

VICH/18015

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Revision 1

Final

**GUIDANCE DOCUMENT**

***VICH Meeting Efficiencies***

***and Initiatives***

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Contents

[INTRODUCTION 2](#_Toc505594874)

[History 2](#_Toc505594875)

[Current Process 2](#_Toc505594876)

[PROPOSED EFFICIENCIES AND INITIATIVES 2](#_Toc505594877)

[Charter 2](#_Toc505594878)

[Procedural Guidance 4](#_Toc505594879)

[New Initiatives 5](#_Toc505594880)

[IMPACT ASSESSMENT 6](#_Toc505594881)

[SC Meetings 6](#_Toc505594882)

[VOF Meetings 6](#_Toc505594883)

## INTRODUCTION

### History

1. At the 35th meeting of the VICH Steering Committee (November 2017 in Tokyo), members agreed in principle to the proposal to move to a 12 month meeting cycle. Such a move would require a higher level of oversight of activities to avoid any potential of loss of momentum in progressing activities.
2. This document was supported by the 36th VICH Steering Committee meeting (June 2018 in Bruges).
3. The Steering Committee has agreed that the timelines recommended in this document must be seen as guidance, but should be respected as much as possible. Nevertheless, where a delegation will not be able to comply with the proposed timelines, it should circulate a message to the SC and Secretariat providing information on when it expects to be able to provide the relevant document.

### Current Process (pre 2018)

*Organisational Charter of VICH*

1. The Charter does not specify timelines other than for the circulation of the agendas, minutes and conclusions of VICH SC meetings. In particular the Step process provides no indication of timelines.

*Procedural Guidance*

1. Of the procedural guidance documents, there are opportunities for the following ones to include or amend guidance on timeframes:
* [VICH/97/037- Revision 3 - June 2014 - Final - Note to prepare a VICH Topic Concept Paper](http://www.vichsec.org/component/attachments/attachments/951.html?task=download)
* [VICH/00/151 - Revision 3 - June 2014 - Final - VICH Procedure for the Expert Working Groups](http://www.vichsec.org/component/attachments/attachments/959.html?task=download)
* [VICH/00/154-rev2-Fin - Policy on Consultation at Step 4](http://www.vichsec.org/component/attachments/attachments/176.html?task=download)
* VICH/17/007 - VICH Methodology for a systematic review of VICH Guidelines at step 9

## PROPOSED EFFICIENCIES AND INITIATIVES

### Charter

*Step Procedure*

1. It is proposed that relevant steps in the Step Procedure have timelines established for actions. The following is therefore suggested:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Step** | **Timeline\*** |
| *Step 1:* The SC:* defines a priority item from a detailed concept paper prepared by one of its members;
* designates the topic to an EWG or establishes a new EWG, as appropriate, and appoints an EWG topic leader and/or chairperson. The EWG chair/topic leader in charge of drafting the guideline is given a clear mandate to carry out the expected work;
	+ ensures that each topic leader has the required competence and interpersonal skills to lead an EWG and achieve its objectives.
 |  |
| *Step 2:* The appropriate EWG elaborates a draft guideline, and submits it to the Secretariat with the signatures of all experts.  | EWG Chair sets a 4 week deadline for signatures of all experts.EWG Chair submits draft guideline to secretariat within one week of receiving all signatures. |
| *Step 3*: The draft guideline is submitted to the SC for approving its release for consultation. | VICH Secretariat within one week of receiving draft guideline submits to SC members.VICH Secretariat sets a 4 week deadline for SC members to sign-off for release. |
| *Step 4*: Once adopted by the SC, the draft guideline is published for consultation, applying an appropriate consultation period (normally 6 months). The regulatory coordinators should inform the VICH secretariat of the dates and if the consultation process in their region is delayed*.* | VICH Secretariat within one week of receiving approval by SC will publish the draft guideline for consultation. The OIE contributes in disseminating the draft VICH GLs worldwide during the public consultation phase. |
| *Step 5*: The comments received are directed to the EWG for consideration. At this step, the topic leader must be a representative of a regulatory authority. The EWG prepares a revised draft and submits it to the Secretariat with the signatures of all experts. The signatures of industry experts are clearly separated from those of experts representing regulatory authorities. | EWG Chair sets a 4 week deadline for signatures of all experts.EWG Chair submits draft guideline to secretariat within one week of receiving all signatures. |
| *Step 6*: The revised draft guideline is submitted to the SC for approval. | VICH Secretariat within one week of receiving draft guideline submits to SC members.VICH Secretariat sets a 4 week deadline for SC members to sign-off for release. |
| *Step 7*: Once approved by the SC, the final guideline and a proposed date for its implementation are circulated to the regulatory authorities represented in the SC. | VICH Secretariat within two weeks of receiving approval of SC members will circulate the final guideline and proposed date of implementation to SC regulatory authorities. The OIE contributes in disseminating the final VICH GLs worldwide. |
| *Step 8*: The SC members report to the SC on the dates of implementation of the guidelines in their respective regions. |  |

\* Where a delegation will not be able to comply with the indicated timelines it will circulate a message to the SC and Secretariat providing information on when it expects to be able to provide the relevant document

*Agendas and Papers – SC and VOF meetings*

1. Four months prior to the meetings of SC and VOF the VICH Secretariat sends out a reminder to coordinators, EWG Chairs, and VICH SC members, observers and VOF members to submit updates/papers etc to the VICH Secretariat no later than 10 weeks prior to the SC and VOF meetings. A follow up reminder is sent 3 weeks after the first reminder.
2. The VICH Secretariat sends out the draft agendas and papers 2 months prior to the SC and VOF meetings.
3. Papers covering new topics/areas of work submitted after the above deadline to the VICH Secretariat will not be included on the agenda, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

*Timing of SC and VOF meetings*

1. With the move to a 12 month cycle, it is proposed the schedule moves to a late October/November cycle. This period avoids holiday seasons in both hemispheres and is a period where there is less likelihood of travel disruptions.

### Procedural Guidance

*VICH Note to Prepare a VICH Topic Concept Paper (CP) (VICH/97/037)*

1. It is proposed that the work flow for concept papers be altered to better ensure a decision is made at the following SC meeting. To facilitate this, the following is proposed:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Work flow plan** | **Month** |
| * **SC “1”:** SC is informed and agrees that a CP will be drafted
 | 0 |
| * CP draft 1 to be submitted to secretariat by month 3
 | +3 |
| * CP draft 1 immediately circulated to SC for comment by the SC/VOF within 3 months
 | +6 |
| * CP draft 2 submitted by the author to the secretariat within 1 month
 | +7 |
| * CP draft 2 immediately circulated to SC for final comment/approval by the SC within 3 months
 | +10 |
| * Any final comments received at month 10 to be compiled and shared with SC 6 weeks before the SC meeting (4 weeks absolute minimum)
 | +10.5 to 11 |
| * **SC “2”:** Outstanding issues discussed at SC and decisions taken
 | +12 |

*VICH Procedure for the Expert Working Groups (VICH/00/151)*

1. Further guidance on timelines along with shortening of some of the stated timelines in this document will facilitate a shorter timeframe for completion of the work of the EWG.
2. The following is proposed:
* When establishing the work plan of the EWG, the Chair will make their best effort to ensure it is as timely as possible.
* Coordinators – Any actions arising from the SC meeting for a EWG, the coordinator for their delegation will provide such feedback to EWG Chairperson within 2 weeks of the meeting.
* The 2 month period for nominating experts is reduced to 6 weeks.
* The 2 month period for the Topic Leader to write a discussion document and establish an action plan is reduced to 6 weeks.
* A 4 week timeline is established for the EWG members to agree to the discussion document and action plan.
* It should be more explicit that the EWG should undertake its work using electronic communications and only require physical meetings for exceptional circumstances.
* It is however also proposed to increase the number of physical meetings in order to increase the efficiency of the EWG

Where a delegation will not be able to comply with the indicated timelines it will circulate a message to the SC and Secretariat providing information on when it expects to be able to provide the relevant document

1. Some of the proposals above will require consequential changes to the Charter.

*VICH Policy on Consultation at Step 4 (VICH/00/154)*

1. The current public consultation period is 6 months from the date it is published on the VICH website.

*VICH Methodology for a systematic review of VICH Guidelines at step 9 (VICH/17/007)*

1. Timelines should be added along the lines for those proposed above.

### New Initiatives

*Charter*

1. Add a section to allow the SC to make a decision (outside of the Step process) by electronic procedure between the scheduled SC meeting.
2. Add to the Role of the Secretariat section to send out reminders (1 month) on follow up activity deadlines.
3. Add to Coordinators role section all the VICH coordinators should “connect” for progress updates at the mid-point between SC meetings to improve coordination and efficiency of follow-up and to help maintain momentum.

*VOF*

1. A SC member or observer country could organize regional events such as training sessions between SC yearly meetings under an overarching training programme for VOF members.
2. SC should monitor the impacts (if any) of the change in frequency of meetings on VOF. In particular whether there would be benefit to increase the time for VOF to consider extra topics.

## IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. The proposed changes above will:
* Shorten time cycles for completion of work of EWGs.
* Provide more definitive time periods for actions to be completed.
* Allow for sufficient time for SC and VOF members to read and consider agenda items prior to meetings.

### SC Meetings

1. The reduction in time lines in most instances is unlikely to see a significant increase of through put through put of new guidelines (such as from CP) or revision of existing guidelines going via the step process for a 9 monthly cycle. This is on the basis that even with a shorted consultation period, the time period required to go via the step process and prepare papers in a timely manner for the SC meeting is still insufficient. However, in most instances this would be achievable with a 12 monthly cycle of meetings. Furthermore, it is likely the number of guidelines being considered at the SC meeting will be higher due to this 12 monthly cycle.
2. Overall, there is unlikely to be any negative impact on the progression of guidelines and other work of the SC in moving to a 12 monthly cycle.

### VOF Meetings

1. The majority of the proposed efficiencies do not have any impact on the VOF meetings.
2. The two initiatives mentioned above should be beneficial for VOF members, but noting the second initiative is dependent on the outcome of the monitoring.

**Duration of meeting sessions**

1. In a 12 monthly cycle, it is proposed initially that the VICH SC should monitor the flow of the meetings to determine whether the existing length of the meeting is still appropriate.