



A world of better health for animals and people

AVERT: AUSTRALIA-WIDE VETERINARY EMERGENCY WORKFORCE

Vets Beyond Borders (VBB) is an Australian veterinary charity working with over 30 Partner Organisations across Australia, Asia and the Pacific, in settings where animal welfare and public health are at risk due to lack of veterinary services.

VBB establishes and supports selected animal welfare/animal population management programs in the region and, under its **VetMatch** program, deploys experienced volunteer veterinarians and veterinary nurses to these projects to assist them in their important, but often challenging, work. Its **VetTrain** program provides instructors to deliver free clinical training courses in regions where training is not readily accessible or affordable.

VBB's provision of veterinary personnel extends to its AVERT (Australian Veterinary Emergency Response Team) program, created to meet the urgent need for effective veterinary services following natural disasters or outbreaks of emergency animal disease in Australia. Under AVERT, VBB has compiled a database of more than 2,500 veterinarians and veterinary nurses who have indicated willingness to be deployed; 441 of whom are based in Victoria.

AVERT members come from all sectors of veterinary practice, including production animal, equine, domestic pet and wildlife. The confidential **AVERT** register contains relevant details of its membership, including experience, specific training, licensing and location.

Thanks to funds provided to VBB by WWF-Australia and WIRES, the **AVERT** register includes a large cohort of members trained in the provision of veterinary care to wildlife. A number hold darting and firearms licences. VBB has provided several **AVERT**-registered veterinarians with state-of-the-art darting rifles, facilitates online fireground awareness training for **AVERT** members and has a mobile triage/acute care unit that can be transported rapidly to where it is most needed.

During an emergency response, VBB relies on state-nominated agencies to identify the need to deploy **AVERT** members to deliver veterinary care.