

Recipient of the 2024 IETS Distinguished Service Award: Dr George Perry

Dr George Perry obtained his BVSc degree from the University of Queensland in 1976. After a year as Research Veterinarian at Coolool Research Station with the Queensland Department of Primary Industries, George, newly married, moved to Walgett in 1978 to start up a mixed practice to service outback north-west New South Wales, an area of over 130 000 km², roughly the size of England. This included getting a private pilot licence to fly to properties and towns in the region. Twelve years later, because of the loss of his wife to cancer and being a sole parent to his three young children, George sold his practice with its long hours to become a District Veterinarian for the Walgett Rural Lands Protection Board with its more regular hours. While there, George graduated as Member of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientist in Veterinary Epidemiology.

In 1996, after marrying again, George moved to Sydney to do some contract work, then, in 1998, to Canberra where he became a Veterinary Officer specialising in import risk analyses, especially of germplasm, with the Animal Biosecurity Branch of the Australian Department of Agriculture and Fisheries until his retirement in 2019.

During his time there, George was involved as epidemiologist in managing and eradicating Newcastle disease outbreaks in poultry in New South Wales in 1998 and 1999, in the foot-and-mouth disease outbreak in the UK in 2001, and in the equine influenza outbreak in Australia in 2007.

It was in 2005 when George, representing the Australian government on the HASAC Regulatory subcommittee, first attended the IETS Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, where he volunteered his expertise to write a paper on the quantitative risk analysis on BVDV in abattoir derived bovine IVP embryos for the HASAC Research subcommittee. The conclusions reported in this paper resulted in minor amendments to the EU rules on trade in IVP embryos. This began an association with HASAC that has continued to the present day.

In 2012, the IETS Board of Governors approached George to chair the Data Retrieval Committee. George accepted and immediately organised the development of a web-based database for the collection and storage of ET data from countries using embryo technology in livestock to replace the very laborious process of collecting paper-based ET data for manual transfer to spreadsheets. Already, there are over ten years of ET data on the database, clearly demonstrating



the negligible risk of pathogen/disease transmission via *in-vivo* derived (IVD) and *in vitro* produced (IVP) embryos in cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, horses and deer.

In 2019, George was accepted to become chair of HASAC, with shared responsibilities for the publication of the 5th edition of the IETS Manual with Dr Sue Leelawardana and the updating of the risk categorisation of diseases/pathogens in ET in IVD embryos with Professor Lamia Briand and extending this to IVP embryos. Since then, George has authored and co-authored updates to five chapters in the IETS Manual, and reviewed most other chapters prior to their publication. Because of changes to technology in the production of IVP embryos, the time and expertise required of people already overworked, the risk categorisation project is still to be completed.

Currently, George is involved in developing IETS collaboration with the International Committee for Animal Recording (ICAR) and further strengthening relationships with the World Organisation for Animal Health. These steps serve to enhance the international reputation of the IETS.

The Board of Governors consider George Perry to be a most worthy recipient of the 2024 IETS Distinguished Service Award.