
GENERAL INFORMATION

CVM PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM

The Food and Drug Administration has established a mechanism to give the public early and meaningful opportunity to participate in the policy making aspects of the Agency's functions. To implement this participation requires coordination and cooperation between the operating units of the Agency and the Centers. The Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) Public Affairs Program is intended to implement the Center's participation in FDA's public affairs initiative.

1. **Purpose:**

The CVM Public Affairs Program provides the means for coordinating Center activities with those Agency units which have been assigned responsibility for incorporating the public viewpoint into FDA policy development.

2. **Objectives of the CVM Public Affairs Program:**

The CVM Public Affairs Program has three major objectives.

a. Provide Public Education:

In order for the public to make input into CVM programs, they must first have some knowledge of the mission and responsibilities of the Center. The public education program, which is implemented through the Public Affairs Specialists (PASs), provides broad guidance to PASs to develop strategies for informing the public about CVM's areas of regulatory responsibility. This involves providing the PASs with information so that they may:

- (1) Make formal presentations about CVM programs/issues to consumer groups/organizations and the press.
- (2) Respond to inquiries from consumers and the press about CVM regulated products.
- (3) Coordinate activities and give technical assistance to consumer groups, organizations and the press in relation to CVM activities.

- (4) Target farm-related groups (such as Farm Bureau, Future Farmers of America, etc.) for special programs on CVM activities and issues.
- (5) Include information about CVM activities when the PASs staff FDA exhibits at fairs, conventions, and exhibitions.
- (6) Cover CVM topics, if possible, when participating on radio and television shows.

b. Provide liaison:

- (1) In order for the PASs to effectively implement the CVM Public Education Program, there must be an established channel of communication with the Center. By serving as liaison with the PASs, the CVM Consumer Affairs Representative (CAR) provides a single contact through which PASs can easily obtain information when and where it is needed.
- (2) The CAR increases the efficiency of the Agency's program and relieves the burden on the rest of the Center by providing a single Center contact for FDA headquarters units for consumer activities. In much the same way as when the CAR serves as liaison with the PASs, the CAR also serves as liaison for consumer programs with the appropriate officials in the Office of Consumer Affairs, the Consumer Affairs and Information Staff and the Office of Public Affairs, thus aiding the flow of information and increasing the effectiveness of the entire program.

c. Provide a consumer feedback mechanism:

Although the Agency's Office of Consumer Affairs and Information Staff (CAIS) is responsible for formulating a consumer perspective that can be used to justify and direct the focus of FDA programs, policies, information, and regulatory activities, the CVM Public Affairs Program provides the mechanism to determine at an early stage the need for involvement of the Office of Consumer Affairs.

:

3. **Responsibility**

a. Agency Responsibilities for Implementing the FDA Public Affairs Program.

Effective implementation of the Agency's Public Affairs initiative requires the coordination and cooperation of many units in the Agency. The principal units within FDA which are involved in the Public Affairs Program and a description of their basic responsibilities are as follows:

- (1) The Office of the Associate Commissioner for Consumer Affairs (HFE-1) serves as FDA's focal point for gathering and channeling input into and stimulating consumer participation in FDA policy development.
- (2) The Office of the Associate Commissioner for Public Affairs (HFI-1) is responsible for planning, developing, implementing, and monitoring consumer information and education programs conducted through FDA's nationwide network of Public Affairs Specialists the media and other public communication sources.
- (3) ORA's Consumer Affairs and Information Staff (HFC-110) is the principal coordinator for planning, development, and implementation of consumer and health related educational and informational programs and activities to be executed by the PASs.
- (4) The Office of the Associate Commissioner for Health Affairs (HFY-1) participates in the planning and development of programs and informational materials to be presented by PASs to selected health officials and professional organizations.

b. Center Responsibilities for Implementing the CVM Public Affairs Program:

- (1) The Director, Office of Management and Communications (HFV-10) is responsible for providing direction and coordination of the CVM Public Affairs Program and overseeing its implementation.

- (2) CVM Consumer Affairs Representative:

The CVM Consumer Affairs Representative (CAR) coordinates the Public Affairs program and carries out the daily operations of the program. Specific responsibilities include:

- (a) Coordinating activities with the monitor of the Public Affairs

Compliance Program.

- (b) Developing, in cooperation with representatives from CVM, ORA, OCA, and OPA, a public consumer education program which will inform consumers about the products for which the Center has regulatory responsibility.
- (c) Coordinating activities by serving as liaison with ORA, OCA, and OPA in the development of support and educational materials to supplement public affairs activities.
- (d) Monitoring and evaluating, through the CVM/FDA communications systems, consumer opinions and reactions, and channeling them into the Center decision making process.
- (e) Analyzing and evaluating comments by the Public Affairs Specialists concerning CVM's Compliance Program for the PAS Program.
- (f) Acting as liaison between the PAS s and the Center.
- (g) Assisting in the development of workshops and training conferences for PASs.