

VMD INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) STRATEGY 2014/2015

Introduction

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The VMD is a net running cost Agency, receiving nearly 80% of funding from industry fees and levies and the remainder from Defra.

Medicines regulation is harmonised across the European Union (EU) (including the European Economic Area (EEA) countries) and the VMD operates as part of the European Medicines Regulatory Network (EMRN) to deliver the processes leading to the authorisation of veterinary medicines.

The Government priorities to tackle the deficit and create a business environment that supports economic growth will shape the VMD's activities in the years ahead. The VMD will contribute to Defra's work to drive down costs and improve value for money; and to implement the outcomes of the Civil Service Reform programme, in particular "digital by default".

This high level strategy document sets out how our Information and Communications Technology (ICT) will support and enhance the VMD's activities during 2014-2015, as set out in our Business Plan, with a forward look to 2015-2016 and beyond. Our strategic goals are closely linked to those of Defra and the European Union Drug Regulatory Authorities (Eudra) network.

Our Vision

To provide information services that are fit for purpose, affordable, sustainable and responsive to the VMD business and that are valued by stakeholders and VMD staff alike. To fully integrate the VMD within the EU information landscape and so promote us as the agency of choice within a competitive marketplace. To provide the VMD with secure information assets that promote collaborative working and knowledge sharing, enabling VMD staff to deliver value for money, customer-centric services. To fully support the Government's digital agenda by improving and extending electronic ways of working for VMD staff and our customers.

Our Obligations

Our increasing involvement in the European arena means that it is essential to develop common strategies with the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and other European Member States, facilitating electronic information exchange and knowledge sharing.

The VMD must ensure that our development standards are compatible with European standards and that our systems can be easily integrated with them.

The VMD must maintain strong links with the core Department, supporting Defra's aims and objectives and we are becoming increasingly involved in Defra's initiatives, particularly in areas such as information security and assurance and sustainable development. We must fully support Defra's ICT strategy, developing our systems in

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line with Cabinet Office guidelines, sharing best practice and investigating opportunities to develop systems in conjunction with other Government organisations.

The VMD website will become part of GOV.UK this year to provide our customers with a central repository of Government information. We will also continue to provide electronic services via our online systems, maintaining and improving these services in response to feedback from our customers, in line with Government Digital Services guidelines.

The VMD will develop and formalise a Digital Strategy this year.

Service Delivery

The in-house Information Technology (IT) team provide cost effective, fit for purpose information systems and services to the VMD. We have explored alternative methods of service delivery to ensure that we are providing the best value for money for the VMD and its customers and will continue to investigate other options.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy 2014-2015

[VMD Business Plan 2014/15-2018/19](#)

The main aims of the proposed ICT strategy for this financial year are to support the ongoing business requirements of the VMD, especially in relation to European integration and Defra's ICT strategies. The majority of our objectives reflect the ongoing incremental and evolutionary development of existing ICT services and systems. ICT services will be provided in an affordable and sustainable way by the VMD in-house IT team with the minimum use of contractors. All VMD information systems and services comply with Open Systems standards.

We will continue to work to deliver the Government's vision for full electronic service delivery "digital by default", maintaining and enhancing the existing online services for the most regular transactions with VMD, such as applications for import and export certificates, providing new online systems and services as required.

The data landscape within which the VMD exists is increasingly Eurocentric and there is a significant additional emphasis on developing these data flows using Service Orientated Architecture (SOA). We will continue to integrate and align where appropriate our systems and databases as part of the European (EU) programme to allow for the exchange, storage and retrieval of information on veterinary medicines authorised in the EU and pharmacovigilance information for such products.

We continue to seek cost saving measures where they can be achieved without a reduction in quality or service and to fully explore ways of obtaining the full potential and value for money from our ICT system developments. We will follow Defra procurements routes, buying from small or medium-sized, local businesses wherever possible and using the "Cloud First" principles for larger purchases, using free or open source where applicable.

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We will fully support Defra's ICT Strategy and the EMA's new ICT governance structure and strategic aims.

ICT Projects 2014/15

eBusiness

Migrate the VMD website to GOV.UK;
Complete the Intranet redevelopment project;
Carry out further enhancements to our online systems, particularly the Special Imports Site, incorporating support for Wholesale Dealership applications and the Product Information Database, providing an XML schema that can be incorporated into veterinary practice systems;
Continue support for VMD eSubmission and eFiling projects, widening the scope of the PDF optimisation project.

Electronic Document & Records Management (EDRM)

Continue to optimise eDocs and its integrations with other systems;
Evaluate alternative EDRM technologies.

Information Security

Maintain the VMD's Information Security Management System (ISMS) through the programme of internal and external ISO 27001 audit reviews;
Migrate our ISMS from ISO 27001:2005 to ISO 27001:2013;
Change our email addresses as part of the migration to the Public Secure Network (PSN) platform, in line with Defra's project;
Implement and test our contingency solution based on virtual backup software;
Support VMD wide tests of our business contingency plans.

Modular Systems

Complete the redevelopment of the systems to support Statutory Residues Surveillance, Export Certificates, company contact information, pharmaceutical and immunological ingredients and specified feed additives;
Incorporate modules to support microchip suspected adverse event recording and tracking/workflows in Tigress, the system to support pharmacovigilance;
Develop a new module to support Research and Development projects;
Extend the Correspondence Management System to the rest of the VMD, incorporating the Access to Information system;
Redevelop the Licence Management System (LMS) to incorporate improved Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) information handling, a new module for Scientific Advice applications and improved work list management;
Incorporate eFiling modules in the Batch Release, Active Substance Master File (ASMF), Inspection Management, Unauthorised Products and Export Certificate systems;
Incorporate automated invoicing modules in the LMS, IMS and Special Imports database;

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Incorporate scanning modules in the Special Imports and ASMF systems;
Continue the work to combine the GXP and FRX Inspection management systems.

Configuration Projects

Replace outmoded equipment that is no longer fit for purpose with new (laptops and PCs)
Investigate and test options for providing improved, portable equipment for the Inspectors (tablets).

European Initiatives

Fully participate in the IT Directors Group and the Change Management Board (CMB) for the veterinary sector and specifically act as the project lead for HMA in the EMA development of a common EU veterinary product database;
Continue to support EU initiatives such as the Common EU Submission Platform (CESP), Veterinary Product database, EudraNet and redevelopment of the Communications & Tracking and EudraLink systems;
Support and maintain the system to manage the benchmarking of EU Regulatory Agencies, BEMA in conjunction with the Health Products Regulatory Authority in Eire;
Provide full support for the CMB for eSubmission;
Update the Committee for Veterinary Products (CVMP) and VMD versions of the system to support veterinary symptoms and signs (VEDDRA).

Finance IT Systems

Investigate the feasibility of upgrading Sun Accounts to the latest version;
Increase the amount of support for Finance IT systems provided by the in-house Finance and IT teams.

Sustainable Development

Promote electronic working practices and virtual meeting options;
Continue to incorporate sustainable development practices in our purchasing and general ways of working.

Future proposals include

Over the next 3 years our ICT strategy will support the aims and objectives as laid out in the VMD's Business Plans.

Configuration Management: to keep the VMD IT services and systems in line with prevailing technology and in step with Defra, the EMA and other European Regulatory Agencies and our customers and stakeholders.

Modular Systems: to complete the progressive programme to migrate all the existing Modular Systems to the new technological platform during the next year,

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either separately or by incorporating them in existing systems. Also, we aim to develop new and extend current in-house systems in line with business requirements during 2014-2017.

Electronic Document and Records Management: to continue to investigate a migration or replacement path for the VMD Document Management System to ensure we are using the best solution to support the business. To continue to develop VMD IT systems in support of the Public Records Office target for Electronic Records Management in conjunction with Defra's chosen programme.

European IT Systems: to support the implementation of the EMA's new ICT governance structure, ensuring existing as well as new projects are implemented to the agreed timescales. To ensure that the VMD's IT systems are fully aligned with those in Europe so that our European licensing work is wholly supported and our position in the forefront of the market place is maintained. To monitor regulatory changes in Europe so that the VMD's modular and online systems can be amended to support new requirements as they occur.

Electronic Submission: to continue our project to facilitate the electronic submission of licensing applications by enhancing and improving our support systems and to continue to participate in European Electronic Submission initiatives, maintaining an active role in the eSubmission projects, particularly focussing on the veterinary sector during 2014-2017.

ISO 27001 Certification: to maintain our current ISO 27001 certification for information security through a programme of continual improvement against the standard and to continue to participate in the project to comply with Cabinet Office targets. In addition, we will again consider extending the scope of our Information Security Management System during 2014-2017.

GSI/PSN Certification: to maintain the security of our network in line with Government Secure Intranet / Public Secure Network requirements and to submit any changes to the Departmental Security Officer each year to ensure we retain our certification.

Digital by Default: to continue to extend the electronic services that we provide to our customers and internally, keeping pace with the Government Digital Services (GDS) project.

Sustainability: to continue to support Defra's Green ICT programme and exploring further measures to reduce our print landscape and overall carbon footprint during 2014-2017.

Accessibility: to continue to embed accessibility standards in all our ICT projects, working towards WA1 AA standards and meeting Central Office of Information and GDS requirements for our web developments over the next three years.