

Questions and answers on managing conflicts of interest

1. *What is the purpose of MAFBNZ's policy for managing conflicts of interest?*

MAFBNZ's policy on conflicts of interest aims to maintain the integrity of New Zealand's Official Assurance Programme and the integrity of those performing duties under it (section 1.1.3).

MAFBNZ recognises that conflicts of interest cannot always be avoided or prohibited; some are natural and unavoidable in small countries like New Zealand (section 1.2.3).

MAFBNZ's policy contains procedures to ensure that conflicts of interest are appropriately managed to deliver its aims.

2. *How can MAFBNZ be confident that a Centre/Team Veterinarian recruited to manage an identified conflict of interest has sufficient knowledge to undertake the task appropriately?*

A Centre/Team Veterinarian approved by MAFBNZ must meet the requirements for approval required in the Official Assurance Programme (Parts 7 or 9). These include being a registered veterinarian, holding a current practising certificate, abiding by policies and procedures required by MAFBNZ and the Veterinary Council of New Zealand, and having sufficient knowledge of what is happening on the site on a day-to-day basis to undertake the tasks required.

The procedures of the Centre/Team Veterinarian are audited at regular intervals by independent verifiers. This ongoing interaction builds up understanding by all parties of what is required and how it is being delivered.

3. *Can a Centre/Team Veterinarian who has a shareholding in his/her business provide clinical services and sign declarations/documentation for those services that lead to official assurances?*

Yes, provided that their conflict of interest is managed by having another approved and non-conflicted Centre/Team Veterinarian or recognised person reviewing the testing/examination declarations/documentation and who will then sign the respective germplasm declarations or eligibility documents that are required for the official assurances.