

Government vets already have recognised union

Dear editor,

While we note, with interest, announcements (August 1 issue) regarding the alliance between Unite and the British Veterinary Union (BVU), and the representative role of the BVA, it is important to remind interested parties that Prospect has, for many years, been the recognised trade union for veterinary staff employed by Government.

Prospect represents all veterinary staff in DEFRA, the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency, the Home Office, the Food Standards Agency and the Welsh and Scottish governments.

The union is unique in this respect, as it has collective recognition for the representation of veterinary staff in Government covering all pay, and terms and conditions of service. Members also have access to an extensive range of benefits, including legal guidance and representation, CPD opportunities and advice on all aspects of health and safety for veterinary staff working in field operations.

Prospect is equally aware of the changing Government market – to date, a number of contracts have been outsourced, including official veterinary inspectors for the Meat Hygiene Service – and it is committed to continuing to represent members, whether direct employees within Government or those who have, through no fault of their own, been outsourced to the private sector.

We will continue to engage with private sector employers happy to consult with us on the delivery of public sector contracts and to represent members in collective bargaining when required.

The union is also keen to participate in all public consultations covering changes to legislation related to animal health and well-being, at the same time as recognising that our members implement Government policies and must adhere to those policy principles in accordance with legislation.

Yours faithfully,

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