiously and fairly.

II. Relevant Statewide Goals and Benchmarks

Priority Goal

To ensure Texans are effectively and efficiently served by high quality professionals and businesses by:

- Implementing clear standards;
- Ensuring compliance;
- Establishing market based solutions; and
- Reducing the regulatory burden on people and business.

Benchmarks

- Percent of veterinary licensee population with no documented violations.
- Percent of new veterinary licensees as compared to the existing population.
- Percent of documented complaints to the agency resolved within six months.
- Percent of individuals given a test for veterinary licensure who received a passing score.
- Percent of new and renewed veterinary licenses issued via the internet.
- Percent increase in utilization of the State Business Portal.

TEXAS BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS

III. Mission

The mission of the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is to establish and enforce policies to ensure the best possible quality of veterinary and equine dental provider services for the people of Texas.

IV. Philosophy

The Board and its staff will act in accordance with the highest standards of ethics, accountability, efficiency and openness. We affirm that protection from less than quality veterinary and equine dental provider services is a public and private trust. We approach our activities with a deep sense of purpose and responsibility. The public and regulated community alike can be assured of a balanced and sensible approach to regulation.

Introduction:

Veterinary Medicine, The Industry

With roots dating back as early as 1766 BC, veterinary medicine is an ever growing, ever changing field. Veterinarians of old utilized such things as acupuncture, olive oil, and wine to treat animal ailments. With advances in science and medicine, today's veterinarian has new tools to work with and faces challenges not seen by his or her predecessors. They are asked to play an increasing role in the prevention and/or treatment of zoonotic diseases and acts of bio-terrorism and agri-terrorism. In addition, how animals are thought of is rapidly changing. Animals, who were once thought of as mere property, today are seen as companions, members of the family. Society is placing higher values on animals, and, as a result, is placing higher social values on veterinary medicine and increased economic value on veterinary services. These changes make regulation of the field more important than ever before.

Because veterinary medicine is a large industry and greatly affects the public's welfare, regulation is imperative. The industry of veterinary medicine includes such areas as private practice, non-traditional veterinary services (zoos, wildlife, fisheries, and animal shelters), academia, as well as employment within state, local and federal government entities. Veterinary medicine makes many contributions to the public sector through services rendered, jobs, taxes paid, and goods purchased. The Texas Veterinary Medical Association (TVMA) issued a report in December 2004 entitled "The Economic Impact of Veterinary Medicine on the State of Texas" which shows the veterinary community's economic contributions to the State of Texas.

Category	Total Output Effects	Total Value Added Effects	Labor Income Impact	Job Impact	Indirect Business Tax Effect
Veterinary Salaries and Ancillary Staff	\$1,132,027,449	\$428,663,484	\$369,122,803	12,871.1	\$25,068,809
Non-Traditional Veterinary Medicine	\$100,678,628	\$40,470,239	\$30,576,051	1,551	\$2,477,385
Academia	\$49,276,580	\$21,425,828	\$17,568,223	717.3	
State and Local Government	\$87,601,564	\$38,885,871	\$33,907,102	4,961.0	\$1,858,085
Federal Government	\$65,751,359	\$49,158,549	\$39,606,346	1,057.4	\$1,441,033

An additional factor of the veterinary medicine industry lies in drugs, medical supplies, and other goods sold.

Category	Drugs, Supplies, Goods Sold
Private Practice	\$703,363,965
Non-Traditional	\$4,874,118
Academia	\$13,925,376
Government	\$31,077,620

Total Output Effects = Texas sales revenue

Total Value Added Effects = state-wide economic impact from employment of all resources of production (land, labor, capital, management)

Labor Income Impact = Total household income from all sources (wages, salaries, profits, rent) resulting from a \$1 change in sales-to-final demand within the veterinary sector

Indirect Business Tax = Sales tax, franchise tax, property tax paid to Texas

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medicine

Since its inception in 1911, the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (TBVME) has grown and evolved to fit the changing needs of the public as well as the veterinary community. In order to continue to meet these needs, the Board continues to seek innovative, cost effective ways to regulate the field and provide the best possible product and superior customer service to the public and veterinarians.

In the following pages, we will give an external/internal assessment of the Board. As a part of that process, we will also detail the agency's future plans and current needs. The Board can fund these plans and meet its needs through a minor increase in fees collected from our licensees. It is our belief that both the public and our licensee base would benefit from the added or enhanced services.

V. External/Internal Assessment

A. Overview of Agency Scope and Functions

a. Statutory Basis

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (the Board) was created in 1911 and is governed by the Veterinary Licensing Act, Chapter 801, Occupations Code. Agency practice, procedure and rulemaking is governed by Government Code, Chapter 2001, the Administrative Procedure Act.

b. Historical Perspective

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (the Board) was created in 1911. Until 1956, the Board's activities were operated by Board members who volunteered their time. That year the Board was funded to operate an office with paid staff. Since 1911, the Board has issued 12,571 licenses. As of May 2012, 7,756 veterinarians hold a Texas license.

c. Affected Populations

In a sense, all Texans are affected by the practice of veterinary medicine. Veterinarians have a direct impact on food animal production, one of the major economic segments of the Texas economy. They assist producers in disease prevention, nutrition programs, and general herd/flock management. Veterinarians also have a key role in protecting the public from zoonotic diseases, those transferable from animals to humans. More specifically, all animal owners are affected, whether they own food production animals (cattle, swine, chickens, etc.) or companion animals. Virtually all will need veterinary services at some point.

d. Main Functions

The Board's principal purpose is to ensure that the citizens of Texas have the services of veterinarians and equine dental providers who have demonstrated the ability to meet or exceed established minimum qualifications to enter practice in this state and to hold those veterinarians accountable to abide by the laws of the state and the rules of the Board. The agency's responsibilities include:

Licensing - The Licensing and Examination division is charged with ensuring that only those persons who have demonstrated the ability to meet or exceed the minimum qualifications required to be a licensed veterinarian in the state of Texas, enter the practice and provide veterinary services to Texas' citizens.

In order to receive a license to practice in this state, a person must demonstrate that they are of age, have obtained a passing score on the North American Veterinary Licensing Examination (NAVLE), or its predecessors (the National Board Exam and the Clinical Competency Test), and the State Board Exam (SBE) and have graduated from a school or college of veterinary medicine that is approved by the Board and accredited by the Council on Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association or, if not approved and accredited, hold a certificate from the Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) or the Educational Commission for Foreign Veterinary Graduates (ECFVG). The Licensing and Examination section is responsible for reviewing and verifying that these requirements are met, assisting prospective licensees with the application process to take the NAVLE, and administering exams necessary for the various types of veterinary licenses.

The Licensing and Examination division is also responsible for the annual renewal of veterinary licenses and beginning on January 1, 2013, Equine Dental Practitioners will have to renew their license as well. Staff of this division review each application for renewal or online renewal reports to ensure that continuing education requirements are met, licensees are in compliance with applicable laws, and that fees are submitted prior to issuing a renewal certificate.

As of September 1, 2011, the agency has statutory authority to license individuals who perform dentistry on equines, Equine Dental Providers (EDP). The Licensing Division is responsible to ensure that required documentation is submitted by the EDP applicant to ensure that required documentation is submitted by the EDP applicant, and, if the application is complete, an EDP license is issued. As of May 10, 2012 six (6) persons have been issued an EDP license, and three (3) are pending. The current statute provides for the grandfathering of eligible applicants and thereby allowing applicants to gain an EDP license without passing a licensing examination. After September 1, 2012, an applicant must take and pass a licensing examination in order to earn an EDP license. It is anticipated that by August 31, 2012, the Licensing Division will have 20-30 persons holding an EDP license.

Enforcement - The enforcement program is designed to protect consumers of veterinary services and ensure veterinarians and equine dental providers comply with the Veterinary Licensing Act and the Rules of Professional Conduct through the investigation of complaints and compliance inspections, as well as the investigation of the unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine.

Approximately one half of the agency's staff resources are devoted to the investigation and resolution of complaints from the public about the professional conduct of veterinarians. The Board has a range of disciplinary authority. Under certain circumstances, it can refuse to examine applicants, suspend, probate suspension, and revoke licenses; issue administrative and civil penalties; and, hold settlement conferences concerning alleged violations of the Veterinary Licensing Act and Board Rules. Timely, competently performed complaint investigations are perhaps the most direct consumer services the Board staff performs. Both the complainant and the responding veterinarian are relieved when a complaint is resolved, often regardless of the outcome. This is particularly true if both believe that justice was served. The goal for the average number of days to resolve complaints is 180 days. We continue to believe that this is a worthy goal to achieve.

Another critical dimension to the regulatory role is conducting compliance inspections. The Board's compliance inspection program is a valuable tool not only to ensure standards are met, but also to educate licensees and reduce violations and subsequent complaints. However, due to past budgetary constraints, these visits were replaced by a simple, but much less effective inspection of veterinarians by use of the US Postal System. The agency initiated this "by-mail" compliance inspection program in FY2005. In FY 2008, with funding available, the Board reestablished the on-site Compliance Inspection Program. Again, however, due to budgetary constraints in FY 2010, the Board was forced to return to "by mail" inspections. The Board conducted 808 inspections by mail in FY 2010. Late in FY 2011 funding became available to conduct on-site inspections and 302 were completed. Three hundred had previously been conducted by mail.

Peer Assistance - The peer assistance program, authorized by Chapter 467 of the Health and Safety Code, assists veterinarians and veterinary students who are impaired by chemical dependency or mental illness. Participation may be voluntary or required by a Board order. The program is administered through the Professional Recovery Network (PRN), and is approved by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse (TCADA). In 1998, the Board first competitively bid the contract to operate the program. As a result, it entered into a formal contract with the association and continued the previous relationship. During the 80th Legislative session the Board requested to change the way the program is funded. The Board recommended that the program be funded 100% by a surcharge (\$5) on each license renewal. The 80th Legislature approved this funding change. The Board receives the authority under the Health and Safety Code, Chapter 467.004, to add a surcharge of not more than (\$10) to each license renewal to fund an approved peer assistance program.

e. Who We Are In The Public's Perspective

The TBVME is the primary agency responsible for ensuring the public's welfare with regards to veterinary medicine and persons who are Equine Dental Providers. Texans who are animal owners are the potential public who will come in contact with the Board. Veterinarians and equine dental providers are required to post information about the Board and contact information in their offices. This ensures that the licensees' clientele are aware of the Board and their right to file a complaint. The complaint form is available on the agency's website along with brochures that outline the complaint process.

B. Organizational Aspects

a. Size and Composition of Workforce

The Board has 16 positions; five positions are classified as official/administrator, six as professional, and five as administrative support. The workforce is currently 31% male and 69% female.

b. Organizational Structure and Process

The agency is governed by a Board of directors that consists of nine members who are appointed by the Governor of Texas. The make-up of the Board is six veterinarians and three public members, all of whom serve a term of six years, with staggered appointments being made every two years. The Board meets at least three times a year, March, July, and November, with special meetings called as needed. Each fall meeting, the Board elects a Vice-President and Secretary and appoints members to three standing committees, the Executive Disciplinary Committee, Rules Committee and the Enforcement Committee. Special committees are created as needed. The Governor appoints the Board President.

The functions of the Board are to:

- Guide the short term and long term direction of the agency and its policies;
- Hire the Executive Director and supervise the Executive Director's administration of the agency;
- Formulate the policy objectives of the agency;
- Approve the agency's operating budget and requests for legislative appropriations;
- Set fees to cover the cost of administering the Veterinary Licensing Act;
- Adopt rules as necessary to implement the statute; and
- Impose disciplinary actions against those veterinarians and lay persons who violate the Veterinary Licensing Act and rules promulgated by the Board.

TBVME has four divisions organized along functional lines: Executive, Enforcement, Licensing and Examination, and Fiscal Operations.

Executive – The Executive division consists of the Executive Director, General Counsel, Staff Attorney, Executive Assistant/Director of Human Resources, Legal Secretary, and Receptionist. This division is responsible for such functions as:

- Administration of the agency’s programs, including licensing and examination and enforcement;
- Monitoring the agency’s budget;
- Human Resources;
- Records Management;
- Risk Management;
- Disaster Recovery;
- Customer Service;
- Representing the agency before the Legislature, and with other private and governmental entities.
- Representing the Board and agency in all legal matters, including the formulation of disciplinary actions and administrative rules;
- Open Records; and
- Administering informal settlement conferences.

Enforcement – The Enforcement division consists of the Director of Enforcement, 4 Investigators and an Administrative Assistant. The key functions of the division are:

- Investigating and resolving complaints filed by the public and veterinarians;
- Conducting compliance inspections and special investigations; and
- Educating both veterinarians and the public with regard to state law and Board rules that govern the practice of veterinary medicine.

Licensing and Examination – The Licensing and Examination division consists of a Director and an Administrative Assistant. Some of this division’s key functions include the administration of the agency’s licensing and examination program through the:

- Review and processing of applications for licensure for veterinarians and equine dental providers;
- Administration of the State Board Examination and starting in FY 2013 the EDP examination;
- Providing notice of and processing of license renewals;
- Overseeing the efficient and effective operation of the office computer systems and equipment, including the agency’s website and licensing database;
- Reviewing and obtaining approval of CE programs;
- Making recommendations to improve the licensing and examination programs; and
- Analyzing and developing action plans to improve or initiate programs.

Fiscal – The Fiscal division consists of the Chief Fiscal Officer and an Administrative Assistant. Key functions of this division include:

- Preparing and proposing agency budgets;
- Accounting;
- Budgeting;
- Handling cash receipts and payment processing;
- Purchasing and contract administration;
- Managing the Historically Underutilized Business program; and
- Managing fixed assets.

c. Geographical Location of Agency

The Board office is located in the William P. Hobby State Office Building located at 333 Guadalupe, Suite 3-810 in Austin, Texas.

d. Service Population

The population served by the Board is statewide. Primary contacts between the agency and the public relate to the licensing status of a veterinarian or to file or follow up on a complaint. The Board offers a toll-free complaint line, provided through the Health Professions Council, to ensure easy public access to the complaint process. A complaint form is also found on the web site and can be downloaded by the consumer. General information regarding the complaint process is also given on the web site. This is also the case for various license application forms and information pertaining to licensing. Licensees also frequently contact the Board to seek clarification about Board rules and those of other regulatory bodies that affect their profession.

e. Human Resource Strengths and Weaknesses

The agency is fortunate to have staff that offers many strengths, including a high level of skill, tenure, dedication to the agency's mission and the ability to manage an ever-changing world. Because the agency is small, only 16 FTE staff members, the agency has had to ensure that all new hires have already well developed skills. This has allowed the agency to replace terminated staff with individuals who are highly skilled and who have a high capacity for learning, thus allowing them to easily fill voids and bring new ideas for improving processes, while keeping costs to a minimum. Tenured and new staff alike have shown an amazing ability to adapt to changes and difficult situations brought on by an increased workload and budget cuts.

Weaknesses can be noted in the agency's ability to provide employee incentives. With only a few exceptions, most of the staff that have left the agency in the last five years have done so to gain better pay and more opportunities for advancement. As with most agencies, the Board's lack of available funding for employee incentives and training opportunities has had a negative impact on its ability to attract and retain competent staff.

f. Capital Asset Strengths and Weaknesses

The agency sees no need for any capital improvement during the 2016-2020 period that would exceed the \$25,000 threshold. No plans exist for capital improvement projects meeting the criteria established for submission of a Statewide Capital Plan to the Bond Review Board. The agency currently has two areas of concern with regard to capital assets.

Computers: 29% of the agency's current computer equipment is beyond the recommended replacement schedule produced by the Texas Department of Information Resources. This places the agency at risk of not being able to remain technologically competitive. There is also a greater risk of the computer hardware malfunctioning and the need for emergency replacement of computers due to the satisfaction of the upgraded software not functioning on the outdated hardware.

Additional Office Space: To accommodate the increasing number of complaints and an ever-growing licensee base, the agency will need to expand its workforce during the next five years. This expansion will require the Board to seek additional space in which to house new employees. In the event the agency secures authorization for new FTEs, the agency will seek additional space within the Capitol Complex or seek supplemental funding to lease commercial space if no state owned facilities are available.

g. Agency Use of HUBs

It is the intent of the Legislature that each state agency makes a good faith effort to increase purchasing and contract awards to historically underutilized business (HUBs). Since fiscal year 1996, the percentage of total purchases expended with HUBs has ranged from 8.1% to 50.5%. The average percentage over that period of time has been 25.5%. The Board will continue to fulfill internal policies governing purchases of goods and services that will encourage meaningful and substantive inclusion of HUBs. In addition, the Board will continue to follow purchasing procedures to ensure a proportionately high use of HUBs that are qualified to offer such goods and services. Progress in these areas is as follows:

HUB Strategic Plan Progress Report

Category	Goal for FY12	FY12
Professional Service Contracts	23.6%*	100%
Other Services Contracts	24.6%*	35.6%
Commodities Contracts	21.0%*	69.2%
Overall HUB Expenditures	30.0%	50.5%

*Statewide-unadjusted goals established by 34 TAC §20.13.

Constraints:

- Expert witnesses are not available on the HUB vendor list because this service is only available through a specialty. This is a critical service that is needed to pursue our mission of protecting the public from people that are practicing veterinary medicine without a license or to close a complaint regarding a veterinarian or equine dental provider.
- Whenever possible, we purchase services from other state agencies. We have had excellent results by doing this; but again, this does prevent us from soliciting business from HUBs for those services.
- The limited purchasing needs of the Board do not normally involve contracts that are of such size or complexity as to permit subcontracting.

The use of the Internet to identify HUBs has greatly enhanced the agency’s ability to identify and locate HUBs and include them in our bid solicitations.

h. Key Organizational events and areas of change, and the impact on the agency.

The TBVME may face many changes over the coming fiscal years that would impact the agency’s organization.

Sharing of Administrative Functions with Other Health Professions Council (HPC) Members.

HPC members continue to review options available for sharing administrative functions between the smaller Boards. The Board may realize some efficiencies and savings as a result of this effort.

Consolidation and Outsourcing of Human Resources Functions

During the 78th legislative session, the Council on Competitive Government was charged with conducting a feasibility study to determine the feasibility of consolidating and outsourcing human resources functions within small agencies. The HPC is currently assisting member agencies with some HR functions, but not all. Currently, the Executive Assistant is the agency’s Director of Human Resources in addition to having numerous other responsibilities. The HPC assists with job postings and other ministered functions, but the agency still needs and utilizes the Executive Assistant for most HR Functions.

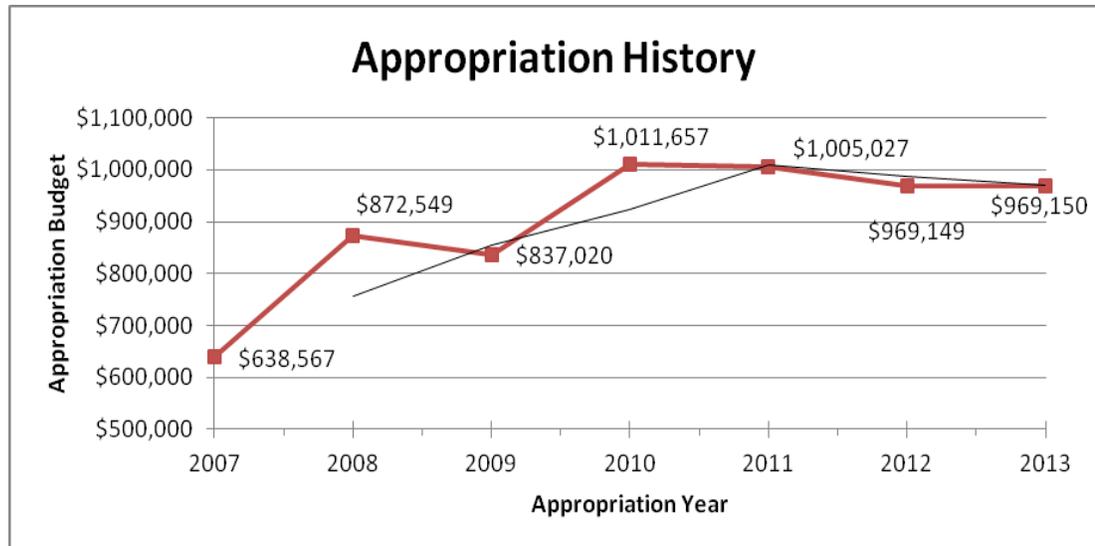
i. Use and Anticipated Use of Consultants

The agency currently does not utilize any consultants and does not anticipate the need for any over the next five years.

C. Fiscal Aspects

a. Size of Budget

The Board's total operating appropriation for fiscal year 2012 is \$969,149. Over the five-year period 2007 through 2012, the agency's budget increased approximately 52%. The Board receives no federal funds.



b. Method of Finance

The Board's main source of revenue comes from fees derived from license renewals, examinations, and issuance of new licenses. The estimated revenue for FY2012 is \$1,465,604 compared to \$1,103,805 received in FY2011. All receipts are deposited in the Treasury Division of the Comptroller of Public Accounts into the General Revenue Fund and are expended in accordance with the General Appropriations Act. Of total revenues collected in FY2011, 97.15% came from licensing, 2.5% from peer assistance (surcharges), and 0.27% from miscellaneous items such as mailing lists, labels and open records requests. Additional revenue is generated by a professional tax of \$200 per paid active license renewal. The Board collected \$1,264,000 in professional taxes on active licenses. In FY2011, the total revenue collected by the Board was \$2,622,198.

c. Capital and/or Leased Needs

The Board sees no need for any capital improvement during the 2013-2017 period that would exceed the \$25,000 threshold. No plans exist for any capital improvement projects meeting the criteria established for submission of a Statewide Capital Plan for the Bond Review Board.

d. Degree To Which Budget Meets Current And Expected Demands

The agency is currently in the process of developing its Legislative Appropriation Request for 2014-2015. If approved by the Legislature, the agency's 2012-2013 Legislative Appropriation Request will be adequate to meet current and expected demands.

D. Service Population Demographics

The growth rate for the number of persons licensed is expected to remain between 2.6 and 3.0% annually. The number of newly graduated veterinarians is expected to remain level. The Texas A & M University, College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) projects that enrollment in their program will remain at around 135 new admissions per year over the next few years. Texas A&M University received funding to build new veterinary teaching facilities that will allow a larger number of students to enroll at CVM within the next 5 years. Graduates will increase, however, not all new Texas graduates seek licensure in this state.

The veterinary profession as a whole is becoming more mobile. Veterinarians are employable in almost any community. More veterinarians are being employed by national/regional corporations that have practices in multiple states, and may be transferred from state to state. Current laws, rules and examination timetables enable new graduates as well as out-of-state practitioners to obtain a license to practice veterinary medicine in a shorter period of time. Existing fee structures allow for an inactive license status, which helps practitioners located out-of-state to maintain their Texas license.

Veterinary medicine is an ever-changing field. With constant advances in medical technology and changes in treatment protocols, the demands placed on veterinarians are increasing by leaps and bounds. In addition, individuals are beginning to see themselves as guardians of animals instead of owners, placing more emphasis on the emotional attachment to animals and opening the door to more litigation and more complaints. As a result of these changes, the number of complaints received by the Board has increased. In Fiscal Year 2000, the agency received two hundred twenty-eight (228) complaints. In Fiscal Year 2005 the agency received two hundred ninety (290) complaints. The agency received 478 complaints in FY 2010 and 411 in FY 2011. It is likely the recent drop is a result of the downturn in the economy.

E. Technological Developments

Part 1: Technology Assessment Summary

1. Network and Servers

The agency utilizes a modern firewall router to provision perimeter network security for the Local Area Network (LAN). The agency also provides Virtual Private Network (VPN) access for a select group of remote employees, allowing them to access network assets securely. In 2008, a secure and encrypted wireless network was deployed for use of agency staff within the physical limits of the main office. For all uses, authentication and access to network resources is made possible by an Active Directory installation, which is managed by a Windows 2008 Domain Controller. Multiple servers, printers, and other network services are managed through this Active Directory infrastructure. By deploying the network and servers mentioned here, the agency is able to receive the benefits of an efficient and secure network computing environment, which is also accessible to remote workers.

Barracuda- Through the IT sharing program called ITSS with the Health Professions Council (HPC), the agency shares the use of a Barracuda Web Application Firewall. The network device is a perimeter security appliance that protects the agency's web enabled assets from online malicious attacks. The device receives ongoing updates and signature files from the vendor.

FortiAnalyzer- Also via HPC, the agency participates in the use of the FortiAnalyzer management device. This network appliance is an Enterprise reporting tool that allows HPC IT staff to monitor and analyze all agency network traffic. This device is a centralized management node which allows HPC staff to monitor multiple networks simultaneously.

2. Shared IT Staff from the Health Professions Council (HPC)

In FY 2003, the agency entered into an interagency contract with the HPC to obtain IT services and participate in the imaging system. This contract has been extended through the current year, as this arrangement has worked well for this agency. HPC provides shared IT staff that advises the agency on all issues related to technology. This shared staff advises on issues related to long term strategic planning, as well as immediate helpdesk support. Through this shared agreement, the agency is able to maintain its technology infrastructure without incurring the cost of full time staff.

3. Texas Online

The agency has seen continued success with the Texas On-line renewal process as defined by Texas Government Code 2054.251- .267 to provide information technology and web based application functionality to the consumer.

The agency online renewal process became available in January 2002. The first year introduced our consumers to the process and resulted in 42 online transactions. Since then, there has been increased usage, as the 2003 renewal period increased to 526 online transactions, the 2004 renewal period reflected 861 online renewals. During the 2005 renewal period, approximately 34% of eligible veterinarians renewed their license online. Through strong encouragement from the Board and aggressive advertising, we have seen a steady increase in online renewals by our licensees.

2006.....	79%
2007.....	85%
2008.....	85.4%
2009.....	87%
2010.....	89%
2011.....	90%
2012 year to date	91.3%

The agency has supported the rebranding of Texas Online to Texas.gov and is working further in adjustments to not only make the Texas.Gov domain name available, but the primary choice.

4. Hardware and Software Upgrades

Hardware and software have been upgraded to support the evolving needs of the agency. The following upgrades have been made which have resulted in a standards-compliant and efficiently supported computing environment:

- a. SQL Server 2005- For the data storage and hosting for the TexVets licensing tracking application.
- b. New Domain Controller- Windows Server 2008 is the new primary domain controller which replaced an aging Windows Server 2003 domain controller.
- c. Neubus Server- The agency contracts with Neubus to scan and manage large volumes of printed materials. This Neubus-owned server was first installed on the agency's LAN in 2008 and received an upgrade in 2010 including providing intranet access to licensee files.
- d. McAfee ePO- HPC ITSS staff has implemented the ePO product, which is an enterprise management tool for all McAfee software deployed on the agency's network. From one tool, IT staff can now manage all aspects of the agency's anti-malware software.
- e. McAfee Endpoint Encryption- This software will allow IT staff to encrypt the hard drive inside each agency laptop to prevent unauthorized data access through theft or other loss of device.

5. TexVets Database

The agency contracted with an independent consultant to upgrade the agency's enterprise licensee tracking database system. The project scope was to begin with the existing Microsoft Access database and upgrade it to a modern Microsoft SQL Server implementation. This project was mostly completed in 2009 and features a web-based interface for staff users to interact with the software. The database in 2012 has been updated to add tracking of internal use of the system to create an audit trail as well as user based restrictions to areas that are not required. Ongoing enhancements are implemented as needed, as funding is available.

The agency is currently in need of a programmer familiar with its current proprietary database and its infrastructure to improve its functionality and upgrade to its performance. Regular maintenance by a database administrator has not been established as of this date making the original coding outdated and prone to malfunctioning. The database server operating system, hardware and software is maintained and upgraded as needed. However, this will eventually overlap and corrupt the current coding in the veterinarian database if we are unable to obtain a contract for maintenance.

6. Website

The agency website is located on an HPC shared web server. It was migrated from the internal agency desktop system to one that receives regular backups and maintenance. It has been fully operational since FY 2003. Updates to the website are published regularly, and the agency has full control of content. The website satisfies all legislative requirements and includes the ability for the public to lookup publicly available information about our licensees and download various forms. Additionally, a new continuing education (CE) module implemented in FY2009 allows a Texas licensed practitioner to earn a limited number of CE hours, primarily in the areas of record keeping and practice management. Veterinarians who are required to retake the jurisprudence exam as part of disciplinary action may use the module accessible through our website. For a fee, the individual may take the exam on-line.

Website Redesign: HPC will host our site, along with other participating agency sites, on a shared server, and the ITSS technology staff will maintain all aspects of the web environment. Additionally, the new website will be hosted in a mirrored environment facilitated by a load balancing network device on the HPC network.

As the web becomes more modern HPC will need additional staff to meet all requirements of the LBB for accessibility standards, and backup stability. Site functionality, longevity, as well as standards for data transmission are adjusting and the website will need upgrades and overhauls to be brought into a more modern secure web environment. Additional funds are necessary to ensure the safety of confidential information of our user base while making public access available to meet the needs of all constituents.

7. HPC Imaging System

The agency has increased its participation in the shared HPC document imaging system. The enforcement division is the early adopter of this technology which allows the agency to transition document management from paper to electronic format. The agency reduces costs of printing, binding, faxing (long distance), postage, and paper document storage. Once scanned, documents are available through a secure web interface, allowing agency staff access to up-to-date information in real time. By reducing the number of phone calls, faxes, and mailed packages, the imaging system saves the agency both time and money during the resolution of enforcement and legal cases. The agency plans to expand the usage of this system to additional divisions within the agency.

Statewide Technology Goal 1

Strengthen and Expand the Use of Enterprise Services and Infrastructure

1.1 Enhance Capabilities of the Shared Infrastructure

- Data Center Infrastructure
- Communications Technology Infrastructure
- Statewide Portal Infrastructure

1.2 Leverage Shared Applications

- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
- Email Messaging

1.3 Leverage the State's Purchasing Power

- Product and Services Portfolio Expansion

1.a Describe agency plans to strengthen and/or expand its capabilities through the initiatives described in Statewide Technology Goal 1.

The agency does not participate in the Austin datacenter.

1.b Describe agency plans to strengthen and/or expand its capabilities through other initiatives that leverage enterprise or multi-agency services and infrastructure, including managed services, shared applications, internal consolidation efforts, and procurement strategies.

Google Apps Enterprise- The agency migrated its enterprise messaging to Google Apps Enterprise and decommissioned use of Capnet email services. The Google services allow all agency users to participate in a collaborative messaging environment for the first time. Included with Google Apps is messaging (email), document collaboration, calendar sharing, and intranet site creation.

Virtual Servers – HPC has actively pursued the use of server virtualization to make better use of resources as well as scaling server needs across the many agency requests.

Statewide Technology Goal 2

Secure and Safeguard Technology Assets and Information

2.1 Align the State's Approach to Enterprise Security with other State and National Strategies

- State Enterprise Security Plan
- Vulnerability to Cyber Attacks
- Response and Recovery Capabilities

2.2 Integrate Identity Management, Credentialing, and Access Privileges

- Identity Management Services

2.a Provide an update on the agency's progress in implementing strategies to align with the *State Enterprise Security Plan*.

AT&T SETA- DIR has changed the NetForensics security assistance to AT&T's new SETA Program. This service allows the agency to send the syslog files from both the firewall and the router so that DIR can inspect and analyze all firewall traffic and all router traffic in and out of the agency. The agency receives a monthly report from DIR upon which HPC staff makes security recommendations if necessary.

FortiAnalyzer-The shared use of the FortiAnalyzer enables centralized log management of the agency's firewall and router. This tool gives staff the ability to respond to all network incidents and research any possible intrusions or suspicious activity.

Barracuda- Through the IT sharing program called ITSS with the Health Professions Council, the agency shares the use of a Barracuda Web Application Firewall. The network device is a perimeter security appliance that protects the agency's web enabled assets from online malicious attacks. The device receives ongoing updates and signature files from the vendor. Regular, unannounced penetration tests conducted by the Department of Information Resources have shown the firewall to be effective. Daily data backups are run by agency staff and maintained by HPC staff.

McAfee Enterprise and ePO- The agency continues to use McAfee node protection products to secure against malware at the network, server, and workstation levels. Also, ePO enables IT staff to remotely manage all aspects of this anti-malware software.

McAfee Endpoint Encryption- This tool is planned to be implemented in FY 2011 and will provide additional encryption security for all agency laptops.

2.b Describe the agency's identity management strategies in place or planned.

The agency continues to use Windows identity management through the implementation of Active Directory. Custom Group Policies are in place to enhance security through the use of complex passwords, password expiration, and password rotation.

McAfee Endpoint Encryption- This tool is planned to be implemented in FY 2011 and will provide additional encryption security for all agency laptops. Endpoint encryption helps to minimize unauthorized access to agency devices.

Statewide Technology Goal 3

Serve Citizens Anytime, Anywhere

3.1 Expand and Enhance Access to Agency Services

- Multi-Channel Access
- Rural Broadband Expansion

3.2 Facilitate Open and Transparent Government

- Best Practices for Information Assets

3.a Describe the agency's plans to expand or enhance access to its services and promote citizen engagement through online services and emerging technologies.

The agency continues to provide access to agency information through the publication of its existing website. The website will be upgraded to a modern Content Management System in the coming months.

The agency continues to allow licensees to access agency data and services through its participation with Texas Online.

The agency has created a Facebook page where it publishes notification of rule changes, as well as examination and meeting dates.

Google Apps Enterprise- Use of Google Sites for collaborating with Board members and key public members. A new Google site will be developed to share data using the Google cloud computing model.

3.b Describe initiatives planned or in process that will facilitate access to agency information and public data.

The agency continues to provide access to agency information through the publication of its existing website. The website will be upgraded to a modern Content Management System in the coming months.

The agency continues to allow licensees to access agency data and services through its participation with Texas Online.

The agency will consider allowing more enhanced and detailed online license verification through its newly redesigned website.

Statewide Technology Goal 4

Pursue Excellence and Foster Innovation Across the Enterprise

4.1 Link Technology Solutions to Workplace Innovations

- Workplace Productivity and Collaboration

4.2 Pursue Leading-Edge Strategies for Application Deployment

- Cloud Computing
- Specifications, Toolkits, and the Application Marketplace
- Legacy Systems Modernization

4.3 Optimize Information Asset Management

- Best Practices for Managing Digital Information

4.4 Promote the Use and Sharing of Information

- Health Information Exchange
- Statewide Communications Interoperability
- Justice Information System Integration
- Enterprise Geospatial Services

- 4.a Describe agency plans to implement or enhance workplace productivity and to leverage collaboration tools.

Google Apps Enterprise- The agency migrated its enterprise messaging to Google Apps Enterprise and decommissioned use of Capnet email services. The Google services allows all agency users to participate in a collaborative messaging environment for the first time. Included with Google Apps is messaging (email), document collaboration, calendar sharing, and intranet site creation.

Additionally, users can now access their agency resources- especially email and calendars- from remote locations using web enabled devices such as their agency-issued laptops and smart phones.

- 4.b Describe agency strategies to develop and deploy applications more efficiently (i.e., through Cloud Computing, Software as a Service, Application Toolkits, Legacy System Modernization).

Google Apps Enterprise- The Google suite of services is based on a cloud computing infrastructure and allows agency users to access collaboration tools from any internet enabled device.

TexVets (Access to SQL Server)- The enterprise licensing database was upgraded from a Legacy MS Access 2000 database structure to a more modern MS SQL Server 2005 database structure. This has enabled the agency to provide web-based access to enterprise data and set the stage for future web-enabled enhancements.

- 4.c Describe agency strategies to enhance information asset management practices.

The agency continues to participate in a best practices data backup and disaster recovery plan by utilizing of-site storage services from the Texas Library and Archives Commission.

- 4.d Describe agency practices or plans to enhance the use and sharing of information with agency business partners.

The agency continues to work with the Health Professions Council to facilitate the sharing of information and data with any relevant external organizations

Part 2: Technology Initiative Alignment

The table below depicts the format and mapping of the TBVME current and planned technology initiatives to the agency’s business objectives.

TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE	RELATED AGENCY OBJECTIVE/(S)	RELATED SSP STRATEGY/ (IES)	CURRENT OR PLANNED	ANTICIPATED BENEFIT(S)	INNOVATION, BEST PRACTICE, BENCHMARKING
1. Support and maintain the TexVets licensing tracking system, which is the upgrade to the legacy Veterinarian Tracking System (VTS).	Objective A.1	1.3 3.1 4.1 4.2	Current	1. Leverage web-based technologies to better communicate underlying data. 2. Update and revise reports, layouts, and automation of the existing TexVets system. 3. Prepare agency data for future interoperability.	Best Practice: The system is based on industry standard web application technologies which will position the agency to more quickly adopt future technological advances related to database management.
2. Investigate the possibility of a shared enterprise licensing database application which would integrate licensing, investigation, and legal functions.	All objectives.	1.1 1.2 1.3 3.1 3.2 4.1 4.2 4.4	Planned	The system would provide common information to all division employees and field investigators which will result in efficient processing of all agency tasks.	Best Practice: The agency will migrate multiple legacy database systems into one enterprise system built on a modern and interoperable application platform.

TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE	RELATED AGENCY OBJECTIVE/(S)	RELATED SSP STRATEGY/ (IES)	CURRENT OR PLANNED	ANTICIPATED BENEFIT(S)	INNOVATION, BEST PRACTICE, BENCHMARKING
3. Support and Maintain secure VPN access for remote workers.	All Objectives.	2.1 2.2 3.1 4.1	Current	1. Increased communication efficiency between remote workers and the main office. 2. Secure transport of all data between the remote locations and the main office.	Innovation: Employing remote workers reduces the financial burden related to facilities, while allowing for statewide coverage of enforcement functions.
4. Utilize the HPC website development and hosting service. Implement HPC's Content Management System (CMS).	Objective C.1	1.1 1.2 1.3 2.1 2.2 3.1 3.2 4.1 4.2 4.4	Planned	1. The CMS will allow agency staff to become content authors and therefore employ an efficient content development and publishing workflow. 2. Utilizing HPC's shared services will allow the agency's website to receive all of the management and upgrades that best practices suggest.	Innovation: The agency is utilizing additional shared services that leverage a single technological investment across several agencies. The HPC initiative is looking to hire a specific position to handle this need.
5. Implement in-house technology for staff to work in an increasing paperless environment by further utilizing the shared HPC Imaging System.	All objectives.	1.1 1.2 1.3 3.1 3.2 4.1 4.4	Current	Provide agency staff full access to all features of the hosted imaging system.	Best Practice: The agency will continue to free office space and make paper documents searchable and accessible by fully adopting the imaging system.

TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE	RELATED AGENCY OBJECTIVE/(S)	RELATED SSP STRATEGY/ (IES)	CURRENT OR PLANNED	ANTICIPATED BENEFIT(S)	INNOVATION, BEST PRACTICE, BENCHMARKING
6. Google Apps Enterprise	All Objectives.	1.1 1.2 1.3 2.1 2.2 3.1 3.2 4.1 4.4	Current	The Google services allow all agency users to participate in a collaborative messaging environment for the first time. Included with Google Apps is messaging (email), document collaboration, calendar sharing, and intranet site creation.	Best practice: Using cloud computing and leveraging existing technologies to facilitate collaboration among all staff members and Board members- local and remote.
7. AT&T SETA	All Objectives	1.1 1.2 1.3 2.1 2.2 4.3		This service allows the agency to send the syslog files from both the firewall and the router so that DIR can inspect and analyze all firewall traffic and all router traffic in and out of the agency. The agency receives a monthly report from DIR upon which HPC staff makes security recommendations if necessary.	Best Practice: Proactive network monitoring and access log review.

TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE	RELATED AGENCY OBJECTIVE/(S)	RELATED SSP STRATEGY/ (IES)	CURRENT OR PLANNED	ANTICIPATED BENEFIT(S)	INNOVATION, BEST PRACTICE, BENCHMARKING
8. FortiAnalyzer	All Objectives	1.1 1.2 1.3 2.1 2.2 4.3		The shared use of the FortiAnalyzer enables centralized log management of the agency's firewall and router. This tool gives staff the ability to respond to all network incidents and research any possible intrusions or suspicious activity.	Best Practice: Single point of management for all network logging and traffic analysis. Tool to forensically review suspicious activity.
9. Barracuda	All Objectives	1.1 1.2 1.3 2.1 2.2 3.1 3.2 4.1 4.3		The network device is a perimeter security appliance that protects the agency's web enabled assets from online malicious attacks.	Best Practice: Web application vulnerability protection without code remediation. Load balancing for web servers.
10. McAfee ePO	All Objectives	1.1 1.2 1.3 2.1 2.2 4.1 4.3		This centralized management tool allows IT staff to manage and monitor the effectiveness of all McAfee security products deployed in the agency.	Best Practice: Enterprise management tool for automated threat prevention and remediation.

F. Agency Priority Issues

a. External

1. Unauthorized Practice Of Veterinary Medicine

The Board is responsible for enforcing the Veterinary Licensing Act (“Act”). This responsibility includes jurisdiction over licensees and those who practice veterinary medicine without a license. The Act makes practicing without a license a Class A misdemeanor. A violator is also subject to a civil penalty of \$1,000 for each day of violation. During the 2005 Legislative session, the Texas Legislature authorized the Board to issue cease and desist orders. However, the Board must still take these orders through the State Office of Administrative Hearings to have an enforceable order if the non-licensee refuses to voluntarily cease and desist.

(a) Difficulties with Practice Without a License Cases

The enforcement staff has been involved with undercover operations with the assistance of local law enforcement officers. Two arrests resulted in FY 2011. There is an increase in “practicing without a license” cases. Three factors seem to be contributing to the rise of such activities: border area violence, poor economic conditions, and utilization of Craigslist as an easy means to facilitate underground activities.

The staff has been unable to proceed with pursuing some criminal cases due to an inability to engage the assistance of local law enforcement. Peace officer status for our investigators would enable some of these cases to be pursued that are otherwise closed due to insufficient evidence or with a cease and desist order.

(b) Animal Reproduction

The Board has noted an increase in the number of non-veterinarians performing animal reproductive services in recent years. The Veterinary Licensing Act defines veterinary medicine to include all diagnosis, treatment and correction of an animal’s physical condition, and exempts only artificial insemination from the practice of veterinary medicine. In the context of animal reproductive services under Board Rule 573.72, the Board has interpreted this to mean that while an unlicensed person can perform non-surgical artificial insemination without the use of sedation, only a licensed veterinarian can perform breeding soundness examinations, including palpation of reproductive structures, ultrasounds, and microscopic examination of semen; a licensed veterinarian can either personally perform or directly supervise a non-licensed person performing invasive laparoscopic insemination. Unlicensed persons performing these procedures creates a risk for improper diagnosis and improper invasive surgical procedures, leading to inaccurate valuation of an animal or physical harm to the animal. Additional concerns exist in that many of these procedures require the horse to be sedated. Drugs used for sedation are generally at a minimum, prescription drugs, but may be substances that require a registration through the Texas Department of Public Safety and the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency as well as training in the appropriate use and dosage of the prescription/controlled substances. If not administered appropriately, these drugs can lead to other medical issues and/or the death of the patient. Unauthorized practice of this nature leaves the Texas public vulnerable, as these non-licensees are not accountable to any regulatory authority.

(c) Alternate therapies.

In addition to the “traditional” subsets of veterinary medicine such as surgery, reproduction and obstetrics, dermatology, cardiology, etc., veterinary medicine also includes “alternate therapies” such as holistic medicine, homeopathy, chiropractic, acupuncture, laser therapy, etc. These disciplines must be practiced by a veterinarian or under the direction or general supervision of a veterinarian. The Board has adopted rules covering these practices, but from time to time questions arise as to whether persons who perform animal services, such as massage therapy, must be veterinarians or work under the supervision of veterinarians. In addition, questions often arise as to whether certain subsets such as holistic medicine should be subject to the same requirements of establishing the veterinarian-client-patient relationship, record keeping, etc., that traditional practice veterinarians are required to adhere to.

The Board will continue to address the issues of unauthorized practice and alternate therapies as resources and staff allow.

2. Registered Veterinary Technician Licensure

The Registered Veterinary Technician Association of Texas has voted to seek licensure by the Board in the next legislative session in 2013. The Texas Veterinary Medical Association has voted to support this licensure. The Board anticipates legislation in the next legislative session with changes to the Veterinary Licensing Act to add licensure of registered veterinary technicians (RVTs). The licensure of RVTs and the enforcement of regulations for RVTs will require additional personnel, additional office space and equipment for the personnel as well as a change to the Board's database system.

b. Internal

1. State Office of Administrative Hearings (SOAH)

With continued funding of at least \$10,000 per fiscal year, the agency should be able to continue its prosecution of at least two cases per year at SOAH as long as the case does not require a national specialist. In actual practice, the Agency filed 1 case in FY 2007, 8 cases in FY 2008 and 22 cases in FY 2009, 7 cases in FY 2010, and 6 cases in FY 2011. The decrease in the number of cases filed at SOAH between FY 2009 and FY 2010 was due to the resolution of litigation regarding the unlicensed practice equine dentistry with the passage of House Bill (HB) 414 in the 82nd Legislative Session, which gave the Board authority to license and regulate equine dental providers.

The Board's aggressive cost containment and case management strategies made these numbers possible in the past, but the Board is facing increasing difficulty finding expert witnesses that are qualified to testify on the Board's behalf regarding the standard of care for veterinarians, and are willing to testify for minimal compensation. Without qualified expert witness testimony, the Board cannot meet its burden of proof for claims regarding standard of care for veterinarians. In order to prosecute its cases, the Board has been forced to look to out-of-state experts, and to consider paying hundreds of dollars per hour for expert testimony. These increased expert witness costs are making the Board's litigation funding insufficient to cover the number of prosecutions the Board must bring each year. Without increased funding, the Board will be unable to adequately defend and uphold the standard of care for veterinarians in Texas, which will in turn endanger the public and animals of Texas..

2. Enforcement Issues

(a) Commissioned Peace Officers

The Board will again seek to obtain Peace Officer Status authority for its investigators. As the primary protector of the public's welfare with regard to veterinary and equine dental provider services, the Board must be able to function in the arena of criminal justice agencies.

In recent years, the Board has faced situations in which its ability to protect the public has been compromised by the inability to communicate with and function as peace officers.

(b) Controlled Substances/Dangerous Drugs

Veterinarians maintain inventories of controlled substances within their practices. This situation has led to instances of drug abuse and/or diversion by veterinarians. The Board has seen a significant increase in this area. The Board has found that when a criminal justice entity becomes involved in the investigation of these crimes, in most cases the Board does not have access to information necessary to allow for disciplinary action against the perpetrator's license, including summary suspensions, until there is a conviction. This situation allows the individual to continue to practice while under criminal investigation, even in instances where the public would be at risk.

(c) *Limited access to criminal justice agency information*

Access to information held by criminal justice agencies is generally restricted to other criminal justice agencies and peace officers. Because the Board cannot access the evidence and information, it may not take action against a license until there is a final conviction and these individuals are still considered “in good standing” with the Board and may continue to practice.

(d) *Limited ability to share information with local/federal law enforcement entities*

The Board currently does not have the authority to share information regarding complaints with local/federal law enforcement entities. While the Board may have information that would assist local/federal law enforcement, the information, based on the Veterinary License Act, is considered confidential.

Allowing the Board to have its investigators as peace officers would provide the Board with the tools necessary to share the information with other law enforcement agencies to better protect the public.

3. Travel

(a) *On-site Compliance Inspections*

On-site compliance inspections serve to educate veterinarians about the laws and rules that govern the practice of veterinary medicine. These inspections allow veterinarians and their staff, direct face-to-face access to Board investigators, who can answer questions and give guidance in regard to the veterinarian’s responsibility in meeting the requirements of the Veterinary Licensing Act and the Rules of Professional Conduct.

Unlike most medical professionals, veterinarians are the only prescribing professionals who can purchase and maintain controlled substances and dangerous drugs within their practice. An important part of the compliance inspection is ensuring that these drugs are properly secured, maintained, and accounted for. The appropriation of travel funds will enable the agency to perform on-site compliance inspections and meet these important enforcements. The Board will request continuation of this appropriation.

(b) *Special Investigations*

Occasionally, investigations are of such significance that they may require additional resources, time and travel funds. These “special investigations” result from an act or series of acts that have the potential of causing great harm to the public. These cases generally fall into the category of alcohol and drug abuse. The veterinarian may be suffering from alcohol intoxication; self-administering controlled substances from their own pharmacy, or may even be diverting these drugs. The harm, from our perspective, is that this same impaired veterinarian may be treating the public’s animals, including food source animals.

4. Technology

(a) *Replacement of Select Computers and Printers*

Due to limited funds, the agency replaces PCs and printers only as necessary. It is, therefore, imperative that we take into consideration the lifecycle of each item. Problems can arise as we have two Windows operating systems in production simultaneously. Some users are on Windows Vista, and some on Windows XP. Also, multiple agency printers have met or surpassed their life expectancy. Without adequate funds, replacements are not an option. We will seek funding for software, PC, and printer upgrades during the 82nd Legislative session.

(b) *Software Upgrades for Agency Server*

To effectively continue communication with those we serve, including members of the profession, it is imperative that the agency is able to upgrade software for the agency’s server architecture. The server is also used for online veterinary license renewal and communication and file exchange between the vendor agency (NIC USA) and the comptroller’s office. Continuous security upgrades are necessary to prevent data corruption, unauthorized access

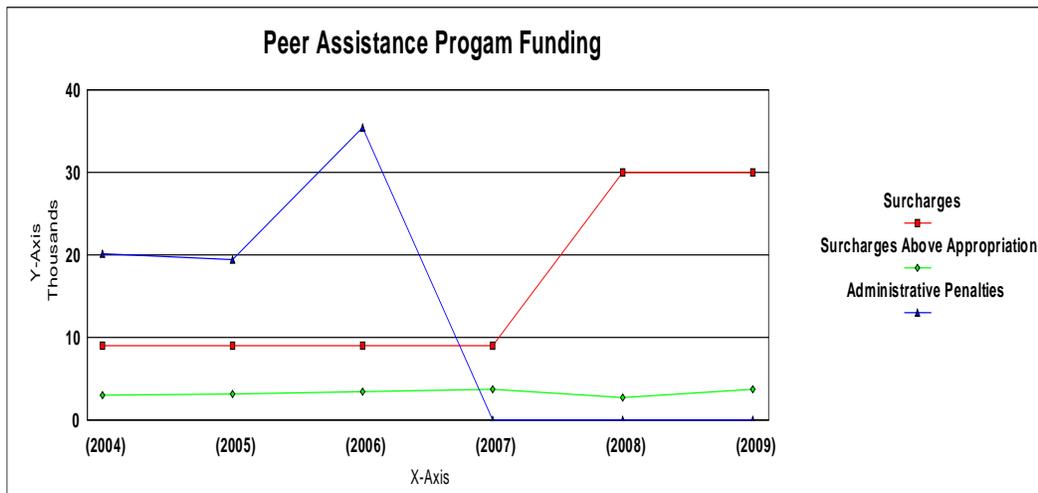
and generally meet the statutory requirements set out in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, Part 10, Chapter 206, Subchapter B, which discusses, among other things, security policies and web site accessibility. User-friendly software upgrades encourage the use of the web site and participation in the online renewal system. Funding will be sought during the 83rd Legislative session.

(c) *TexVets*

A cooperative effort to develop a common database system among all Health Professions Council agencies would minimize individual agency costs and allow for future expansion, upgrades and functionality that would be beneficial to all internal and external database users. Discussions among HPC Boards and DIR are occurring at this time. This effort would also allow for the continuous utilization of HPC agency shared IT personnel for in-house training and maintenance. However, there is a concern the cost may be prohibitively high.

5. Peer Assistance

The Board competitively re-bid the contract to operate the Peer Assistance Program. The change in the funding mechanism from administrative penalties to appropriated funds has achieved stability and efficiency on the new contract.



6. Agency Publication

The Board produces the *Board Notes* three times each year. The material included in the publication is intended to provide information to licensees and assist them in remaining up-to-date with regard to the laws and rules that impact their licenses. The publication is provided in electronic format to those individuals who provide the Board with an email address. Licensees may also download the publication from the agency’s website. The Board sought input from our licensees through the 2012 Customer Service Survey on their preference for format.

Preferred Format of Board Notes		
Paper	Email	Download from Website
45%	46%	9%

7. Agency Workforce

(a) *Funding for Employee Incentives*

While the Legislature has provided sufficient tools for the attraction and retention of highly qualified employees, the lack of funding has not allowed the agency to utilize these tools. The agency will continue to seek funding to allow us to reward employees in a merit system.

(b) Staff Development

In order to maintain a well-qualified staff and continue to offer the public and the veterinary community advanced services, the agency must be able to obtain job specific training for its employees. The ability to offer training to employees would also allow the agency to consider applicants who may not have all of the needed skills but who would be great additions.

G. Economic Variables

The primary types of veterinary practice in Texas are companion animals (dogs, cats, and horses in many instances) and food production animals. The vast majority of veterinarians in Texas are in companion animal practice. Generally, companion animal practitioners may be more affected by significant economic conditions. One factor is that many procedures performed may be discretionary, such as spays and neuters. Veterinarians in food animal practice are more affected by foreign competition and weather conditions.

The agency and the profession contend with lay people performing acts that constitute the practice of veterinary medicine and are illegal. Animal owners seek ways to cut costs or to try novel procedures they believe will remedy problems or enhance performance. Gathering information that confirms a violation in this type of case is more time consuming than the average complaint. These type of cases usually require field work and delays are often encountered due to the need to coordinate with local law enforcement.

The Board's operations are such that there is little it can do to effectively adjust its operations in response to changes in any of the above economic conditions.

H. Impact of Federal Statutes/Regulations

The Board receives no federal funds; however, the agency has a working relationship with three federal agencies: the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Department of Agriculture. Since veterinarians are the only profession allowed to maintain drug inventories and dispense directly to clients/patients, the DEA works closely with the Board.

I. Other Legal Issues

a. Impact of Local Government Requirements

Currently there are no local governmental requirements that impact the agency.

J. Self-Evaluation

a. Opportunities For Improvement

The Board is continuously seeking ways to improve every aspect of its operations and better serve the citizens of Texas and the veterinary community. This commitment to excellence has allowed the Board to operate effectively and efficiently during these times of reduced resources.

b. Agency Website

The agency website will continuously undergo upgrades to allow for additional functionality to continue serving our various stakeholders. We will continue to use our website to further the statewide initiative of improving overall customer relations and government access through efficient access to information and assistance including but not limited to the addition of disciplinary orders being accessible on our website.

c. Partnerships

The Board, through its day-to-day operations as well as its enforcement and licensing functions, partners with many levels of government and private sector organizations to ensure public safety through veterinarian compliance with the State's laws and Board rules and to ensure that the agency works effectively and efficiently, utilizing state funds wisely and prudently.

Health Professions Council (HPC) - The HPC consists of the following health professions agencies:

- Texas Board of Chiropractic Examiners;
- Texas State Board of Dental Examiners;
- Texas Funeral Service Commission;
- Department of State Health Services, Professional Licensing and Certification Division;
- Texas Medical Board;
- Texas Board of Nursing;
- Texas Optometry Board;
- Texas State Board of Pharmacy;
- Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners;
- Texas State Board of Podiatric Medical Examiners;
- Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists; and
- Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners.

As a member of the HPC family, the Board works closely with other members to find and implement efficiencies within agency administrative functions by sharing staff and other resources. At present, many of the smaller HPC agencies share two information technology staff through the HPC help desk. The HPC also assists member agencies by providing a telephone complaint system, Board member program training, and shared document imaging. HPC members are also reviewing ways to share resources within the areas of fiscal and human resources.

State Government: The Board works in partnership with various state agencies through its licensing and enforcement functions to ensure public safety and veterinarian compliance with laws and rules. The state agencies the Board works most closely with include the Texas Department of Public Safety; Texas Animal Health Commission; Texas Department of Health, primarily the Zoonosis division; Texas Racing Commission; Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation; the Office of the Attorney General; and Texas A & M University. In addition to Texas state agencies, the Board is also a member of the American Association of Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB).

Most of the Board's collaboration with these state agencies consists of ensuring that our licensees adhere not only to our rules, but also to those of the other agencies. For example, the Texas Department of Health is responsible for setting the requirements of the Rabies Control Act. The Board aligns its rules to support the Rabies Control Act by ensuring that veterinarians maintain rabies vaccination records as required by the Act. The Board also submits its database (TexVets) to the Department of Public Safety, the Office of Attorney General, Child Support Division, and the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation to assist those agencies in the enforcement of their laws, rules and collections.

Texas A & M University Measurement and Research Division and the agency's exam contractor provide independent validation of the agency's State licensing exam relevancy and its merit as well as scores attained by the examinee.

The Board works with the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC), along with many other entities, to establish the State of Texas Foreign Animal Diseases Plan. The Board also supports the TAHC's mission by ensuring that only qualified, licensed veterinarians perform veterinary services, including the diagnosis and reporting of diseases within the TAHC scope of regulation.

Federal Government: The Board partners with the Federal Drug Administration, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration in areas of enforcement.

The Board also works with a number of organizations and associations related to veterinarians and animals.

d. Texas As A Leader

The Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners has been a committed leader in the regulation of the veterinary profession at the national level. Texas Board members have been key in the initiation and development of programs that support the regulatory Boards in the U.S., the territories of the U.S., and Canada. In 1960, the Association of American Veterinary State Boards (AAVSB) was incorporated as a 501 (c)(3) corporation. Members of AAVSB meet annually to discuss regulatory issues and explore issues common to all. The AAVSB is governed by its Executive Committee, which consists of 7 members, 6 veterinarians and one public member, all elected from member Boards. The term for each member of the executive committee is two years, and the terms are staggered to assure continuity. Also as an assurance of continuity, the president actually serves four years: one year as president-elect, two years as president, and one year as past president.

Initially, AAVSB had no headquarters or staff; volunteers of member Boards conducted all activities. In the early 1990's, AAVSB began exploring the idea of developing a national disciplinary database. When a Board received an application from a veterinarian licensed in another state, it needed an effective method to determine an applicant's disciplinary history. Often applicants are, or were, licensed in several states. Those who had been revoked or had serious disciplinary actions in another state would simply not indicate they had been licensed in that state. It was not practical for the Board receiving an application to contact all other Boards to determine if the applicant had been licensed by them and if the applicant had serious disciplinary actions. Dr. Alton Hopkins, former member of the Texas Board, was instrumental in getting the states to agree to share their license and disciplinary information so that the database could be established. AAVSB hired staff and opened its first office in 1994. The national licensee database became operational that year.

This was the first of a series of services made available to member Boards. Since then the following programs and services have been developed. Texas has always had a representative on the AAVSB Executive Committee that initiated and developed these programs:

- The Practice Act Database and Directory of Licensing Requirements - This program was among the first services provided by AAVSB to member Boards. The Directory maintains up-to-date licensing and application requirements for each jurisdiction and their current laws and rules/regulations. This information can be accessed at AAVSB's website, www.aavsb.org.
- The Registry of Approved Continuing Education (RACE) - This program became operational in 1997. RACE was developed to help both licensing Boards and national and regional providers of continuing education (CE). Most state Boards require that they approve CE in order for a licensee to obtain credit for participation. Vendors would be required to seek individual approval of all state Boards in states they wanted to provide CE. Staff in those Boards would be required to review them for approval. RACE provides that service by contracting with professionals who assess those programs, simplifying the process for both the state Boards and the vendors.
- The Veterinary Information Verifying Agency (VIVA) - This program became operational in 1998. This service allows veterinarians to register their basic licensing credentials at a single source. Virtually every licensing entity requires basic documentation such as certified birth certificates, transcripts of graduation, and name changes after marriage. If a veterinarian seeks a license in more than one state, the veterinarian would need to obtain a certified copy of each of these documents. This process is both costly and time consuming. Now, licensees, mostly new graduates, routinely register with VIVA. Since the profession is becoming much more mobile, this service is very helpful to both veterinarians and licensing Boards.
- The Program for the Assessment of Veterinary Education Equivalence (PAVE) - In 2000, AAVSB delegates voted to establish an educational equivalence program for veterinarian graduates of non-accredited veterinary schools, most of which are graduates of foreign schools. A task force was established to determine the requirements for the program. The AAVSB Board created a Board to direct the program and establish operational policies. The program receives and reviews all documentation of academic work, requires affirmation of English language proficiency, requires passing a basic sciences examination, and affirmation of clinical proficiency. The latter can be met by completing the clinical year (the fourth year) at an accredited veterinary school or completion of a clinical skills examination. The later element became operational this January. Today thirty-eight states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands recognize the PAVE certificate and more are in the

process of changing their law or rules to do so. These states represent 46% of this nation's population. As of May 10, 2012, 1,136 veterinarians have received PAVE certificates.

- The need for sound assessment and accreditation of graduates of foreign and non-accredited veterinary schools is essential. Most predict that the 28 current veterinary colleges in the U.S. cannot supply all the veterinarians needed. The last state to add a veterinary college was California in 1998. A recent study by the American Veterinary Medical Association indicated that between 2002-2012, Texas would have 150 job openings each year. It is second only to California, which needs 200 new veterinarians annually. The need will exceed this nation's graduating capacity.
- Substantial progress has been made to develop new programs and strengthen the regulation of veterinary medicine in Texas and the other jurisdictions that make up the veterinary community with which we all interact. Members of the Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners will always be key players in that effort. Equine Dental Providers were added in 2011, and there is the possibility of Registered Veterinary Technicians will be added in 2014.

e. Agency Successes

1. Continuing Education

Based on changes to the Veterinary Licensing Act mandated by the 79th Legislature, the Board has adopted requirements relating to verifying continuing education credits for Texas veterinarians. Random CE audits by licensing, combined with the Enforcement division's efforts of compliance inspections, has strengthened the agency's continuing education program. The more stringent accounting requirements for both the provider and the attendee have resulted in a more reasonable assurance that the individual has completed the number of CE hours claimed.

2. Online Renewal

The 100% participation of eligible veterinarians for online renewal is being sought. Due to the licensing division's more aggressive advertising strategy to solicit improved participation, close to 91.3% of eligible veterinarians have renewed their license online during 2012.

3. Unlicensed Practice of Veterinary Medicine

As a result of Sunset Review, the Legislature amended our Act to authorize the agency to issue "Cease and Desist" orders to persons practicing veterinary medicine without a license effective Sept. 1, 2005. Due to budgetary constraints and having only a 3/4 time General Counsel, the agency undertook very little, if any, enforcement efforts on unauthorized practice cases. In early 2007, agency staff, with the support of the Board, began actively investigating such cases, including the unauthorized practice of equine dentistry. In 2011, the Texas Legislature gave the Board the power to license and regulate equine dental providers. The Board now investigates and prosecutes the unauthorized practice of both veterinary medicine and equine dentistry. Our enforcement staff conducted undercover investigations on two criminal cases involving "practicing without a license" offenses with local law enforcement. Arrests and prosecutions resulted.

The realization by the public that the Board now actively enforces the Veterinary Licensing Act has caused the Board to receive many complaints from the public regarding the unlawful practice of veterinary medicine and equine dentistry. We are limited in the number of these cases that can be filed and prosecuted due to limited manpower resources and the costs associated with a SOAH contested case. We also have several standard of care or malpractice cases that are in the process of SOAH trial preparation prior to filing. It has also become more common for Respondents to appear at our Informal Settlement Conferences represented by counsel, which creates added complexity and difficulty and increases the costs of litigation to the agency.

VI. Agency Goals

GOALS:

A. Board's Basic Purpose - The Board will ensure that safe and effective veterinary services are delivered to the citizens of Texas by establishing and implementing reasonable standards for veterinary practice, investigating complaints, and enforcing the Veterinary Licensing Act.

B. Historically Underutilized Businesses - The Board will continue to carry out internal policies governing purchases of goods and services that foster meaningful and substantive inclusion of historically underutilized businesses.

C. Customer Service - We will continue to manage agency resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible in order to produce the highest possible level of service and benefit to the citizens of the state, and the agency's licensees.

VII. Agency Objectives and Outcome Measures

- A. GOAL: Board's Basic Purpose - The Board will ensure that safe and effective veterinary services are delivered to the citizens of Texas by establishing and implementing reasonable standards for veterinary practice, investigating complaints, and enforcing the Veterinary Licensing Act.
- A1 OBJECTIVE: To operate a licensure system that will assure that 100 percent of all veterinarians meet minimum licensure standards.
Outcome Measure: Percent Of Licensees With No Recent Violations
Percent Of Licensees Who Renew Online
Percent of New Licensees Issued Online – The Board is currently exempted from the Outcome Measure relating to the percent of New Licenses Issued Online
- A1 STRATEGY: Operate an efficient and comprehensive veterinary licensure program to include initial licensure by examination and the ongoing renewal of licenses.
Output Measures: Number of New Licenses Issued to Individuals
Number of Licensees Renewed (Individuals)
Number of Individuals Examined
Efficiency Measures: Percentage of New Individual Licenses Issued within Ten Days
Percentage of Individual License Renewals Issued within Seven Days
Explanatory/Input Measures: Total Number of Individual Licenses
- A2 OBJECTIVE: To investigate all complaints received and take disciplinary action against veterinarians who have violated the law and/or Board rules, conduct a compliance program to secure voluntary compliance with the law and Board rules, and provide a peer assistance program to licensed professionals who are impaired because of chemical dependency.
Outcome Measures: Percent of Complaints Resulting in Disciplinary Action
Recidivism Rate for Those Receiving Disciplinary Action
Percent of Documented Complaints Resolved within Six Months
Recidivism Rate for Peer Assistance Program
One-Year Completion Rate for Peer Assistance Programs

- A2.1 STRATEGY: To investigate all complaints received and take disciplinary action against veterinarians who have violated the law and/or Board rules and conduct a compliance program to secure voluntary compliance with the law and Board rules.
- Output Measure: Number of Complaints Resolved
 Number of Compliance Inspections
 Number of Disciplinary Hearings
- Efficiency Measures: Average Time for Complaint Resolution
- Explanatory/Input Measures: Number of Jurisdictional Complaints Received
- A2.2 STRATEGY: Identify, refer, and assist those veterinarians whose practice is impaired because of chemical dependency.
- Output Measures: Number of Licensed Individuals Participating in a Peer Assistance Program
- B. GOAL: Historically Underutilized Businesses - The Board will establish and implement internal policies governing purchasing of goods and services that foster meaningful and substantive inclusion of historically underutilized businesses (HUBs).
- B1 OBJECTIVE: To include historically underutilized businesses (HUBs) in at least 20 percent of the total value of contracts and awarded annually by the agency in purchasing contracts by fiscal year 2015.
- Outcome Measure: Percentage of Total Dollar Value of Purchasing Contracts Awarded to HUBs
- B1.1 STRATEGY: Develop and implement a plan for increasing the use of historically underutilized businesses through purchasing contracts.
- Output Measures: Number of HUB Contractors and Subcontractors Contacted for Bid Proposals
 Number of HUB Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded
 Dollar Value of HUB Contracts and Subcontracts Awarded
- Strategies undertaken by the Board to increase HUB participation:*
- For purchases of \$2,000 to \$10,000, TBVME will solicit at least two of the three required informal bids from certified HUBs, one from a minority-owned business and one from a woman-owned business whenever possible.
 - For purchases from \$10,000 to \$25,000, TBVME will solicit at least two of the required formal bids from certified HUBs, one from a minority-owned business and one from a woman-owned business whenever possible.
 - The Board will maintain and monitor information monthly pertaining to the use of HUBs.
 - The HUB list maintained by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission will be used as a resource for obtaining names of new vendors by commodity code.
 - In formal Invitations for Bid where the use of subcontractors is a possibility, the Board will incorporate language to encourage use of HUBs.

- C. GOAL: We will manage agency resources in the most effective and efficient manner possible in order to produce the highest possible level of service and benefit to the citizens of the state.
- C1 OBJECTIVE: To maintain a minimum of 75% customer satisfaction level.
 Outcome Measures: Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Expressing Overall Satisfaction with Services Received.
 Percentage of Surveyed Customer Respondents Identifying Ways to Improve Service Delivery.
- C1.1 STRATEGY: Evaluate customer satisfaction and for those issues under our control, implement a program to improve areas, which are deficient.
 Output Measures: Number of Customers Surveyed
 Number of Customers Served
 Efficiency Measures: Cost per Customer Surveyed.
 Explanatory Measures: Number of Customers Identified
 Number of Customer Groups Inventoried.

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VIII. Appendices

- A. Description of the Agency's Planning Process
- B. Current Organizational Chart
- C. Five-Year Projections of Outcomes
- D. Performance Measure Definitions
- E. Implementing the Texas Transformation
- F. Workforce Plan

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DESCRIPTION OF AGENCY'S PLANNING PROCESS

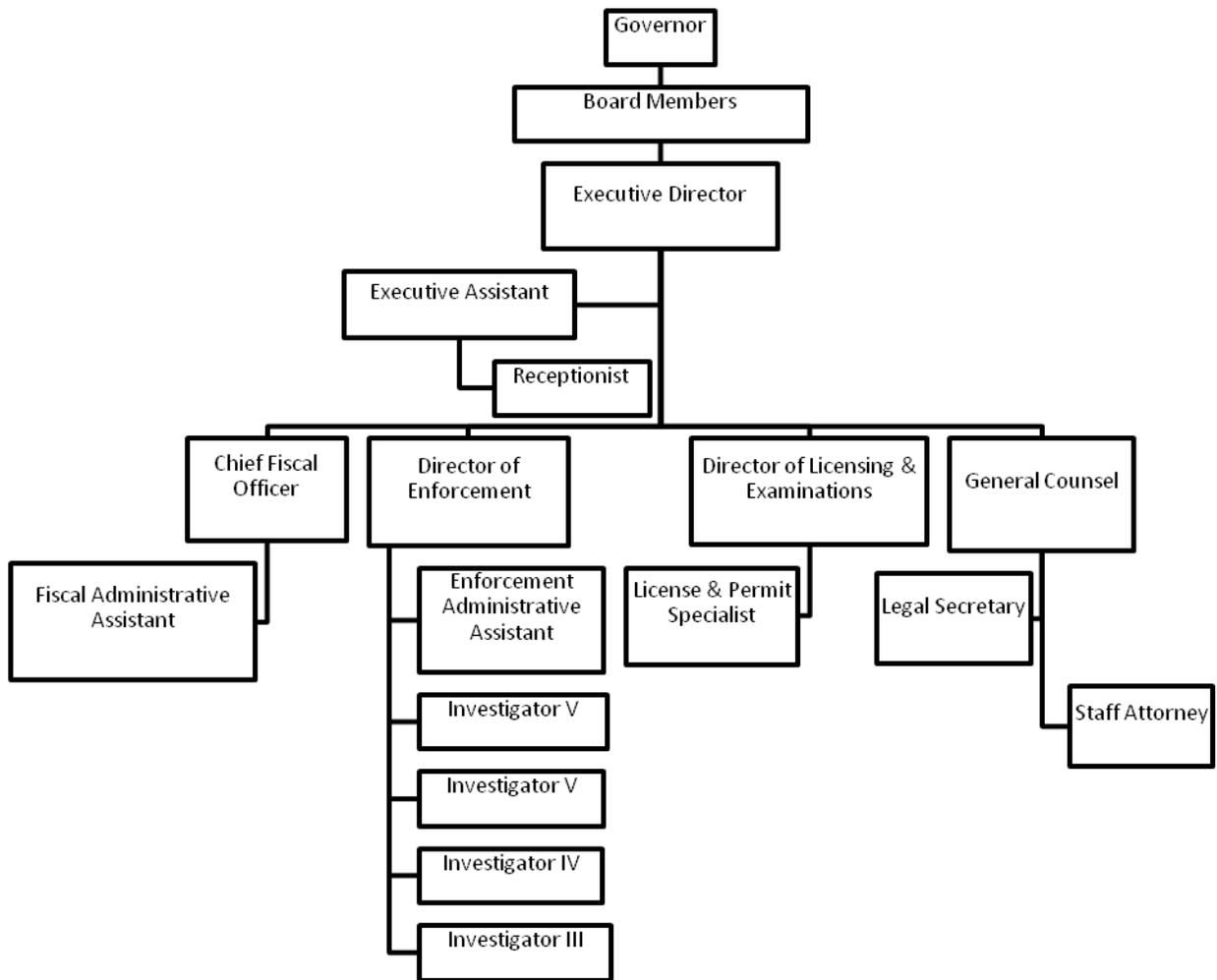
The Board's planning process parallels the biennial appropriations cycle. As the agency begins the cycle with the Strategic Plan and then the Legislative Appropriations Request (LAR), the Board's staff assesses changes in its environment and their effects on current and future resource needs. The Board normally meets three times per year, in March, July, and November. Board staff presents basic policy issues to be considered for the Strategic Plan. The agency's Strategic Plan and topics to be included in the LAR will be submitted to the Board at their July 2012 meeting for approval.

During the biennium, at each Board meeting, the Board is routinely kept updated and informed by the Executive Director on progress or plans, budgetary and operational issues. Policy and budgetary matters are addressed, and staff makes the corresponding operational and budgetary changes. The process is repeated at each meeting during the year.

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CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

**TEXAS BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICAL EXAMINERS
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART AS OF JUNE 1, 2012**



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FIVE-YEAR PROJECTION OF OUTCOMES

OUTCOME	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Percent of licensees with no recent violations	98%	98%	98%	98%	98%
Percent of complaints resulting in disciplinary action	15%	14%	14%	14%	14%
Recidivism rate for those receiving disciplinary action	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Percent of documented complaints resolved within six-months	60%	60%	60%	60%	60%
Recidivism rate for peer assistance programs	0%	6%	6%	6%	6%
One-year completion rate for peer assistance program	83%	94%	94%	94%	94%

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PERFORMANCE MEASURE DEFINITIONS

LICENSING STRATEGY

OUTCOME MEASURE

1) **Percent of Licensees with No Recent Violations**

Short Definition: The percent of the total number of licensed individuals at the end of the reporting period who have not incurred a violation within the current and preceding two years (three years total).

Purpose/Importance: Licensing individuals helps ensure that practitioners meet legal standards for professional education and practice, which is a primary agency goal. This measure is important because it indicates how effectively the agency's activities deter violations of professional standards established by statute and rule.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of licensing generates a report from the agency database, TexVets, which reflects the total number of veterinarians licensed as of the last day of the reporting period. The director of enforcement generates reports from TexVets, which reflect the veterinarians who incurred violations by fiscal year for the current and previous two fiscal years. If a licensee has multiple violations within one fiscal year, the licensee is counted only once.

Method of Calculation: The total number of individuals currently licensed by the agency who have not incurred a violation within the current and preceding two years divided by the total number of individuals currently licensed by the agency. The numerator for this measure is calculated by subtracting the total number of licensees with violations during the three-year period from the total number of licensees at the end of the reporting period. The denominator is the total number of licensees at the end of the reporting period. The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of individuals licensed.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

2) **Percent of Licensees Who Renew Online**

Short Definition: Percentage of the total number of eligible licensed, registered, or certified individuals that renewed their license, registration, or certification during the period. Ineligible licensees are those whose license has expired and a late fee is due; licensees who have to renew but pay no fee such as military or retired practitioners; and licensees who wish to change their current status.

Purpose/Importance: To track use of online license renewal technology by the licensee population.

Source/Collection of Data: The information comes from the agency licensing database, a manually maintained spreadsheet, and a report, which is automatically generated, on a daily bases through a data file exchanges with the state's online. This report identifies individuals who paid their renewal fee the previous day via online access. The director of Licensing generates a computer listing which is then compared to the data received from the online vendor, the comptroller's report on money received and the spreadsheet.

Method of Calculation: The number of individual licenses, registration, or certifications renewed online divided by the total number of individual, registrations, or certifications renewed during the reporting period. The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of licensees who avail themselves of the renewal technology.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

3) Percent of New Individual Licenses Issued Online

Short Definition: Percent of all new eligible persons submitting application information and scheduling the licensing exam online during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: To track use of online license issuance technology by the licensee population.

Source/Collection of Data: The information comes from the agency licensing database, a manually maintained spreadsheet, and a report which is automatically generated on a daily basis through a data file exchange with the state's online. This report identifies individuals who paid their application fee the previous day via online access. The Director of Licensing generates a computer listing which is then compared to the data received from the online vendor, the comptroller's report on money received and the spreadsheet.

Method of Calculation: The total number of new licenses, registrations, or certifications issued to individuals online divided by the total number of new licenses, registrations, or certifications issued to individuals during the reporting period. The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of individuals who avail themselves of the online technology.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than target

OUTPUT MEASURES

1) Number of New Licenses Issued to Individuals

Short Definition: The number of licenses issued to previously unlicensed individuals during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: A successful licensing structure must ensure that legal standards for professional education and practice are met prior to licensure. This measure is a primary workload indicator which is intended to show the number of unlicensed persons who were documented to have successfully met all licensure criteria established by statute and rule as verified by the agency during the reporting period.

Source/Collection of Data: The information comes from the agency licensing database, TexVets, that records those individuals newly licensed in the state. A paper copy of the logs listing the names of individuals newly licensed (as a regular or special licensee) during the reporting period is printed by the director of licensing. The number of regular licensees is added to the number of special licensees. The total is verified and the lists are maintained in the binder containing licensing performance report documentation. For the annual report, the number of licensees on the annual log is reconciled to the sum of the number of licenses issued each quarter.

Method of Calculation: This measure counts the total number of licenses issued to previously unlicensed individuals during the reporting period, regardless of when the application was originally received. Those individuals who had a license in the previous reporting period are not counted. Only new licensees are counted. Provisional licensees are not counted. Licenses are counted as new for persons who were previously licensed, but whose license was cancelled by authority of law or upon request. These licensees are required to meet all criteria of a new applicant.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of applicants for licensure or the pass rate of applicants on the exam.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

2) Number of Licenses Renewed (Individuals)

Short Definition: The number of licensed individuals who held licenses previously and renewed their license during the current reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: Licensure renewal is intended to ensure that persons who want to continue to practice in their respective profession satisfy current legal standards established by statute and rule for professional education and practice. This measure is intended to show the number of license renewals that were issued during the reporting period to individuals who currently held a valid license.

Source/Collection of Data: The information comes from the agency licensing database. The director of licensing generates a paper copy of the log listing the names of all individuals whose license was renewed during the reporting period. The director reviews the list to identify any licensees who have renewed previously as inactive, military, or retired and subsequently change status. The list is marked accordingly to designate those individuals and they are not counted again. After this adjustment, the total number of names shown on the list is counted and recorded on the paper copy by the director of licensing. The list is maintained in the binder containing licensing performance measure documentation.

Method of Calculation: The measure is calculated by querying the agency licensing database to produce a list containing the names of individuals who have renewed their licenses during the previous reporting period. Deduct the number of individuals on the report who have renewed previously as inactive, military, or retired and subsequently changed status, since they have been counted previously. For the annual report, the number of licensees on the annual list is reconciled to the sum of the number of licenses renewed each quarter. With the exception of deducting the “duplicate”, or status change renewals, this is automated and the system does the calculations.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over the number of licensees who choose to renew or not renew their Texas license.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than target

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

1) **Percentage of New Individual Licenses Issued within Ten Days**

Short Definition: The percentage of initial individual license applications that were processed during the reporting period within ten days measured from the time in days elapsed from receipt of the initial completed application until the date the license is mailed.

Purpose/Importance: This measures the ability of the agency to process new applications in a timely manner and its responsiveness to a primary constituent group.

Source/Collection of Data: Application for a new license is considered complete when all required elements have been provided to the agency, including exam grades and evidence of graduation. Applicants must take and pass the required exams prior to licensure. Data from the application is entered into TexVets, including the date of receipt of the last element. At the time an individual's license is prepared for mailing, the date mailed is entered into TexVets. A license is considered mailed on the date it is delivered to the mail room. The calculation is made using all regular and special licenses mailed during the reporting period; no sampling is used. Records are in the binder containing performance measure documentation.

Method of Calculation: At the end of each reporting period, the director of licensing prints a report which shows for each license issued during the reporting period the number of calendar days which elapsed between receipt of the completed application and license mailing. The director verifies that the number of licenses issued is the same as in the performance measure "Number of New Licenses Issued to Individuals." If there is a discrepancy, it is investigated and reconciled. The number of initial individual licenses which were mailed in ten calendar days or less from the date of initial application receipt is divided by the total number of individual licenses mailed during the reporting period. The resulting number is multiplied by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Data Limitations: None identified

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

2) **Percentage of Individual License Renewals Issued within Seven Days**

Short Definition: The percentage of individual license renewal applications that were processed during the reporting period within seven days of receipt, measured from the time in calendar days elapsed from receipt of the renewal application until the date the renewal license is mailed.

Purpose/Importance: This measures the ability of the agency to process renewal application in a timely manner and its responsiveness to a primary constituent group.

Source/Collection of Data: A renewal application is not considered complete until all required elements are correctly submitted. Data from the application is entered into TexVets, including the date of receipt. When an individual's renewal certificate is prepared for mailing, the date mailed is entered into TexVets. A license is considered mailed on the date it is delivered to the mail room. At the end of each reporting period, the director of licensing prints a report which shows for each individual license renewed the number of calendar days which elapsed between initial receipt and mailing of the renewal certificate. The calculation is made using all renewal certificates mailed during the reporting period; no sampling is used. The list is kept in the binder containing licensing performance measure documentation.

Method of Calculation: The director verifies that the number of renewal licenses issued on the report is the same as in the performance measure “Number of Licenses Renewed (Individuals).” If there is a discrepancy, it is investigated and reconciled. The number of renewal licenses which were mailed in seven calendar days or less from the date of renewal application receipt is divided by the total number of renewal licenses mailed during the reporting period. The resulting number is multiplied by 100 to convert it to a percentage.

Data Limitations: None identified

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

EXPLANATORY MEASURES

1) Total Number of Individuals Licensed

Short Definition: Total number of individuals licensed at the end of the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the total number of individual licenses currently issued which indicates the size of one of the agency’s primary constituencies.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of licensing runs a report off the licensing database, TexVets, on the last day of the reporting period, which gives the total number of individuals, licensed as of that date. The report is kept in the binder containing licensing performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The report gives the total number of individuals licensed by category (regular, inactive, special, provisional, retired, and military) on the last day of the reporting period. Licenses in delinquent status are included. The total number of licensees in each category is added to calculate the total of all licensees.

Data Limitations: This is a “snapshot” of licensees on the last day of the reporting period, not the total number of individuals who have been licensed during the year.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

OUTCOME MEASURES

1) Percent of Complaints Resulting in Disciplinary Action

Short Definition: Percent of complaints, which were resolved during the reporting period that resulted in disciplinary action.

Purpose/Importance: The measure is intended to show the extent to which the agency exercises its disciplinary authority in proportion to the number of complaints received. It is important that both the public and licensees have an expectation that the agency will work to ensure fair and effective enforcement of the act and this measure seeks to indicate agency responsiveness to this expectation.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of enforcement runs a report off the TexVets, which lists all the complaints resolved for the period. The report contains a category, which lists all the complaints resulting in disciplinary actions (complaints closed to Board order). The total number of complaints resolved and the complaints resulting in disciplinary actions are calculated by TexVets and recorded on the report. The reports are kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period that resulted in disciplinary action (numerator) is divided by the total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period (denominator). The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage. Disciplinary actions are contained in Board orders, which may include reprimands, suspensions, probation, revocation, and/or fines on which the Board has acted.

Data Limitations: When a disciplinary action resolves multiple complaints against one veterinarian, this figure is inflated. Also, resolution of a number of minor continuing education complaints can cause this figure to be inflated.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

2) **Recidivism Rate for Those Receiving Disciplinary Action**

Short Definition: The number of repeat offenders at the end of the reporting period as a percentage of all offenders during the most recent three-year period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure is intended to show how effectively the agency enforces its regulatory requirements and prohibitions. It is important that the agency enforce its act and rules strictly enough to ensure consumers are protected from unsafe, incompetent and unethical practice by the licensed professional.

Source/Collection of Data: The director of enforcement runs reports off the TexVets by fiscal year for the current and previous two fiscal years, which show the disciplinary actions taken. If multiple disciplinary actions have been taken against one licensee within a fiscal year, the additional disciplinary actions are marked accordingly and deducted off the total number of disciplinary actions to reflect only the number of offenders. The number of licensees to whom disciplinary actions have been taken by fiscal year are added together to achieve the total. The reports are then reviewed and marked to identify licensees who have received disciplinary action in two or more years. The total number of individuals against whom two or more disciplinary actions have been taken within the current and preceding two fiscal years are noted on the report. The reports are kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The number of individuals against whom two or more disciplinary actions were taken by the Board within the current and preceding two fiscal years (numerator) is divided by the total number of individuals receiving disciplinary actions within the current and preceding two fiscal years (denominator). The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitation: None identified

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than Target

3) **Percent of Documented Complaints Resolved Within Six Months**

Short Definition: The percent of complaints resolved during the reporting period that were resolved within a six month period from the time they were initially received by the agency.

Purpose/Importance: The measure is intended to show the percentage of complaints, which are resolved within a reasonable period of time. It is important to ensure the swift enforcement of the Veterinary Act, which is an agency goal.

Source/Collection of Data: Complaints and date of receipt are entered into the TexVets upon receipt. A complaint is considered closed when the Board takes final action on it, or when it is closed to no violation. The closing date is determined by the date final action is taken by the Board or the date the determination is made that a violation did not occur. The closing date is entered into TexVets. The director of enforcement runs a report off TexVets, which lists all the complaints resolved during the fiscal year with date of receipt, date of resolution, and number of calendar days to resolve each complaint. The total number of complaints resolved is calculated by TexVets and recorded at the end of the report. The number of complaints resolved in 180 days or less is manually counted and written on the report. The reports are kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The number of complaints resolved within a period of six months or less from the date of receipt (numerator) is divided by the total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period (denominator). The result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: Two Board members, who are practicing veterinarians, review cases requiring veterinary expertise subsequent to investigation by the staff. This involves extra time for documents to be shipped and reviewed by these Board members as staff lacks the requisite veterinary expertise to determine whether a standard of care violation has occurred. Also, the Board holds only three meetings per year. Complaints resolved by Board order are not complete until final action has been taken by the Board; therefore, a significant amount of time can be accrued awaiting final action at the next Board meeting. Complaints are resolved when the staff or the reviewing veterinarian determine there is no violation, the complaint is dismissed during the Informal Settlement Conference Board, the Board and the licensee sign the agreed order, or the complaint is referred to the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

OUTPUT MEASURES

1) Number of Compliance Inspections

Short Definition: The number of compliance inspections conducted during a reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the workload involved in conducting routine inspections of veterinarians. This is also an educational program, which serves to identify problems and thereby potentially reduce the number of complaints against veterinarians.

Source/Collection of Data: The Director of Enforcement maintains a log of all compliance inspections conducted. A count is taken of all compliance inspections conducted in the fiscal period. The report is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The number of compliance inspections conducted during a reporting period. In instances of multiple licensees in a practice, the number of inspections is determined by the number of licensees in a practice.

Data Limitations: The number of compliance inspections conducted is limited by the amount of travel budget available. Also, many compliance inspections can be conducted in a short time within an urban area, where multiple veterinarians practice within one clinic and clinics are geographically located in close proximity. However, in a rural area, where there are many sole practitioners and distances between clinics are geographically further apart, fewer compliance inspections can be conducted.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

2) Number of Complaints Resolved

Short Definition: The total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period. Complaints are resolved when the staff or the reviewing veterinarian determine there is no violation, the complaint is dismissed during the Informal Settlement Conference Board, the Board and the licensee sign the agreed order, or the complaint is referred to the State Office of Administrative Hearings.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the workload associated with resolving complaints.

Source/Collection of Data: Complaints are entered into the Tex Vets upon receipt. A complaint is considered resolved when final action is taken by the Board or for which a determination is made that a violation did not occur. The closing date is entered into Tex Vets. The director of enforcement runs a report off Tex Vets which lists all the complaints resolved during the fiscal year. The total number of complaints resolved is calculated by Tex Vets and recorded at the end of the report. The report is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total number of complaints during the reporting period upon which final action was taken by the Board or for which a determination is made that a violation did not occur. A complaint that, after preliminary investigation, is determined to be non-jurisdictional is not a resolved complaint. The number of resolved complaints is calculated by TexVets and reflected on the last page of the report.

Data Limitations: The Board Secretary (who is a practicing veterinarian) reviews cases requiring veterinary expertise subsequent to investigation by the staff. This involves extra time for documents to be shipped and reviewed by a Board member, not a full-time employee. Also, the Board holds only three meetings per year. Complaints resolved by Board order are not complete until final action has been taken by the Board; therefore, a significant amount of time can be accrued awaiting final action at the next Board meeting.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

Board

EFFICIENCY MEASURES

1) Average Time for Complaint Resolution

Short Definition: The average length of time to resolve a complaint, for all complaints resolved during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the agency's efficiency in resolving complaints.

Source/Collection of Data: Dates of receipt and dates of resolution are entered into the TexVets. The director of enforcement runs a report off TexVets which records all the complaints resolved during the reporting period, the total number of calendar days during the reporting period associated with those complaints, and the total number of complaints resolved. TexVets calculates the average number of days per complaint resolved and that is recorded at the end of the computer report. The report is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation. The data is stored on TexVets.

Method of Calculation: The total number of calendar days to resolve all complaints closed during the reporting period (numerator) divided by the total number of complaints resolved during the reporting period (denominator).

Data Limitations: The Board Secretary (who is a practicing veterinarian) reviews cases requiring veterinary expertise subsequent to investigation by the staff. This involves extra time for documents to be shipped and reviewed by a non full-time employee. Occasionally complaints are delayed many months and in a few cases more than a year pending the administrative hearing process at the State Office of Administrative Hearings. Also, the Board holds only three meetings per year. Complaints resolved by Board order are not complete until final action has been taken by the Board; therefore, a significant amount of time can be accrued awaiting final action at the next Board meeting.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than Target

EXPLANATORY MEASURES

1) Number of Jurisdictional Complaints Received

Short Definition: The total number of complaints received during the reporting period, which are within the agency's jurisdiction of statutory responsibility.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows the number of jurisdictional complaints, which helps determine agency workload.

Source/Collection of Data: When a complaint is received, it is entered into a manual log. Complaints are numbered sequentially within a fiscal year. (Example: 02-001, 02-002, etc.) The Director of Enforcement counts the number of complaints received during the reporting period and notes the total on a copy of the log. This copy is kept in the binder containing enforcement performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total number of complaints received during the reporting period. This does not include complaints, which upon preliminary investigation, are determined to be non-jurisdictional. The agency generally accepts written complaints only.

Data Limitations: The Board has no control over the number of complaints received.

Calculation Type: Cumulative

New Measure: No

PEER ASSISTANCE STRATEGY

OUTCOME MEASURES

1) Recidivism Rate for Peer Assistance Programs

Short Definition: The percentage of individuals who receive related disciplinary action within three years of completion of the peer assistance program.

Purpose/Importance: The measure is intended to show the three-year recidivism rate for those individuals who have been through the peer assistance program. It is important because it indicates the extent that consumers are being protected from unsafe, incompetent and unethical veterinary practice as a result of participating in the peer assistance program.

Source/Collection of Data: Due to the confidential nature of this program, the program administrator for the peer assistance program maintains the files. Agency staff does not have access to any of the participant files. As a reference, case numbers are assigned to the participants by fiscal year (Example: 02-01, 02-02, etc). Agency records refer to participants only by initials and case number. The program administrator provides participant completion dates. The peer assistance contact on staff (an investigator) provides the names of licensees who have had disciplinary actions imposed which were related to substance abuse. Forms have been devised to capture the necessary data. Data includes the date of program completion for each participant by case number and any related disciplinary action by fiscal year. Based on this information, the fiscal officer calculates the recidivism rate. The reporting forms and spreadsheet are kept in the binders containing peer assistance performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: Of all individuals successfully completing the program in fiscal X-3 (where X is the current fiscal year), the percent of individuals receiving related disciplinary action from the Board anytime between the beginning of fiscal year X-3 and the end of fiscal year X (i.e., the current fiscal year).

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over participants who relapse. In addition, the number of participants in the program is relatively small. Individuals must sign a contract to participate for a minimum of two years. Therefore, a very small number of participants complete the program each year. Consequently, the relapse of one person can produce a large percentage change.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Lower than Target

2) **One-year Completion Rate for Peer Assistance Program**

Short Definition: Percent of individuals who participated in the peer assistance program during the year prior to the reporting period and have not relapsed during the one year period.

Purpose/Importance: This measure is important because it indicates the extent that consumers are being protected from unsafe, incompetent and unethical veterinary practice as a result of participating in the peer assistance program.

Source/Collection of Data: Due to the confidential nature of this program, the program administrator for the peer assistance program maintains the files. Agency staff does not have access to any of the participant files. As a reference, case numbers are assigned to the participants by fiscal year (Example: 02-01, 02-02, etc). Agency records refer to participants only by initials and case number. When a participant enters the program, the program administrator provides the entrance date, which is the date the participant signs the contract. For each reporting period, the program administrator identifies any participants who have suffered relapses and the relapse date. A relapse is defined as any use of mood-altering substances. Forms have been devised to capture the necessary data. The fiscal officer calculates the one-year completion rate. The reporting forms and spreadsheet are kept in the binder containing peer assistance performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: Of all individuals who participated in the peer assistance program in fiscal year X-1 (where X is the current fiscal year), the percent who have successfully participated in the program for one year with no relapses. Numerator: Participants in the program in X-1 who have not suffered a relapse. Denominator: Participants participating in the program in X-1. The numerator is divided by the denominator and result is multiplied by 100 to achieve a percentage.

Data Limitations: The agency has no control over participants who relapse. With so few participants in the program, the relapse of one person can produce a large percentage change.

Calculation Type: Non-cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

OUTPUT MEASURES

1) Number of Licensed Individuals Participating in a Peer Assistance Program

Short Definition: The number of licensed individuals who participated in a peer assistance program sponsored by the agency during the reporting period.

Purpose/Importance: The measure shows licensed individuals who continue to practice in their respective field who are participating in a substance abuse program.

Source/Collection of Data: Due to the confidential nature of this program, the program administrator for the peer assistance program maintains the files. As a reference, case numbers are assigned to the participants by fiscal year (Example: 02-01, 02-02, etc.). Agency records refer to participants only by initials and case number. The program administrator provides the data regarding participants for the reporting period. Forms have been devised to capture the necessary data. The fiscal officer calculates the number of licensed individuals participating in the program each reporting period. The reporting forms are kept in the binder containing peer assistance performance report documentation.

Method of Calculation: The total number of all licensees who participated in the program at some point during the reporting period. Participants are individuals who have signed a contract to participate and are subject to ongoing monitoring requirements. Participants who have not yet signed a contract are not counted. Contracts are normally written for a two year period. Occasionally, the program administrator will extend the participant's contract (prior to expiration) beyond the initial two year period. In this case, the original case number is maintained and the individual is not counted again. Occasionally, a participant successfully completes the program and subsequently re-enters after a lapse of time. In this case, a new case number is assigned and the individual is treated as a new participant.

Data Limitations: Persons who are served before signing a contract are not counted. Involvement in the program customarily begins with intervention, then usually proceeds to in-patient treatment. Only after an individual has completed treatment does he or she sign a peer assistance contract. Many hours of service take place in the preliminary process prior to the signing of a contract.

Calculation: Non-Cumulative

New Measure: No

Desired Performance: Higher than Target

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Texas Board Of Veterinary Medical Examiners



Workforce Plan

June 2012

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OVERVIEW OF AGENCY SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners was created in 1911 by the 32nd Legislature and charged with regulating the practice of veterinary medicine, surgery and dentistry. As the years have passed, different legislative bodies have refined the Board's responsibilities and authority. The Board's current enabling legislation is located in Chapter 801, Texas Occupations Code.

Agency Mission

The mission of the Board is to establish and enforce policies to ensure the best possible quality of veterinary and equine dental provider services for the people of Texas.

Agency Programs

Today, the Board's primary program responsibilities include Licensing and Examination, Legal/Enforcement, and Peer Assistance.

Licensing and Examination

The Licensing and Examination division is charged with ensuring that only those persons who have demonstrated the ability to meet or exceed the minimum qualifications required to be a licensed veterinarian in the state of Texas enter the practice and provide veterinary services to Texas citizens. The Board is also responsible for renewing the more than 7,756 licenses currently held by practitioners, and for collecting fees associated with the licensing and examination functions.

Through its licensing and examination efforts, the Board collected in excess of \$2.6 million for FY2011. This amount includes fees collected for Peer Assistance, application and exam fees, and licensing and license renewal fees. Also included in the total revenue collected is a \$200 professional tax for most licenses issued or renewed.

Enforcement

The enforcement program is designed to protect consumers of veterinary and equine dental provider services and ensure both veterinarians and equine dental providers comply with the Veterinary Licensing Act through the investigation of complaints and compliance inspections as well as the investigation of the unlicensed practice of veterinary medicine.

The legislature has granted the Board authority to utilize many tools for the enforcement efforts. Those tools include the ability to refuse to examine an applicant; suspension, probation or revocation of a license; issue reprimands, require the make up of missed continuing education and/or requiring additional continuing education; impose administrative penalties; and hold settlement conferences concerning alleged violations of the Act.

Peer Assistance

The Peer Assistance program assists veterinarians and veterinary students who are impaired by chemical dependency or mental illness.

The program, authorized by Chapter 467 of the Health and Safety Code, is administered under contract through the Professional Recovery Network and is approved by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse.

Our Compact with Texans

The Texas State Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners is the State's agency that regulates the practice of veterinary medicine by licensing and regulating veterinarians. It also takes action against non-licensed persons who violate the Veterinary Licensing Act by practicing without a license. The Board and its staff are committed to excellence in their service to the public and the veterinary profession. The Board's first priority is to protect the public. It must maintain high standards for veterinarians who seek licensure in Texas and those who are already in practice. The Board also has a commitment to its licensees to keep them informed about the law, its rules, and related information.

All individuals who contact the Board can expect:

- Easy access to agency services;
- Consumer friendly processes;
- Agency staff that are courteous, knowledgeable, and responsive to their needs;
- Answers to questions and requests for information provided in a timely manner; and
- Services provided in an efficient manner that meets the customer's needs and yet remains fiscally responsible.

I. AGENCY STRATEGIC DIRECTION

A. Agency Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal: To establish and implement reasonable standards for veterinary practice, investigate complaints, and enforce Chapter 801, Texas Occupations Code, to ensure that safe and effective veterinary services are delivered to the citizens of Texas.

Objective: To operate a licensure system that will assure that 100 percent of all veterinarians meet minimum licensure standards.

Strategy: Operate an effective and comprehensive veterinary licensure program to include initial licensure by examination and ongoing renewal of licenses.

Objective: To investigate all complaints received and take disciplinary action against veterinarians who have violated the law and/or Board rules; conduct a compliance program to secure voluntary compliance with the law and Board rules; and provide a peer assistance program to licensed professionals who are impaired because of chemical dependency.

Strategy: To investigate all complaints received within strategy guidelines and take disciplinary action against veterinarians who have violated the law and/or Board rules and conduct a compliance program to secure voluntary compliance with the law and Board rules.

Strategy: Identify, refer, and assist veterinarians whose practice is impaired because of chemical dependency or mental health issues.

B. Anticipated Changes to Strategies

The Board anticipates many changes over the coming years due to changes within veterinary medicine, technology, reduced funding levels, an increase in licensees and an increase in complaints received. These changes will present challenges that the Board will endeavor to meet.

The Board has historically seen an increase in licensees each fiscal year. Additionally, the number of complaints received by the Board, while fluid, has consistently risen over the years. In addition, the number of licenses and non-licensees seeking contested hearings before the State Office of Administrative Hearings has steadily increased over the years. These trends toward increased workloads will require adjustments in the agency's business processes and additional staff in order to meet the needs of our customers and strategic requirements.

As our world becomes more technology driven, the Board will continue to make adjustments to accommodate such changes, including an increasing number of licensees renewing online and the need to provide more consumer information on the agency's website.

C. Budget/Financial Forecasts

Severe budget constraints have impacted the agency negatively in the area of workforce, specifically in the investigator positions. The lack of equitable pay has led to a high turnover rate in the enforcement division. This lack of equitable pay coupled with the Board's investigators not being peace officers has impeded the Board's ability to attract qualified staff when vacancies occur. Qualified individuals in the law enforcement area are concerned about losing their own peace officer status by working for an agency without such status as well as the possible loss of additional weekend pay potentially available with other entities as a peace officer.

In an effort to improve the agency's ability to attract and retain qualified staff, the Board will seek additional funding as an exceptional item during the next Legislative session. These funds will be utilized to attract and retain qualified staff as needed.

D. Anticipated Legislative Changes

During the upcoming Legislative session, the Board anticipates a significant change that will impact its ability to meet strategic requirements and serve its customers. Specifically the Board anticipates legislation to authorize the Board to license and regulate Registered Veterinary Technicians (RVTs). Should this legislation be enacted, the Board anticipates the need for one additional investigator as well as two additional licensing administrative positions.

Primarily, the Board will seek authorization and funding for new positions to meet the growing workload.

E. Scope of Workforce Plan

This Workforce Plan will address areas most critical to meeting agency strategic requirements and customer needs, and ensuring the agency's compliance with the State Classification Plan.

II. WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

A. Current Workforce

The Board's current workforce consists of 16 full time positions. Classifications include:

- Executive Director
- Executive Assistant II
- General Counsel II
- Manager III
- Investigator V (2)
- Investigator IV (1)
- Investigator III (1)
- Program Supervisor VI
- Administrative Assistant I (2)
- Administrative Assistant II (1)
- Accountant V
- Licensing and Permit Specialist II
- Legal Secretary II
- Attorney II

B. Critical Workforce Skills

There are numerous skills necessary for successful completion of the agency's core functions. These skills include:

- Executive Level Management
- Customer Service
- Investigative
- Analysis/Research
- Mediation/Arbitration
- Communication (Oral and Written)

- Legal Experience
- Problem Solving
- Critical Thinking
- State Budgeting/Governmental Fund Accounting
- Advanced Computer Skills
- Business Office Management
- Computer Skills (skill requirements range from entry-level to highly-skilled information technology specialists)

C. Workforce Demographics

As of June 1, 2012, the Board had a total headcount of 16 employees. The agency is authorized to have a total of 16 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The following tables profile the agency’s workforce as of June 1, 2012.

Gender		
	Number of Employees	Percent of Employees
Male	5	31%
Female	11	69%

Age		
	Number of Employees	Percent of Employees
20 – 29 years	3	18%
30 – 39 years	2	13%
40 – 49 years	5	31%
50 – 59 years	4	25%
60 – 69 years	2	13%

State Tenure		
	Number of Employees	Percent of Employees
0 – 5 years	9	56%
6 – 10 years	2	13%
11 – 15 years	2	13%
16 – 20 years	0	0%
21 – 25 years	1	6%
26 – 30 years	0	0%
31 – 35 years	1	6%

Agency Tenure		
	Number of Employees	Percent of Employees
0 – 5 years	12	75%
6 – 10 years	1	6%
11 – 15 years	2	13%
16 – 20 years	0	0%
21 – 25 years	1	6%

D. Workforce As Compared With Statewide Civilian Workforce

The following table compares the Board’s percentage of African American, Hispanic and Female employees to the statewide civilian workforce as reported by the Texas Workforce Commission Civil Rights Division.

Job Category	African American		Hispanic American		Female	
	Board%	State %	Board %	State %	Board %	State %
Officials/Administrators	0%	7.5%	0%	21.1%	100%	37.5%
Professionals	0%	9.7%	17%	18.8%	17%	53.3%
Administrative Support	0%	12.7%	20%	31.9%	100%	67.1%

The Board is under-represented in all of the African American and Hispanic categories as well as in the Professional category for females. Because the Board has a small number of staff, only 16 FTEs, and maintains a small budget, \$969,149 for FY2012 and \$969,150 for FY2013, the Board faces many challenges in attracting a diverse group of applicants from which to choose the most qualified applicants when vacancies arise. A small staff means that vacancies are infrequent and promotional opportunities are very limited. A small budget limits the Board in its competitiveness with larger entities and its ability to recruit entry-level personnel because the Board has to seek staff that have already developed skills, and funds are limited for staff development.

The Board continues to utilize as many tools as possible to seek a diverse applicant pool, including advertising with Work In Texas, a web based job Board with the Texas Workforce Commission, providing copies of announcements for all positions to be filled externally to minority and women’s organizations, and, when funding is available, placing advertisements in local newspapers. The Board has developed a Recruitment Plan, which is utilized and updated as necessary to address the deficiencies.

E. Employee Turnover

Turnover experienced by the Board can be attributed to salary dissatisfaction, increased workload as a result of legislative initiatives, and an increasing licensee base, and lack of advancement opportunities. In past years, the Board has been able to utilize merit increases, one-time merits and other retention tools to encourage employees to remain with the Board. While the Legislature has provided sufficient tools for the attraction and retention of highly qualified employees, the lack of funding has not allowed the agency to utilize them.

Following is a chart that shows the Board’s turnover rate as compared to the overall State turnover for fiscal years 2007 – 2011.

Fiscal Year	TBVME	State
2011	26.7%	16.8%
2010	19.0%	14.6%
2009	16.7%	14.4%
2008	24.5%	17.3%
2007	29.3%	17.4%

F. Employee Attrition – Retirement

The Board currently has 2 employees are eligible for retirement, representing 13% of the Board’s workforce. In addition, the Board currently employs 1 return-to-work retiree, 7% of its workforce. This means that the Board is at risk of losing 20% of its workforce over the next 5 years. The loss of institutional knowledge and expertise within the agency, coupled with normal attrition, poses a critical workforce dilemma for the Board as well as the state.

To combat the loss of institutional knowledge and expertise as these employees leave the agency, the Board continues to document job procedures and agency history. The Board will also continue to cross train its employees to allow for a smoother transition as employees leave.

G. Agency Workforce Needs – Expected Workforce Changes

- Attrition through retirement;
- Increased need for additional staff due to changes in workload;
- Increased use of technology to revise and streamline work processes; and
- Greater demand for web-related services;

H. Anticipated Program and Workload Changes and Shortfalls

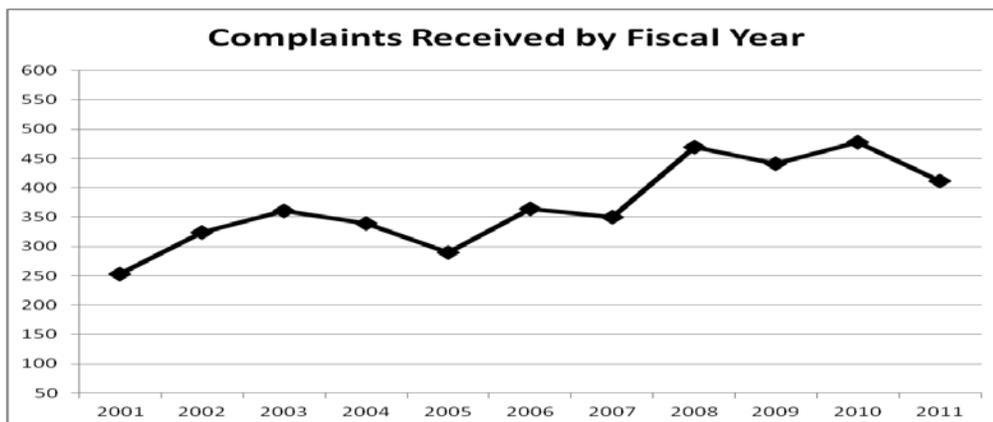
Enforcement

Veterinary medicine is an ever-changing field. With constant advances in medical technology and changes in treatment protocols, the demands placed on veterinarians are increasing by leaps and bounds. In addition, many individuals see themselves as guardians of animals instead of owners, placing more emphasis on the emotional attachment to animals. Some individuals even see their animals as companions. This opens the door to more litigation and more complaints. As a result of these changes, the number of complaints received by the Board has increased. For FY 2012, the Board anticipates receiving in excess of 400 complaints.

Each individual investigator has a responsibility to investigate a complaint by contacting both the complainant and the responding licensee, gathering information relating to the complaint including patient records and other documentation from both parties to support their argument and obtaining second opinions from veterinarians not connected to the case. In order to allow the Board to make a fair decision, investigators are required to delve into medical matters and understand medical processes and terminology to allow them to write comprehensive, informative reports of investigation that are then sent, along with supporting documentation, for medical review. They also attend informal settlement conferences to provide information to the enforcement committee and answer questions. In addition to the investigation of complaints, Board investigators complete special investigations as needed and spend one to two hours per day on the phone answering questions relating to the laws and rules that govern veterinary medicine.

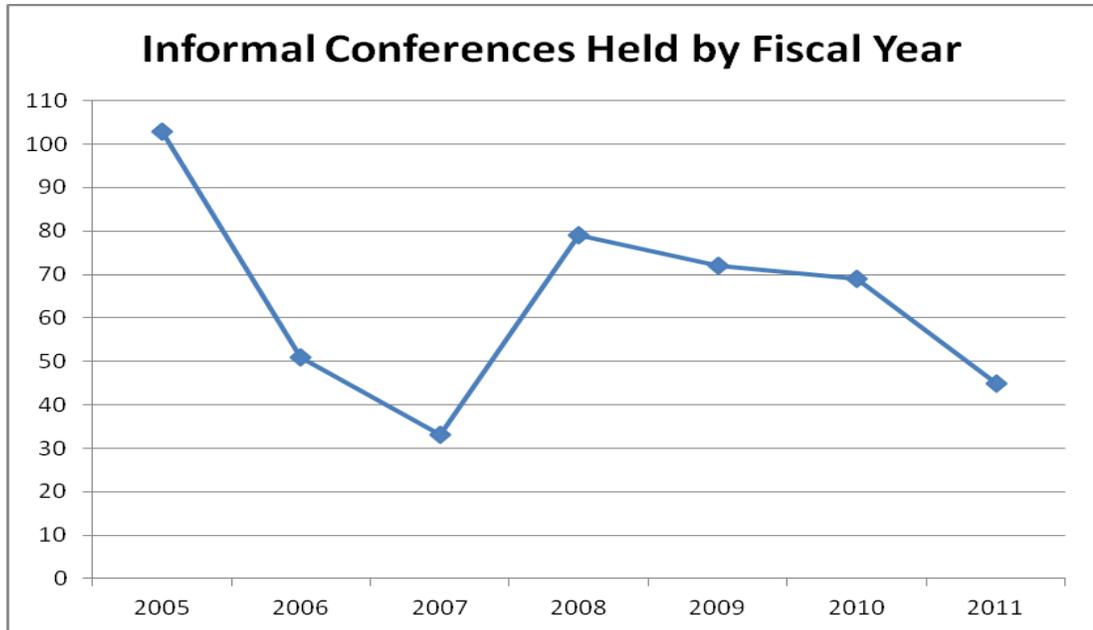
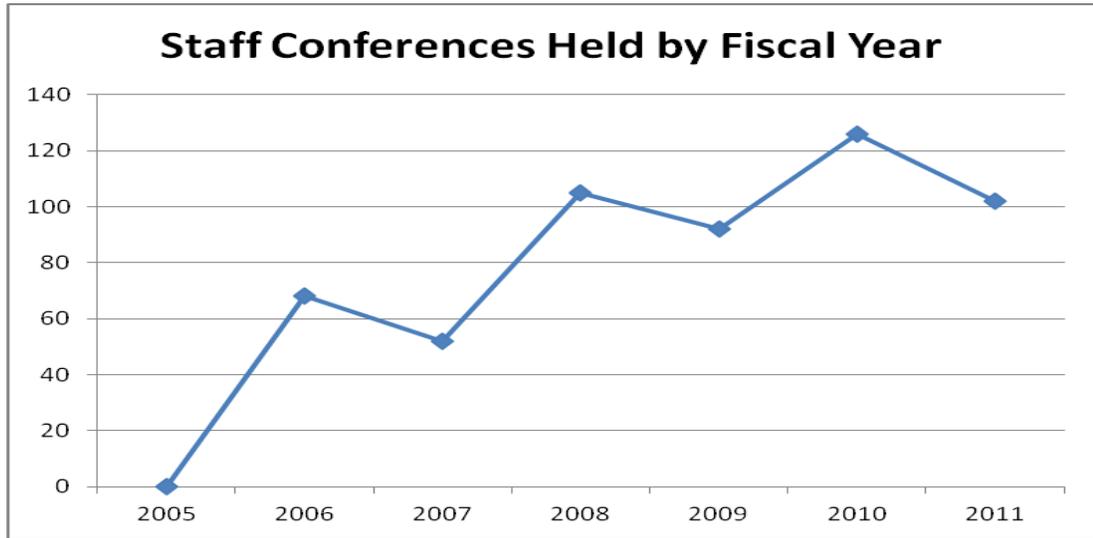
Unlike most medical professions, veterinarians purchase and maintain dangerous drug and controlled substance inventories within their practices. On-site inspections allow investigators to ensure that these controlled substances are maintained and utilized in a manner consistent with applicable laws and rules. These on-site inspections also allow investigators to review patient and continuing education records and licensees to receive, one-on-one contact with the Board. This contact gives the licensee the opportunity to ask questions. On-site inspections also allow the Board an opportunity to keep up-to-date on the workings of a veterinary practice.

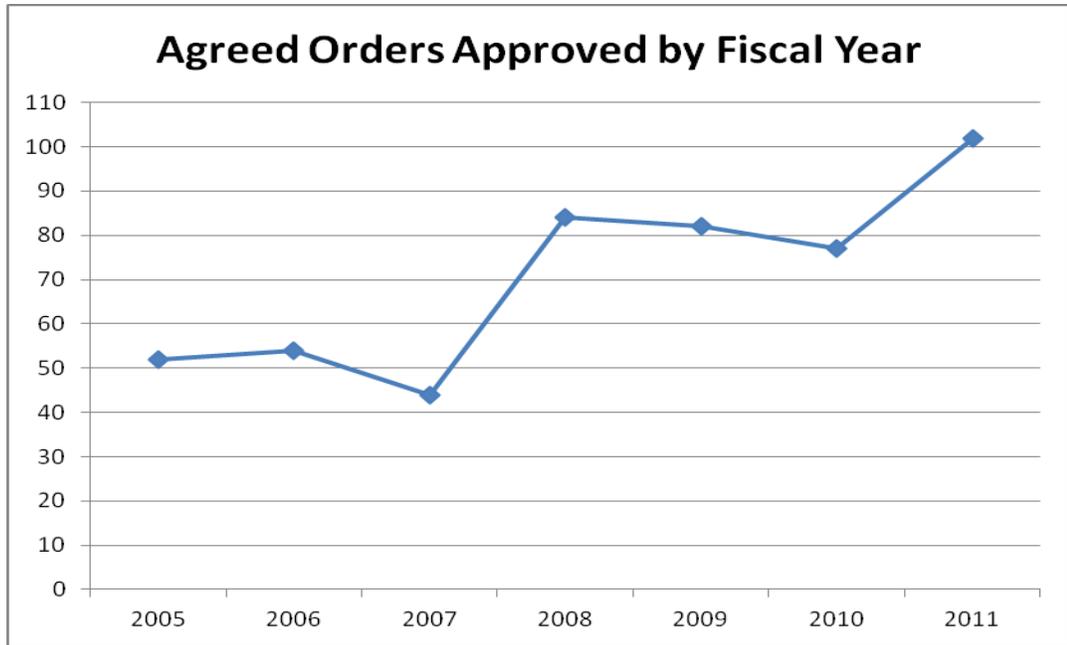
In Fiscal Year 2001, the Board received a total of two hundred fifty-three (253) complaints. In Fiscal Year 2005 the Board received two hundred ninety (290) complaints with four hundred seventy-eight (478) being received in Fiscal Year 2010. The Board anticipates receiving in excess of 400 complaints by the end of Fiscal Year 2012.



Legal

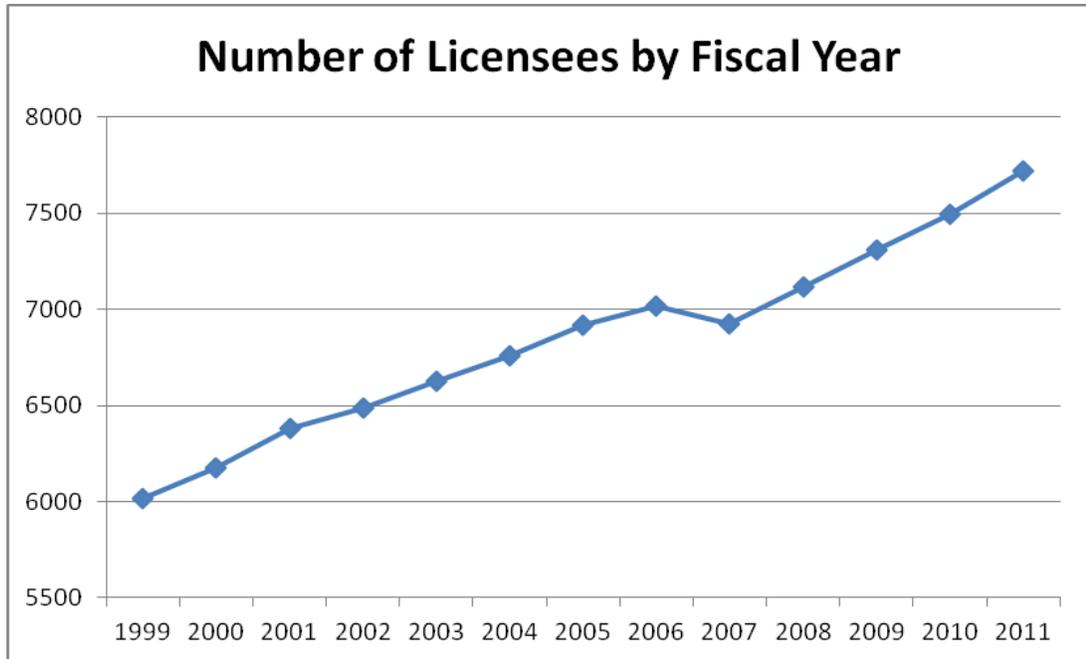
Until September of 2007, the Board's only attorney was part-time. When the current General Counsel was hired full-time, there was a backlog of contested cases waiting to be docketed at the State Office of Administrative Hearings. Currently, some headway in the backlog has been made, but there are still several cases waiting to be heard which continues to create a backlog, as the agency policy is to try the oldest cases first. Exceptions are made to this depending on the severity of the matter and the anticipated time necessary to try a case, in order to efficiently use agency resources and manage the caseload.

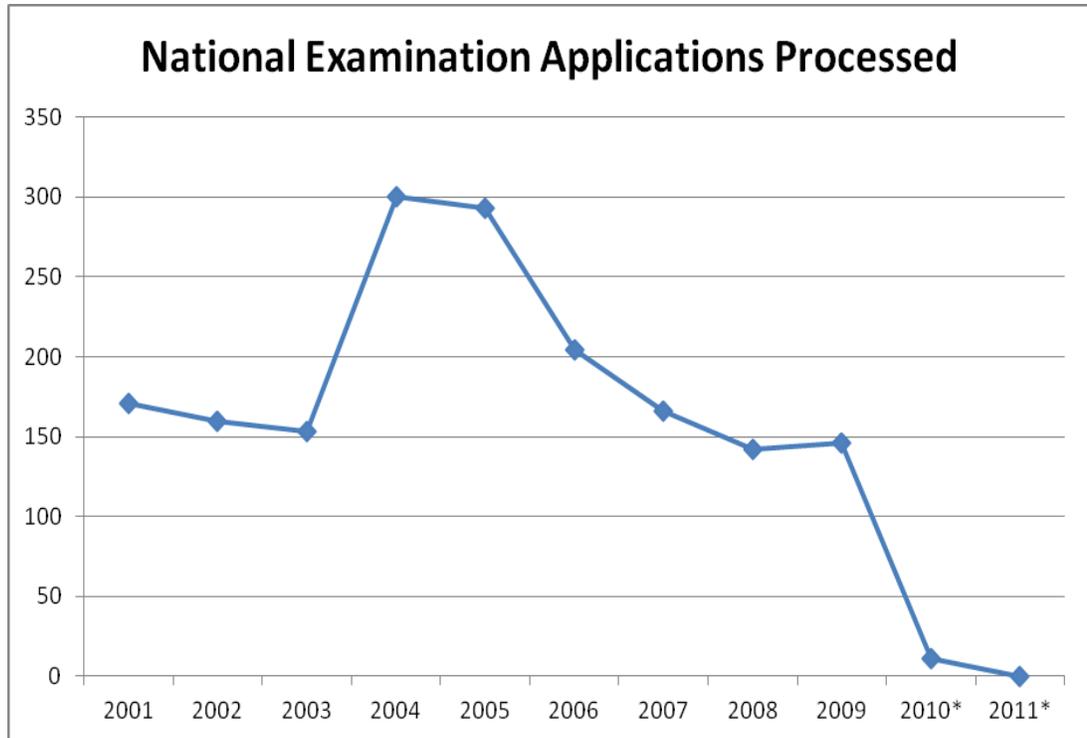




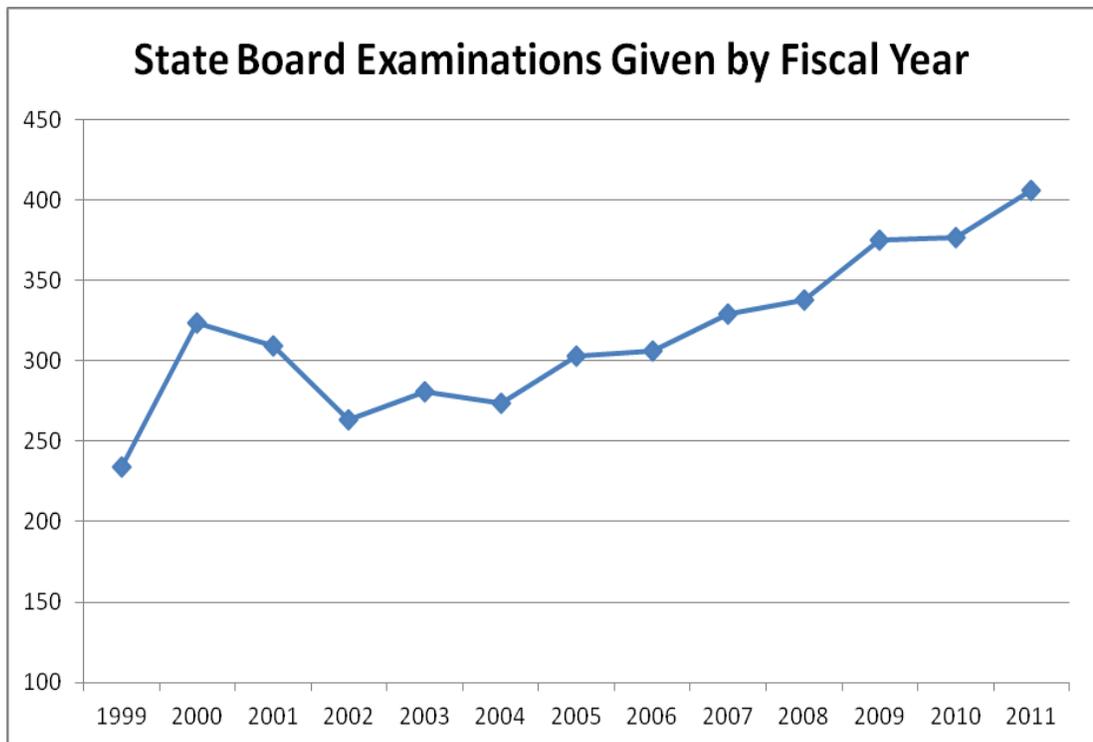
Licensing and Examination

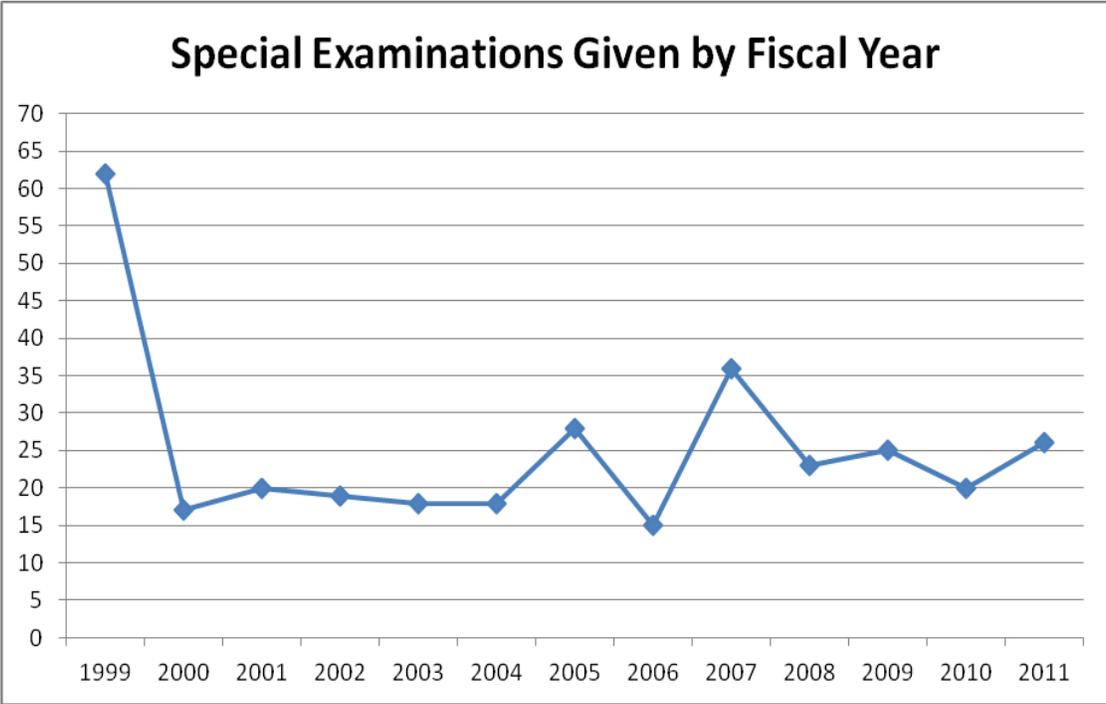
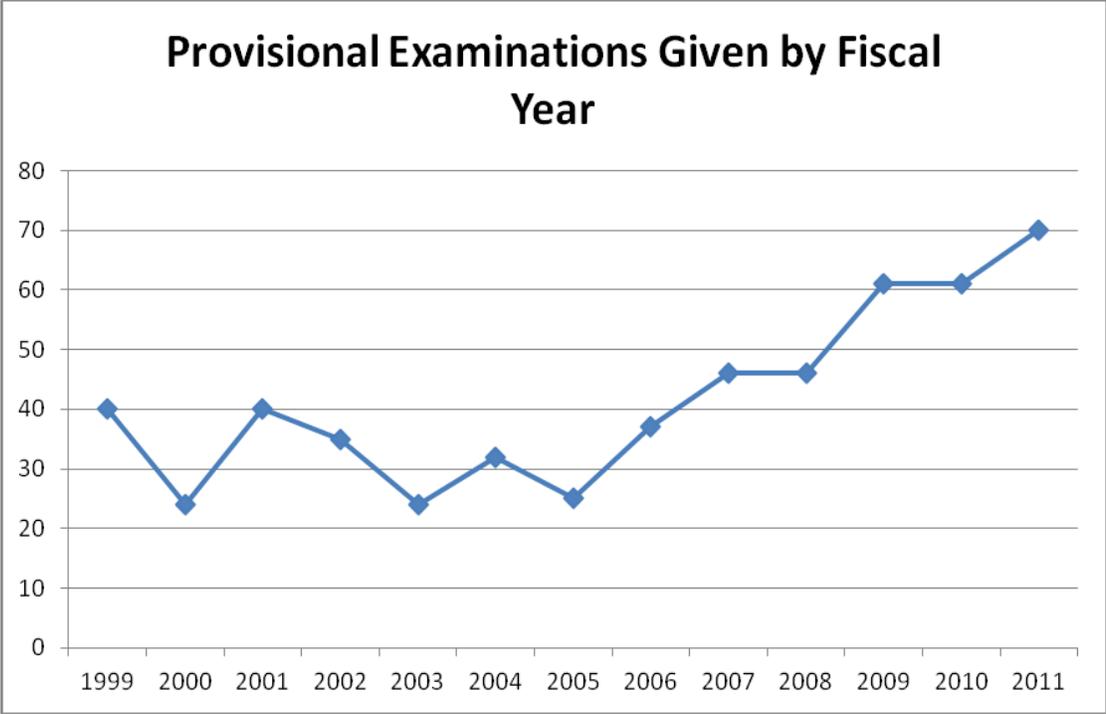
The agency currently has two FTEs operating its licensing and examination program. The licensing and examination division is responsible for administering the State Board Examination, the Provisional and Special License examinations, issuing licenses to qualified individuals who apply for a State of Texas veterinary or equine dental provider license, and annual renewal of each license. From FY2000 to FY2011, the agency's licensee base increased by 20%.





* Starting with the 2010 National Examination (NAVLE) application process, the National Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners (NBVME) began processing all applications and applicants no longer need to apply through the Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners.





I. Future Workforce Skills Needed

With the evolution of veterinary medicine, an increasingly mobile licensee base, changes in business processes, and the continued need for strong leadership, the agency anticipates a greater need in the following skills:

- Leadership;
- Critical thinking;
- Problem solving;
- Communication;
- Change management;
- Expanded technological; and
- Advanced time management.

The continued development of these skills within agency staff will enable the agency to successfully complete its mission in the coming years.

J. Anticipated Surplus or Shortage of Skills

Based on the agency's workforce analysis, the follow issues must be addressed:

- The agency's Licensing and Examination division consist of 2 FTEs. The Licensing and Examination Director has been with the agency for 24 years and is eligible to retire , and the administrative support person who supports this division is a return-to-work retiree. The loss of either of these employees could seriously impact the agency's license process.
- Because the agency has been unable to hire a more diverse workforce, the agency may lack the innovative ideas that a wide variety of workers can provide.

III. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

While the Board faces many challenges in its workforce over the next five years, most can be addressed by the following objectives:

Objective: Obtain additional staff necessary to successfully meet agency strategic responsibilities.

Action Steps

- Identify staffing deficiencies;
- Seek FTEs and funding from the Legislature; and
- Hire appropriate staff.

Objective: Adjustments to current employment placement within the State's compensation schedule.

Action Steps:

- Identify staff inappropriately placed within the State's compensation schedule; and
- Seek funding to allow for appropriate placement.

Objective: Continue to Develop and Document Job Procedures

By continuing to develop and document job procedures, the Board can build a library of resource material for its future workforce. This action will effectively reduce the "brain drain" that will happen as experienced workers leave the agency.

Action Steps

- Identify undocumented procedures;
- Provide guidance to staff on process documentation techniques;
- Ensure sufficient available time to allow staff to complete the documentation process; and
- Include the protection of completed job procedure documentation in the agency's Business Continuity Plan.

Objective: Continue Seeking Diversity Within the Applicant Pool and the Agency's Workforce.
By continuing to seek a diverse applicant pool that includes all qualified individuals, the agency can build a resource of individuals with a wide range of ideas and experience. These attributes can better help the agency to deal with changes in workload and challenges as responsibilities are added.

Action Steps

- Continue to identify and refine ways to attract a more diverse pool of applicants;
- Continue to hire the most qualified applicants; and
- Continue to identify ways to retain those qualified individuals.

Objective: Develop a competent, well-trained workforce.
It is imperative that the agency continues to cross train all agency employees to ensure that agency processes are not disrupted as employees leave. The agency should provide training to its employees whenever possible, utilizing both free and low cost training. This measure will ensure that, where possible, current employees will have opportunities for advancement, thereby increasing the agency's retention ability and that new technologies will be added to the agency's repertoire.

Action Steps

- Identify agency critical skills and competencies with input from divisions;
- Assess the level of risk facing the agency regarding the potential loss of knowledge and focus
- Training efforts in those areas; and
- Expand and enhance staff development to include effective leadership and mentoring as well as
- Assessing and addressing division specific training needs.