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11 February 2013

Dear XXXXXXXXXX,

Ref: ATIC0044. Bovine TB: Proportion of TB-testing vets who have been audited

Thank you for your response dated 11 February 2013 (Reference 1) in which the following shows an extract.

My question

"I would be grateful if you could inform me if the auditing of vets is only carried out by spot checks at practice level or whether it is applied to each vet in that practice who actively carries out testing. If the latter, does the auditing go on the vet's record? If it does, are you aware of the actual proportion of vets who are actively involved in the testing of cattle who have a record which shows that they have been personally audited within six months of their initial appointment? If so, what is this proportion? Is this proportion assumed or verified?"

Your answer

Newly qualified auditors should be audited by AHVLA within six months of their initial appointment, but we are still developing a number of areas to assure the quality of tuberculin testing in the field. This work and policy is ongoing and has not yet concluded.

I thought this was a rather well defined set of questions for which I was hoping you would have been able to supply direct answers.

Yours faithfully,

XXXXXXXXXX.

Reference

1. ATIC0044. Response dated 11 February 2013 to FOI request dated 12 January 2013.



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xxxxxxx
[By E-Mail]

Our Ref: ATIC0044

Date: 25 February 2013

Dear xxxxxxxx

PROVISION OF REQUESTED INFORMATION

Thank you for your follow up email regarding the auditing of vets at six months, which we received on 11th February. Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

The information you requested and AHVLA's response is detailed below.

1. "I would be grateful if you could inform me if the auditing of vets is only carried out by spot checks at practice level or whether it is applied to each vet in that practice who actively carries out testing."

All vets who actively carry out testing should be audited through a supervised visit within six months of their training date.

2. "does the auditing go on the vet's record?"

Yes. Once the supervised visit has been carried out successfully, the completed form is entered on the vets file. It is not held centrally.

3. "are you aware of the actual proportion of vets who are actively involved in the testing of cattle who have a record which shows that they have been personally audited within six months of their initial appointment? If so, what is this proportion? Is this proportion assumed or verified?"

In answer to your question, AHVLA is aware of the number of vets actively involved in the testing of cattle, but does not hold information on the proportion who were audited within six months of initial training. It has always been a requirement for a vet to have a supervised visit within six months of their training.

Prior to 2009, the system held all trained vets whether they had had a supervised visit or not. The only way to tell if a vet had had a supervised visit would be to look at their personal file. Supervised visits were monitored on a monthly basis and the statistics showed how many supervised visits were due and how many were completed each month. However, it was impossible to match up which visits had been carried out to those due.

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The Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, working across Great Britain on behalf of Defra, Scottish Government and Welsh Assembly Government

www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla

Since 2009, there has been a project to remove all those vets who have not carried out any testing in over two years. This has decreased the number of vets from over 4000 to 2987, as of the 18th February 2013. This figure represents all vets still actively testing with a valid panel 1a on their pocket certificate. Panel 1A is a competency to carry out TB testing.

Since April 2012, a process has been put in place to ensure that all vets have a supervised visit within six months of their training. If for any reason a vet has not been successfully audited, their panel 1a is removed and they can no longer carry out the testing.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. I also attach an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the services you have received.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'KNSly', with a stylized flourish at the end.

xxxxxxxxxx

Records and Information Manager