



Veterinary Surgeons' Board



Guidelines for authorisation to administer by injection sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents in Western Australia

BACKGROUND

Section 26(4)(b) of the *Veterinary Surgeons Act* 1960 (the Act) allows for the authorisation of a person who is not a registered veterinary surgeon to carry out, under the direction of a registered veterinary surgeon, an act of veterinary surgery that is prescribed in the *Veterinary Surgeons Regulations* 1979 (the Regulations).

Regulation 47 specifies administration by injection of sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents to be an act of veterinary surgery for the purpose of section 26(4)(b) of the Act.

DEFINITIONS

The Board applies the following definitions:

authorised person is a person who the Board considers to be suitably qualified and experienced to be authorised to perform specific acts of veterinary surgery. The responsibilities of the authorised person are detailed in this document;

direction means regular and frequent supervision but does not necessarily imply continuous personal supervision;

directing veterinary surgeon is an appropriately experienced veterinary surgeon appointed by the Board to direct an authorised person. The duties of the directing veterinary surgeon are detailed in this document.

AUTHORISATION BY THE BOARD

The Board will apply the following criteria in relation to the authorisation of a person to administer by injection sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents.

1. The directing veterinary surgeon is responsible for the direction of the authorised person in relation to the activities and record keeping of the authorised person in their performance of each act of veterinary surgery they perform and are authorised to perform.
2. Authorised persons will not be granted authorisation to administer drugs classed as Schedule 8 (S8) of the *Poisons Regulations* 1965.
3. The Board will approve which sedatives, tranquilisers, or euthanasia agents an authorised person may use and what quantities of the approved drugs the directing veterinary surgeon may supply to the authorised person.
4. The Board will specify under what circumstances or conditions the authorised person may administer the approved sedative, tranquiliser or euthanasia agent and the method and route of administration of the approved drug.
5. The Board will not authorise a person to administer by injection sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents unless the applicant submits an application in the required format and:
 - (a) the applicant satisfies the Board that they have undertaken and passed a training course approved by the Board on the administration by injection of sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents. The course must provide training addressing the competencies listed in part three of this document; or

- (b) the applicant provides proof of competency and experience in each of the training requirements in item 5(a) by means of a disinterested party, approved by the Board in advance of the application, providing evidence that the applicant possesses the relevant knowledge and competence.
6. The Board will authorise a person only if the Board also approves the veterinary surgeon/s nominated by the applicant to direct that person.
7. Authorisation will be for a period of no greater than one (1) year.
8. Maintenance of authorisation will rely upon the satisfactory performance of the authorised person and the directing veterinary surgeon and compliance with the conditions and restrictions set out in these guidelines.

DIRECTING VETERINARY SURGEON

1. The directing veterinary surgeon must be resident and registered in Western Australia, complete the required application form, and provide evidence of suitability. Application forms may be obtained from the Board office or the Board's website at www.vsbwa.org.au.
2. The directing veterinary surgeon is responsible for the authorised person in relation to the performance of each authorised act of veterinary surgery.
3. The directing veterinary surgeon must keep a record of each supervision of the authorised person.
4. The directing veterinary surgeon is accountable to the Board for the administration to animals by injection of sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents by the authorised person.
5. The directing veterinary surgeon must maintain access to the records of the authorised person in relation to:
 - (a) the date of each administration by injection of sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents;
 - (b) the name and address of the owner of domesticated animal(s), and the location at which the sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents were administered, and the reason for the administration of the drugs;
 - (c) the address of the property or location at which the administration by injection of sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents was performed on feral or wild animals, and the reason for the administration of the drugs;
 - (d) the number of animals to which sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents were administered;
 - (e) the name, concentration and volume of scheduled drugs administered to each animal; and
 - (f) any advertising by the authorised person for the administration by injection of sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents.
6. The directing veterinary surgeon is to submit to the Board a yearly audit of the drugs used by the authorised person and confirmation that the scheduled drugs were administered appropriately.
7. The directing veterinary surgeon is to ensure that a registered veterinary surgeon is available to attend in the event that veterinary expertise is required.
8. The directing veterinary surgeon must ensure the authorised person complies with the *Poisons Act 1964* and that:
 - (a) the volume of sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents transported in a vehicle should be minimised as a matter of public safety, and limited to that

estimated as required for the period of time the authorised person will be away from their primary premises or the interval at which it may be re-stocked from the primary premises. Whenever possible, the volume of restricted drugs transported in the vehicle should be limited to one day's requirements;

- (b) the sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents are stored in compliance with the manufacturer's recommendations, for example refrigeration;
 - (c) the sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents are kept in a locked container that is attached to the body of the vehicle; and
 - (d) the vehicle is secure at all times.
9. The directing veterinary surgeon will have their permission to direct an authorised person withdrawn if they:
- (a) cease to be a registered veterinary surgeon;
 - (b) have conditions placed on their registration such that they are no longer eligible to be a directing veterinary surgeon; or
 - (c) do not wish to continue to comply with all of the requirements contained in the Guidelines.

AUTHORISED PERSONS

1. Renewal of authorisation will require the authorised person to provide evidence of ongoing suitability and maintenance of competency.
2. The Board expects that an authorised person administering by injection sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with that of a registered veterinary surgeon. This includes any advertising being factually correct and in compliance with the *Poisons Act 1964*.
3. The Board may withdraw the authorisation of an authorised person if the Board, after due enquiry, considers the person to have acted in an inappropriate manner.
4. The Board may withdraw the authorisation of a person to carry out an act of veterinary surgery for which they are authorised if the person performs an act of veterinary surgery for which they are not authorised.
5. The authorisation of an authorised person will automatically cease if their directing veterinary surgeon:
 - (a) ceases to be a registered veterinary surgeon;
 - (b) has conditions placed on their registration such that they are no longer eligible to be a directing veterinary surgeon; or
 - (c) does not agree to continue to comply with all of the requirements of the guidelines for directing veterinary surgeons.
6. The authorised person will maintain a record of:
 - (a) the date of direction by the approved directing veterinary surgeon in the carrying out of the administration by injection sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents;
 - (b) the date of the administration by injection of approved sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents;
 - (c) the name and address of the owner of domesticated animal(s), and the location at which the sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents were administered, and the reason for the administration of the drugs;
 - (d) the address of the property or location at which the administration by injection of sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents was performed on feral or wild animals, and the reason for the administration of the drugs;

- (e) the number of animals and where possible the names of the animals or a brief description if the animals are unnamed, on which the authorised person administered by injection sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents; and
 - (f) the name, concentration and volume of sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents administered to each animal.
7. The authorised person must provide the directing veterinary surgeon with access to all records required to be made under paragraph 6 above.
 8. The authorised person must report clearly, accurately and in a timely fashion to a veterinary surgeon any adverse events. Where possible, the veterinary surgeon to whom the adverse events are reported should be the directing veterinary surgeon.
 9. The authorised person must accept advice and instruction from the directing veterinary surgeon.
 10. When transporting or storing sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents the authorised person must comply with the *Poisons Act* 1964 and the following requirements:
 - (a) the volume of sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents transported in a vehicle should be minimised as a matter of public safety, and limited to that estimated as required for the period of time the authorised person will be away from their primary premises or the interval at which it may be re-stocked from the primary premises. Whenever possible, the volume of restricted drugs transported in the vehicle should be limited to one day's requirements;
 - (b) the sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents must be stored in compliance with the manufacturer's recommendations, for example refrigeration;
 - (c) the sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents must be in a locked container that is attached to the body of the vehicle; and
 - (d) the vehicle must be secured at all times.
 11. Authorisation to administer by injection sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents does not exempt the authorised person from the provisions of the *Animal Welfare Act* 2002.
 12. Maintenance of competency and evidence of competency by the authorised person requires the following:
 - (a) satisfactory performance by the authorised person as assessed by the directing veterinary surgeon;
 - (b) compliance with the conditions and restrictions set out in these guidelines;
 - (c) evidence, by means of written records, of having carried out authorised administration by injection sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents on at least twenty animals per annum;
 - (d) the accuracy of the written records being certified by the directing veterinary surgeon; and
 - (e) the directing veterinary surgeon submitting a satisfactory annual audit and confirming that all sedatives, tranquilisers or euthanasia agents have been administered appropriately.

In the event that an authorised person does not maintain evidence of frequent competent activity in administering by injection sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents, the Board may require the person to undergo further training, and may terminate the person's authorisation until the person has completed the necessary training and provided evidence of competence.

INSURANCE

Veterinary surgeons and authorised persons are responsible for their own insurance requirements and should seek professional advice on public liability insurance and professional indemnity insurance cover.

RECORD KEEPING BY THE VETERINARY SURGEONS' BOARD

1. The Board will provide a certificate of authorisation.
2. The Board will maintain a record of authorised persons and the relevant directing registered veterinary surgeons.

COMPETENCIES

The Board will only authorise a person to administer by injection sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents if the Board is satisfied that the following competencies have been met.

General knowledge

The applicant must demonstrate their knowledge to the satisfaction of the Board:

- (a) of the effect of the drug which they propose to use, the drug dose rates by different routes of administration they propose to use, the variations between species and their safety in gravid females;
- (b) of potential adverse effects of the drugs to be used, and potential antidotes or first aid steps required in the case of over dosage of an animal or accidental administration to a person;
- (c) an understanding of occupational health and safety issues related to the use of the drug in the circumstances in which the drug is to be used;
- (d) the appropriate administration of the schedule 4 drug(s) via subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous, intracardiac or intraperitoneal techniques as appropriate;
- (e) familiarity with the relevant legislation including the relevant sections of the *Poisons Act* 1964 and relevant regulations of the *Poisons Regulations* 1965; and
- (f) recording and reporting systems for keeping and maintaining written records.

Certification and licences required

1. Relevant firearms licence if a firearm is required to administer the drug.
2. Current senior first aid certificate in case of accidental human injection.
3. National police clearance satisfactory to the Board.
4. Statutory declaration detailing any treatment for drug addiction including alcoholism during the past two years or convictions for any offence.

Occupational Health and Safety

1. Has knowledge of and applies Occupational Health and Safety principles and procedures such that all working routines for animals are carried out in line with the provisions of the relevant Occupational Health and Safety legislation.
2. Eliminates or minimises Occupational Health and Safety risk by means of:
 - (a) relevant occupational health and safety hazards identification, risk assessment and risk control measures;
 - (b) safe operating procedures;
 - (c) safe manual handling systems and procedures; and
 - (d) selection, use and maintenance of relevant personal protective equipment.

Animal Health and Welfare

1. Provides empathic care for animals during husbandry operations.
2. Reports to their directing veterinary surgeon clearly, accurately and in a timely fashion on the health and welfare of the animals.
3. Accepts advice and instruction.
4. Works effectively and safely to accurately carry out the administration by injection of sedatives, tranquilisers and euthanasia agents with nil damage to animals or personnel.
5. Complies with all relevant animal welfare legislation, codes and standards.

Record keeping

Keeps clear, accurate records of all work carried out.

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