

A Guide to Moving & Working in Australia & New Zealand





About the guide

Since 2003, the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has reported an increasing shortage of rural vets in the country. Today, the problem is now a national one - impacting both rural and city practices. Despite that Australian veterinary courses continue to produce roughly 500 to 550 new graduates a year, there still remains a national shortage of vets that are qualified and have three to five years' clinical experience necessary for practice work - especially those who have experience working with livestock.

In 2018, a spokesperson for the New Zealand Veterinary Association reported that not only was a lack of skilled vets becoming a nationwide challenge, also New Zealand's biosecurity is now at threat as the Ministry of Primary Industries struggled to cope with veterinary demand.

After seeing the devastating impact this shortage has caused, we feel that our services can be beneficial in helping the Australian and New Zealand vet industry. Hence, we at Seven Animal Health have decided to open an office in Australia for the sole purpose of helping veterinarians who are interested in making the move, explore their options and find employment in Australia or New Zealand.



Background of the Australian Veterinary Workforce

Shortages & Economic State

State Veterinarians are currently included on the Australian Department of Jobs and Small Business' Skilled Occupation List, which is a list provided by the government that details which professions are in demand in Australia and therefore more likely to be granted a visa to move to and work in the country.

The average number of applicants per practice vacancy in the country has halved since 2014 and the average number of 'suitable' applicants per vacancy has fallen from 2.5 in 2012 to 1.6 in 2017. Areas with a particular shortage include New South Wales, as well as all rural areas where vets with livestock experience are required. Specialists, such as those with surgery or emergency care experience, are also highly in demand as well as all vets with more than three years' experience - a lack of experience is the main reason cited as to why candidates are currently being assessed as unsuitable for vacant roles.

Benefits of Working in Australia

Due to the current shortage, many Australian practices are increasing their wage offerings to attract experienced candidates. Thus, British vets with the correct experience can expect to command high salaries. The shortage also means that finding a job is currently easier in Australia than it is in your home country.

In terms of living conditions, many expats in Australia cite the possibility of a much higher quality of life than they were able to have on the same salary in their home country. For example, house prices tend to be a lot lower and you can get a lot more for your money in Australia than you can in, for example, the UK, specifically in terms of space and land.

Of course, we can't let the beautiful surroundings and weather go unmentioned, plus, lots of expat vets cite the huge variety of wildlife in Australia as making their job a lot more exciting too.



Working in New Zealand

Veterinarians are on the New Zealand skills shortage immigration list, which is a list provided by the government that details which professions are in demand in New Zealand and therefore more likely to be granted a visa to move to and work in the country.

Despite the country's size, New Zealand has an enormous number of horse and companion animal owners, as well as production animal/dairy farms. Not only this, but lifestyle blocks (hobby farms) are growing increasingly popular. New Zealand's need for veterinarians is a growing shortage and is expected to have major consequences on their biosecurity, food production and general way of life.

Veterinary nurses are also in demand and currently, experienced and qualified veterinary nurses are listed on the New Zealand skills shortage immigration list.

New Zealanders are relaxed, friendly and easy to get along with.

Doing well at their job is important, but they make sure they balance that with time to do their own things too. Commuting isn't a big hassle and even in the biggest cities you're only 30 minutes from a beach, native park or mountain biking trail.

It's these reasons and more that help them score at or near the top of so many international work/life balance surveys.

New Zealand has a temperate climate - in other words, generally warm, dry summers and relatively mild, wet winters. So year round, it's easier to enjoy a healthier, outdoors lifestyle. Then there's the scenery. New Zealand really has a lot to offer in this department - glorious sandy beaches, great native forests, mountains, lakes, rivers and fjords. Because they are a relatively compact country, they're all easy to get to and enjoy.



Moving to Australia or New Zealand - How we can help!

We offer a free, trusted service that helps UK and EU animal health professionals fulfil their dream of working in Australia or New Zealand. By strategically resourcing our experienced team in Australia as well as our enormous UK based office, we can help you find the right role in your preferred location.

From organising interviews to visa application assistance, our services can provide you with everything to get you ready for your dream job in Australia including:

Job Search & Visa Assistance

Job Search: As we receive information about new roles, you will be the first to know! Finding work on the other side of the world might sound daunting but we're here to help you every step of the way.

CV Writing: Having our own dedicated Australian office means that our recruitment experts know exactly what Australian and New Zealand veterinary practices are looking for, making us informed and prepared to help you tailor your CV to your ideal role.

Interview Prep: Upon securing an interview, our experienced animal health consultants will help you prepare for success, including how to handle Skype interviews and emphasising the experience that will get you hired.

Registration: All vets with veterinary degrees from the UK, Ireland, South Africa, Canada and USA are eligible to register with the veterinary boards across both countries without further testing. We can provide you with any help you need throughout the registration process.

Visa Application: There are three ways in which you can apply for a visa in Australia or New Zealand:

- General Skilled Migration - a visa designed to meet skilled shortages by attracting skilled migrants under 55
- Employer-Sponsored visa - for those who have found employment already
- Working Holiday visa - for migrants under 30 who might want to try living in Australia for a year to begin with.

Whichever route you want to take, our consultants can help you choose the most relevant visa for your needs as informing you about costs, processing times, checks, maintenance, skills assessment fees and health surcharges.

Travel & Accommodation

Of course you'll need to get to Australia or New Zealand and have somewhere to stay when you first arrive! Whether you want to start off renting or purchase a property, we can help you with every aspect of the travel and accommodation process including:

Booking Flights: We can help you find the best deals on the most affordable flights. As an initial suggestion, Skyscanner and Travel Supermarket are particularly good for comparing rates if your new employer is unable to provide the flights for you.

Reserving Temporary Accommodation: You might find that you want to start with temporary accommodation when you first arrive so that you have a base for viewing more permanent options. We can connect you with short-term accommodation providers wherever you'd like to start.

Finding Permanent Accommodation: If you'd rather buy before you go or you need help purchasing or renting long-term once you're in Aus or NZ, we can advise you on relevant property laws and tenants agreements as well as assisting you throughout the process.

Transport From Airport: We can help with every last detail of your journey down to transport from the airport to your new accommodation, from hiring cars to finding buses or taxis.

Transitioning and Adapting Your Family: Of course, no matter how wonderful the country is that you're moving to, there will always be a period of transition and adaptation to your new life. This can be especially difficult on kids or other family members, so we'll be by your side throughout to make sure you and your family adjust as easy and happy as possible.

Transitioning and Adapting Your Family

Living Costs: We can help you estimate your new living costs before you move, to make sure you're as prepared as possible when you get there.

Organising Your Working Life: We can help you with any financial advice you need as a new worker in Aus or NZ, from setting up bank accounts to getting your Tax File Number sorted.

Establishing Your Home Life: From registering with GPs and dentists to sorting out your driving license and Medicare card, we'll help you and your family get set up for everyday life.

24/7 Relocation Support: Whenever you need help, our Relocation Support service is on hand 24/7. Having both a UK and an Australian office means that time differences won't stand in our way.

Schools & Childcare Information: If your children are of school age, it's a good idea to start researching schools in the area you want to move to before you get there; most schools will have a catchment map on their website, so this might affect your decision on where to choose accommodation. Once you've moved, you'll need a proof of address to begin the application process as well as your child's birth certificate or passport, and your proof of visa. Some areas might also require an immunisation record. Bear in mind that schools are closed during the holidays so you'll need to contact them in term time and also that the terms are the opposite to the Northern Hemisphere - summer holidays happen at Christmas!



Adjusting to Life in Australia & New Zealand: Acclimatising and Cultural Adjustment

While most people assume that our shared language means that life in New Zealand and Australia is much the same as life in your home country, the truth is that Australia and New Zealand both have a unique and vibrant culture all of their own. Luckily it's also a culture that is welcoming and friendly, so you should have no problems fitting in. Here are some things to think about:

Laws in Australia

When moving to any country, it's good to have a general idea of the law there and what might affect you. For example, all banks charge a monthly fee for withdrawals, and some states require you to resit your driving test before you can drive there. Many families also get caught out by pet laws. The quarantine process for bringing pets into the country can be complex and lengthy due to Australia & New Zealand's strict biosecurity laws so make sure to research this before you go. We can help you with any other questions you might have, while both Government websites are also a great resource for finding out more about Aus & NZ law.

How do Aussies and Kiwis make friends?

The good news is that the locals are super friendly, so making friends should be easy. If you're moving over to join a vet practise, you'll also already have a number of colleagues there to socialise with or ask for advice. Your best bet is to be proactive and get stuck in to Australian life. Join message boards before you go, join clubs or groups when you get there and encourage your kids to sign up for sports or activity clubs where they'll make friends more easily. Reading up on Aus/NZ culture and daily life is also a great idea as it'll help you avoid any faux pas.

Interested in making the move to Australia or New Zealand?

Five Questions to Ask Yourself

So you think you're ready to move to Australia? Before you make the final decision, here are five key questions to consider:

1. Have you really prepared?

When you think you've read everything possible about moving to Australia or New Zealand - read some more! This is a big decision and it's important to be completely prepared so nothing takes you by surprise.

2. What are your career goals?

Okay so that's three questions but it's important to make sure you're clear about where you want to be in your career and the sort of progression on offer in Australia and New Zealand. The good news is, with such a shortage of skilled and specialist vets, these countries really should be your oyster, whatever your goals. The Australian Veterinary Association and the New Zealand Veterinary Association is a great resource for researching this further.

3. Does everyone want to move?

While Australia and New Zealand might hold great career opportunities for you, if you've got a family it's important to make sure everyone else is just as happy with the move. A good idea can be to take a family holiday to the area you're interested in so everyone can get a feel for the country and to make the move seems less alien and scary.

4. Can you afford to move?

While housing costs are lower in Aus & New Zealand, living costs can be higher. Before making the decision to move, we highly recommend drafting a yearly budget based on your estimated vet salary (and your partner's combined salary, if relevant) to make sure the move is financially sound.

5. When do you want to move?

While you might be so excited you want to move straight away, it's important to be realistic about how much time the migration process can take. The sooner you get started, the sooner you can book those flights!

Contact Us Today!

If you've read our whole guide and you're raring to go, we'd be delighted to help you make the move to Australia or New Zealand. You can contact us via our contact form, give us a ring on +6175 64 64 077, or email us at info@sevenanimalhealth.com. We're also on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn so there's heaps of ways you can get in touch and let us help you begin your new life.



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