

# VMD INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) STRATEGY 2015/2016

## ***Introduction***

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is a net running cost Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). We receive 77% of funding from industry regulatory fees and levies and the remainder from Defra.

The VMD's primary purpose is to deliver the UK's obligations under harmonised EU legislation on veterinary medicines and medicated feeding stuffs.

The VMD's vision is the responsible, safe and effective use of veterinary medicinal products.

The Government priorities to tackle the deficit and create a business environment that supports economic growth will continue to 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 2015-2016, as set out in our Business Plan, with a forward look to 2016-2017 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, responsive to the VMD business and 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 digital strategy, developing our systems

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

The VMD's published information now resides on GOV.UK, providing our customers with a central repository of Government information. We will continue to provide electronic services via our online systems, maintaining and improving these services in response to feedback from our customers and in line with Government Digital Services guidelines.

## **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 2015-2016**

### **[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 the European (EU) Telematics governance structure and Defra's digital strategy. The majority of our objectives reflect the ongoing incremental and evolutionary development of existing ICT services and systems. ICT services are 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 our most regular transactions, 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 EU Telematics programme to allow for the exchange, storage and retrieval of information on veterinary medicinal products 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.

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

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## **ICT Projects 2015/16**

### **eBusiness**

Our aim is to provide improved digital services to our external and internal customers through

- carrying out the longer term developments to the Product Information Database (PID)
- refining the XML schema for incorporation in veterinary practice management software with feedback from the vet consortium
- continuing the development of the VMD Intranet using our in-house solution
- applying further enhancements to the Special Imports Site
- continuing support for the VMD eSubmission and eFiling projects
- incorporating the Wholesale Dealer Import Certificate application form in the online Special Imports online system

### **Electronic Document & Records Management (EDRM)**

We must provide effective document and records management to support electronic working and facilitate collaboration by

- continuing to optimise eDocs and its integrations with other systems
- evaluating alternative EDRM technologies

### **Information Security**

We will complete the work required to successfully achieve the transition to ISO 27001:2013 and continue to enhance our Information Security Management System and to strengthen our backup and contingency arrangements through

- completing the ISO 27001:2013 migration project in July and preparing for the external audit review in September
- Implementing the bi-monthly schedule of internal review audits to maintain the ISO 27001 certification and carry out our annual risk assessment
- investigating alternative, improved disaster recovery sites
- carrying out tests of our contingency solution based on virtual backup software
- providing support for VMD wide business continuity tests

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## Modular Systems

We will continue the incremental development of the VMD's suite of integrated in-house systems and to introduce improved efficiency in response to business requirements by

- developing a new module to support Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance work and providing an interface to the Licence Management System (LMS)
- redeveloping the data exchanges and automate EU reporting for the Statutory Residues IT system
- continuing the work to optimise the Inspections systems, aligning and integrating the systems where possible
- extending the Correspondence Management System to the rest of the VMD, incorporating the Access to Information system
- incorporating a module to support microchip adverse events within the Pharmacovigilance management system (Tigress)
- redesigning the worklist facility within LMS
- redeveloping the Environmental Incidents database and incorporating it within Tigress
- redeveloping the management systems that support Export Certificates, Companies, Immunological and Pharmaceutical Ingredients and Specified Feed Additives
- developing a system to manage system development processes

## Configuration Projects

The IT team will continue to provide members of VMD staff with the ICT equipment they need to effectively carry out their work by

- replacing outmoded equipment that is no longer fit for purpose with refurbished or new devices
- extending the Virtual Desktop project to include all members of staff who work remotely

## European Initiatives

We will continue to play a leading role in in the strategic planning, development and ongoing maintenance of European IT systems, ensuring that legislative requirements are supported, the VMD's requirements are taken into account and our internal systems are compatible. We will do this through

- participating fully in the new Telematics infrastructure, contributing to relevant committees and working groups such as the EU IT Directors Group and Change Management Boards
- continuing to support EU initiatives such as eSubmission, the Common EU Submission Platform (CESP), EU Veterinary Medicinal Product database, the EU network (EudraNet), projects for common standards and redevelopment and maintenance of existing IT systems

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- supporting the system to manage the benchmarking of EU Regulatory Agencies, BEMA, in conjunction with the BEMA Secretariat
- upgrading current versions of the combined list of clinical signs for reporting suspected adverse reactions (VEDDRA) for the Committee for Veterinary Products (CVMP) and VMD

## Finance IT Systems

We will continue to increase our support for Finance IT systems to reduce our reliance on external contractors by

- continuing to lead the project to upgrade our accounting system software, providing a solution with improved functionality for our Finance team

## Sustainable Development

We will promote and support environmentally sustainable working practices for members of VMD staff through

- providing improved facilities to support electronic working and virtual meeting options
- continuing 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, 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, 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 2015-2018.

**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 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

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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 2015-2018.

**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 2015-2018.

**PSN Certification:** to maintain the security of our network in line with 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 and fully supporting Defra's Digital Strategy.

**Sustainability:** to continue to support Defra's Green ICT programme and exploring further measures to reduce our overall carbon footprint during 2015-2018.

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

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