BVA/SPVS/VPMA Annual and Quarterly Practice surveys

1. The BVA currently organizes two different practice surveys in conjunction with the SPVS and the VPMA. The annual survey has been running since 1985 and is currently contracted to a firm of consultants, Anval Ltd.

2. Both surveys are intended as services to members. Respondents receive an individual statement of how their performance compares with their regional and national peer groups.

3. The annual survey attempts to cover key business aspects of running veterinary practices. The quarterly survey provides a more limited comparison based solely on the profit and loss account.

4. Both surveys have low response rates with consequent implications for the reliability of the results. Out of about 2,000 eligible practices, only 78 participated in the 2000 annual survey and 135 in the 2001 survey. Quarterly survey participants have fallen from a high of 185 to 62 in the final quarter of 2001.

5. The BVA told us that the survey participants tended to be either more efficient than average or more interested in improving efficiency than average.

6. The respondents tend to be from larger-than-average practices.

7. In comparing results with our own BMRB surveys, it should be noted that the BMRB surveys restrict questions to the specific surgery at the contact address, whether it is a main practice or branch. The BVA annual survey asks for whole practice returns and does not normally include branch surgeries. The BVA quarterly survey leaves it to the respondent whether to incorporate data about branch surgeries.