



General Assembly 2025

DRAFT MINUTES FOR MEMBERSHIP COMMENT

ISSUED TO MEMBERS JANUARY 2026

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1 MORNING SESSION

1.1 Opening & Housekeeping – Richard Casey

Housekeeping information was provided, including the location of facilities and planned comfort breaks. Members were advised that audio recording would take place for minute-taking purposes only, with recordings to be shared with member associations within seven days as part of the post-Assembly online voting process. No video recording would be used.

Members were informed that Slido would be used throughout the session for interactive polling and submission of questions. It was emphasized that all Slido polls were non-binding and intended solely to gauge sentiment and inform future proposals. All formal voting would take place online following the General Assembly.

Warm-up polls were conducted to confirm participation and functionality, including identification of countries represented and general perceptions of the WSAVA Congress.



Which country are you from?

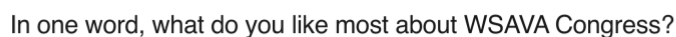
Wordcloud Poll

81 responses

81 participants



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Wordcloud Poll

107 responses

87 participants



1.2 Welcome from WSAVA President – Dr Jim Berry

Dr Jim Berry noted governance developments agreed by members in the previous year, including revised regional representation and expansion of the Executive Board, resulting in broader geographic representation and more inclusive decision-making. The Executive Board members present were introduced.

Members were advised that WSAVA is currently in a strong financial position, enabling consideration of larger strategic initiatives. It was noted that further financial detail would be presented later in the Assembly by the Treasurer and the Financial Advisory Committee.

Updates were provided on recent organisational developments, including consolidation of education-related committees into an integrated structure, redevelopment of the WSAVA Academy platform, appointment of a new Professional Congress Organiser from 2027, and the development of new educational programmes, including a Future Leaders initiative and a business management course aimed particularly at early-career veterinarians and members from emerging associations.

Dr Jim Berry also highlighted the establishment of the Strategic Advisory Committee to identify emerging issues in the profession and the creation of the Advocacy and Communications Committee to strengthen WSAVA's voice in global policy, access to medicines, and animal welfare discussions.

Dr Jim Berry concluded by expressing appreciation for member support during the first year of the presidency and reaffirmed commitment to continued collaboration with the global WSAVA community.

1.3 Member Consultation 2025: Next Steps

An update was provided on the outcomes of the 2025 Membership Consultation, which comprised a series of surveys and engagement activities conducted across regions during the year. It was noted that the consultation sought to capture member perspectives on governance, participation, representation, and operational processes, and that responses reflected a broad range of regional experiences and constraints.

It was explained that the consultation findings informed a number of proposed bylaw and policy updates presented to the General Assembly, while also highlighting areas where further discussion and refinement are required before formal decisions are taken. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring that governance structures remain inclusive, practical, and reflective of the realities faced by member associations of different sizes and capacities.

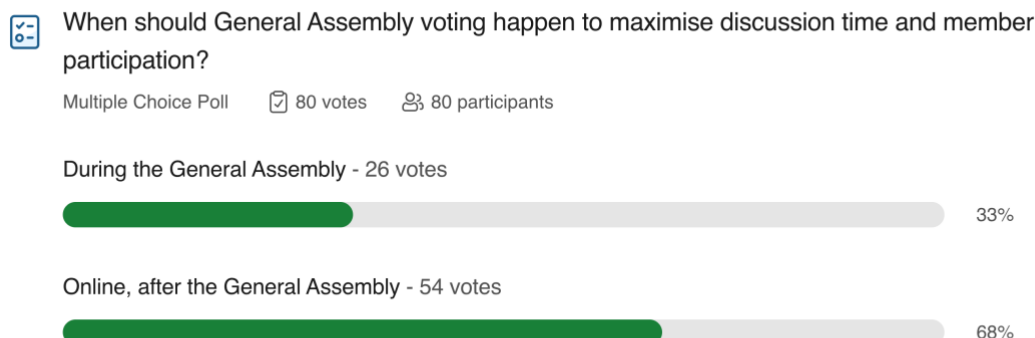
Two key issues arising from the consultation were presented for focused discussion:

1.3.1 Timing and Modality of General Assembly Voting

Members considered whether statutory voting should continue to take place during the General Assembly or be conducted via online voting following the Assembly. It was noted that in-person voting supports immediate decision-making and accountability following live discussion, while online voting allows wider participation from associations unable to attend in person due to visa restrictions, financial limitations, time-zone challenges, or competing commitments. Members highlighted the value of

online voting in allowing additional time to review recordings, presentations, and supporting documentation prior to casting votes.

Slido polling was conducted to gauge overall sentiment. It was reiterated that polling results were indicative only and intended to inform further consideration rather than determine outcomes.



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1.3.2 Quorum Calculation and Representation

The General Assembly discussed whether the current attendance-based quorum model remains appropriate or whether alternative approaches should be explored. Members noted that the existing model can disproportionately disadvantage associations that face consistent barriers to physical attendance, potentially affecting the representativeness of decision-making. The possibility of weighted or alternative quorum models was raised, alongside concerns regarding complexity, transparency, and the need to maintain clear and understandable governance mechanisms.

Members shared examples from national and regional associations, including fixed quorum thresholds, proportional representation models, and procedural safeguards to address low attendance. Challenges relating to equitable participation, legitimacy of decisions, and avoidance of unintended consequences were discussed.

Suggestions were made regarding complementary approaches, such as regional pre-Assembly consultations, improved circulation of materials in advance, and clearer framing of complex or potentially contentious issues. It was acknowledged that similar approaches have been trialed previously with mixed levels of engagement, but members agreed that continued exploration of options remains important.

Slido polling was conducted to gauge overall sentiment. It was reiterated that polling results were indicative only and intended to inform further consideration rather than determine outcomes.



How should the General Assembly quorum be counted?

Multiple Choice Poll

78 votes

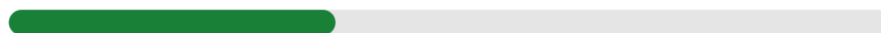
78 participants

The number of associations present - 49 votes



63%

The weighted vote of associations present - 29 votes



37%

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It was confirmed that all feedback from discussion and polling would be consolidated and reviewed by the Executive Board and relevant governance bodies. Members were advised that revised proposals, where appropriate, would be shared for further consultation and brought forward for formal consideration through the established online voting process following the General Assembly.

1.4 Congress Locations 2028+

Dr Jim Berry facilitated a structured discussion on the selection of WSAVA Congress locations from 2028 onwards, emphasizing the strategic importance of long-term planning for the Association's flagship event. It was noted that Congress location decisions have a direct impact on global accessibility, financial sustainability, regional engagement, and WSAVA's ability to fulfil its mission of advancing companion animal veterinary care worldwide.

The General Assembly was invited to reflect on the current regional rotation framework and its role in promoting geographic balance and predictability. Members acknowledged the value of rotation in supporting equity, advance planning, and regional capacity-building, while also recognizing the need for flexibility in response to practical considerations.

Key factors identified as central to future site selection included ease of international travel and visa accessibility, affordability for delegates, safety and political stability, venue capacity and infrastructure, and financial risk management. Members also highlighted the importance of strong local veterinary association engagement, government and institutional support, and the ability to deliver high-quality scientific programming and delegate experience.

Discussion addressed the balance between hosting Congresses in well-established destinations with proven infrastructure and exploring opportunities in emerging regions to broaden WSAVA's global footprint. Members noted that while expansion into new

regions can enhance inclusivity and regional development, it may also introduce additional operational and financial risks that must be carefully assessed.

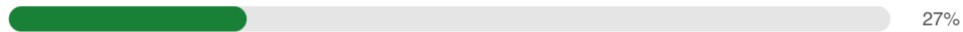
It was clarified that no Congress locations were being proposed or selected during the session. Feedback gathered during the discussion would be used to refine evaluation criteria and inform future planning by the Executive Board and relevant governance bodies. Members were advised that any proposed locations would be brought forward through the established consultation and approval processes.



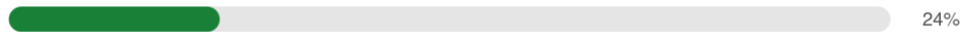
Which of the following factors is most important when selecting a WSAVA Congress location?
Select THREE.

Multiple Choice Poll 86 votes 86 participants

Support from the WSAVA member association in the host country - 23 votes



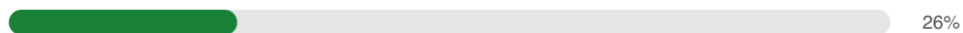
Financial support from the country/city - 21 votes



Easy international travel - 58 votes



Travel VISA availability - 22 votes



Suitable venue - 9 votes



Local infrastructure such as many hotels and public transport - 21 votes



Affordability of the destination (cost of hotels, food, public transport for delegates) - 43 votes



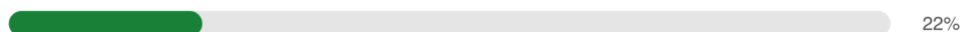
Safety and security - 38 votes



Environmental sustainability - 1 vote



A strong veterinary ecosystem in the country (for example, large population of veterinarians) - 19 votes



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1.5 Strategic Priorities 2026+

Dr Ernie Ward, Chair of the Strategic Advisory Committee, facilitated a structured and interactive session to support the development of WSAVA's strategic priorities for the period beyond 2026. The session was positioned as a key consultation exercise, intended to capture member perspectives and regional realities to inform long-term

planning and ensure alignment between WSAVA's activities and the evolving needs of the global companion animal veterinary profession.

Members participated in facilitated table discussions and guided exercises designed to encourage reflection on both current and emerging challenges affecting veterinary practice. Participants were asked to consider pressures facing the profession within their own countries and regions, as well as issues that transcend national boundaries and would benefit from coordinated global leadership.

A broad range of themes were raised during the discussions. These included workforce sustainability and wellbeing, recruitment and retention challenges, access to veterinary care in underserved communities, regulatory complexity, public trust and professional reputation, the rapid pace of technological and scientific change, and the growing expectations placed on veterinary teams. Members also highlighted disparities in resources and infrastructure between regions, and the impact of economic, political, and social factors on the ability of veterinarians to deliver optimal care.

Considerable attention was given to identifying areas where WSAVA is uniquely positioned to add value. Members noted the Association's role in setting global standards and guidelines, convening international expertise, supporting education and leadership development, and representing companion animal perspectives in global policy discussions. The importance of prioritising initiatives that are evidence-based, inclusive, and feasible within available resources was emphasized.

Participants were encouraged to differentiate between issues best addressed at national or regional level and those that require global coordination. Areas frequently identified as appropriate for WSAVA leadership included advocacy related to One Health and antimicrobial resistance, promotion of veterinary wellbeing and workforce sustainability, capacity building in lower-resourced regions, and development of data-driven insights to inform policy and practice.

Input was collected through facilitated discussion and live polling, allowing common themes and areas of consensus to be identified across regions. It was noted that while priorities vary by context, there was strong alignment around the need for WSAVA to focus on long-term impact, collaboration, and support for member associations navigating rapid change.

Dr Ernie Ward confirmed that the Strategic Advisory Committee would consolidate all feedback received during the session and prepare a synthesis for review by the Executive Board. Members were advised that this input would inform the next phase of strategic planning, including refinement of priorities, development of workplans, and alignment of resources. Revised strategic proposals would be shared with members for further consultation prior to formal adoption.



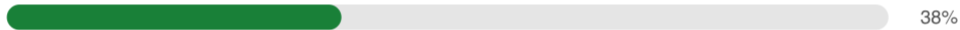
Which of the following activities and interventions from WSAVA do you believe would provide your association and its members with the greatest benefit and impact? Select FIVE.

Multiple Choice Poll 65 votes 65 participants

Development of Global Guidelines - 48 votes



Structured Courses on the WSAVA Academy - 25 votes



Representing the companion animal veterinary community in global advocacy campaigns, such as at the United Nations, World Health Organisation, World Organisation for Animal Health, etc. - 38 votes



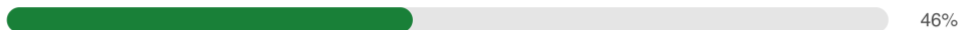
Practical tools and resources for use in veterinary practice/clinics - 36 votes



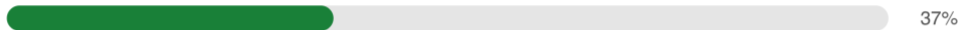
Regional in-person continuing education events - 36 votes



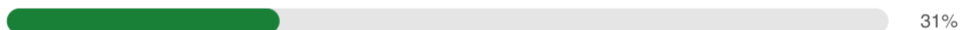
Structured programmes for advancing and developing veterinary associations and leadership - 30 votes



Regional Member Forums for WSAVA Member Associations - 24 votes



Travel grants and scholarships such as for WSAVA Congress - 20 votes



General guidelines for using AI in companion animal practice - 24 votes



General guidelines for using veterinary telemedicine in companion animal practice - 9 votes



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1.6 Scope of Species

Dr Jerzy Gawor facilitated a discussion on the scope of species addressed within WSAVA activities, prompted by feedback from member associations regarding the growing relevance of species beyond dogs and cats in companion animal practice.

The General Assembly was invited to consider how “companion animal” is defined across different regions and whether WSAVA should broaden its educational and guideline activities to more explicitly include small mammals and other non-traditional companion species. Regional differences in species prevalence, regulatory frameworks, and educational needs were highlighted.

Members expressed a range of views, noting both the importance of responding to evolving practice realities and the need to remain aligned with member priorities and available resources. It was emphasized that WSAVA’s scientific programming historically reflects the needs and requests of member associations and regional organising committees.

Indicative polling demonstrated a range of opinions, with a slight majority supporting continuation of the current needs-based, regionally driven approach. It was noted that this feedback would be taken into account by the relevant committees when planning future educational content and initiatives.



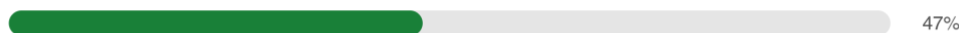
How should non-traditional pets be represented in WSAVA Congress?

Multiple Choice Poll 81 votes 81 participants

Considered on a case-by-case basis following consultation with the region - 43 votes



Small number of lectures - 38 votes



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1.7 Future Association Leader Program

Dr Julie Stafford presented an overview of the WSAVA Future Leader Programme, developed to support succession planning and leadership development within WSAVA member associations. The programme was described as a strategic investment in the future sustainability of veterinary associations globally.

It was explained that the programme will launch in 2026, with applications opening in October 2025. The programme will run over nine months and include a combination of

self-paced online learning, facilitated virtual sessions, and an in-person workshop held in conjunction with the 2026 WSAVA Congress in Warsaw.

The curriculum focuses on association leadership, governance, communication, strategic thinking, and change management, with an emphasis on practical application within member associations. Participation fees were outlined, tiered according to World Bank income classification, alongside planned travel support mechanisms.

Member associations were encouraged to actively promote the programme, nominate suitable candidates, and consider supporting participants financially where possible. The presentation concluded with confirmation that up to 25 participants would be selected for the initial cohort.

1.8 Dental Committee Update

An update on the WSAVA Dental Guidelines was presented via recorded message by Dr Brooke Niemic. The General Assembly was reminded that dental disease remains the most prevalent health issue affecting companion animals globally and represents a significant animal welfare concern.

Key updates to the 2025 Dental Guidelines were outlined, including expanded content on pediatric dentistry, tooth resorption, caries, dental radiography, and utilisation of veterinary nurses and support staff. The revised guidelines were described as more practically oriented, designed to support general practitioners in daily clinical practice.

Progress since publication of the original guidelines was highlighted, including translations into multiple languages, regional continuing education initiatives, development of toolkits, and “train-the-trainer” programmes. Future plans include expanded student engagement, additional educational resources, and further regional capacity-building.

Changes in committee membership were noted, including transition of leadership, and the General Assembly acknowledged the contributions of outgoing committee members.

1.9 Hospital Standards Committee Update

Dr Rochelle Low provided an update on the work of the Hospital Standards Committee, noting that the committee was established earlier in the year and has focused on developing a practical, globally applicable framework for hospital standards.

The proposed framework adopts a total quality approach, identifying key stakeholders including veterinary teams, patients, and clients. Core areas under development include team wellbeing and development, delivery of clinical care, environment of care (including infection prevention and antimicrobial stewardship), and documentation and medical records.

The importance of prioritising standards that are measurable, achievable, and impactful across diverse practice settings was emphasized. Examples were provided to illustrate how consistent standards can improve patient outcomes, team communication, and client trust.

Members were invited to provide feedback on the proposed framework as work continues on the initial set of standards. It was noted that further consultation would take place as the standards are developed and refined.

2 Afternoon Session

2.1 Call to Order

Jim Berry reconvened the General Assembly for the afternoon session and welcomed members. It was confirmed that quorum had not been reached. Members were advised that, in accordance with WSAVA bylaws, all statutory items requiring approval would be deferred to an online vote following the General Assembly. Slido polling was used throughout the session to capture non-binding member sentiment. A moment of reflection was observed in memory of colleagues who had passed away during the year.

2.2 Executive Board Q&A

The Executive Board responded to questions submitted in advance and via Slido during the session. The discussion focused on governance processes, participation models, and WSAVA programmes.

Remote Participation in the General Assembly

The General Assembly asked whether live remote participation and voting during the General Assembly had been considered to improve inclusivity.

The Executive Board responded that while the objective of greater accessibility is recognised, live remote participation presents ongoing challenges, including time-zone differences, technical reliability, language barriers, and the risk of unequal engagement between in-person and remote participants. Based on previous experience and benchmarking with other international associations, post-Assembly online voting was confirmed as the most reliable and equitable mechanism at this time.

WSAVA Academy Scope and Content

Questions were raised regarding the scope of the WSAVA Academy, including the inclusion of exotic or non-traditional companion animal content and how educational priorities are determined.

The Executive Board explained that Academy content is aligned with WSAVA's strategic priorities and companion animal practice, drawing primarily from Congress sessions, committee initiatives, and WSAVA guidelines. Expansion into additional subject areas depends on relevance, volunteer expertise, and available resources.

Academy Engagement and Completion Rates

The General Assembly asked how engagement with Academy content is measured. The Executive Board confirmed that enrolment, completion rates, and geographic reach are monitored. Engagement trends vary by region and topic, and this data is increasingly used to inform future content development and identify unmet needs.

Online Voting Participation

Questions were raised regarding participation levels in online voting.

The Executive Board reported that historical participation in online votes has typically ranged between approximately 60% and 90% of eligible member associations, often exceeding in-person participation levels at General Assemblies.

2.3 Treasurer's Report – Dr Oscar Umana

Dr Oscar Umana presented a detailed overview of WSAVA's financial position, covering audited results for 2024 and financial performance for 2025 to date. It was reported that the Association remained in a strong and stable financial position, supported by diversified income streams and strengthened financial oversight.

Dr Umana confirmed that the 2024 accounts had been externally audited and reflected a positive net result. Contributing factors included prudent cost management, strong performance of recent World Congresses, and increased income from digital education initiatives. Particular reference was made to the WSAVA Academy, which had exceeded income projections and demonstrated growing engagement across multiple regions.

An update was provided on financial performance for 2025, noting improved visibility of expenditure following changes to financial reporting structures. Expenditure was presented in alignment with WSAVA's strategic pillars, enabling clearer understanding of how resources are allocated across governance, education, advocacy, community engagement, and operational support.

Dr Umana confirmed that WSAVA's reserves remained in line with the Association's reserve policy and were considered appropriate to mitigate risk and support long-term sustainability. It was emphasized that reserves are intended to protect WSAVA against unforeseen events and revenue volatility, rather than to fund routine operations.

2.4 Financial Advisory Committee Report -Dr Julia Crawford

Dr Crawford presented a report on the Committee's activities and oversight role during the reporting period. The FAC was described as an independent advisory body supporting the Executive Board on matters of financial governance, sustainability, and risk management.

Dr Crawford outlined the Committee's key areas of work, including review of annual budgets, monitoring of financial performance against projections, and oversight of significant financial proposals. The FAC had reviewed and supported the 2025 budget and contributed to longer-term financial planning discussions.

Updates were provided on the Committee's work relating to reserve and investment policies, ensuring alignment with best practice and WSAVA's risk profile. The FAC also participated in the external audit process and confirmed that no material concerns had been identified.

Dr Crawford highlighted the FAC's involvement in reviewing major expenditure proposals, including Congress-related financial arrangements and proposed investments in data infrastructure and research. In each case, financial risk, sustainability, and alignment with strategic priorities were assessed before recommendations were made to the Executive Board. The importance of clear financial governance structures, internal controls, and transparent reporting to member associations was emphasized.

2.5 Expense Approval 1 - Congress-Related Expenditure Approval

The General Assembly discussed a proposed amendment to authorise the Executive Board to approve all WSAVA Congress-related expenditures, removing the existing USD 50,000 General Assembly approval threshold for these specific items. The rationale for the proposal was outlined, noting that changes to Congress financial flows under the current Professional Congress Organiser (PCO) model have altered how Congress-related costs are incurred, managed, and reported.

Discussion focused on governance and financial safeguards to ensure appropriate oversight remains in place. Members noted that Congress expenditures are subject to multiple layers of control, including tender processes, contractual review, Executive Board approval, Financial Advisory Committee oversight, and external audit. It was observed that these mechanisms provide a level of scrutiny that is more robust than under previous Congress arrangements.

Several members commented that requiring General Assembly approval for individual Congress expenses above a fixed threshold is no longer practical and can create unnecessary delays, particularly given the operational timelines required for large international events. Others emphasized the importance of maintaining transparency and clear reporting to member associations.

It was noted that Congress budgets and financial outcomes continue to be reported to members, and that the Executive Board remains accountable for financial decision-making. A Slido poll conducted during the session indicated strong support for the proposed amendment.

2.6 Expense Approval 2 Data & Research Project

The General Assembly discussed a proposed investment in a global data and research initiative intended to strengthen WSAVA's capacity for evidence-based governance, advocacy, education planning, and strategic decision-making. The initiative was described as a significant step toward enabling WSAVA to collect, own, and analyze primary global data relevant to companion animal veterinary practice.

Discussion addressed the scope of the proposed research, including the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods, and the anticipated value of producing a global benchmark report on the state of companion animal veterinary practice. Members highlighted the importance of reliable data to inform policy positions, support advocacy efforts, and align educational initiatives with real-world needs across diverse regions.

Financial considerations were discussed, including the proposed cost range, phased implementation, and the importance of ensuring value for money. Members also raised points regarding data governance, privacy, and security, emphasizing the need for compliance with international data protection standards.

Several members expressed strong support for the initiative, noting that access to credible, WSAVA-owned data would strengthen the Association's global reputation and influence. Slido polling reflected broad support.

2.7 Bylaw Changes

The General Assembly reviewed and discussed proposed amendments to the WSAVA bylaws. The amendments were presented as outcomes of the 2025 Membership Consultation and were intended to improve clarity, governance efficiency, and alignment with current operational practices.

Key areas discussed included the introduction of a Non-Voting membership category, clarification of voting allocations for General Members, the timing of Executive Board elections through mid-year online voting, and proposed changes relating to quorum calculation and Congress-related expenditure approvals.

Members raised questions regarding representation, inclusivity, and the balance between in-person engagement at the General Assembly and online governance mechanisms. Particular attention was given to quorum-related provisions and how changes might affect participation and legitimacy of decision-making.

All comments and feedback were noted. As quorum was not reached, no formal votes were taken during the session. It was confirmed that all proposed bylaw amendments would be subject to online voting following the General Assembly.

2.8 Membership Update – Mike Topper, Membership and Nominations Committee

A report was provided on the work of the Membership and Nominations Committee (MNC), including its role in reviewing membership applications and confirming eligibility requirements in accordance with the WSAVA bylaws and the Policy and Process Manual. It was also noted that a change in Committee leadership was forthcoming, with the Chair, Mike Topper, stepping down and an incoming Chair, Melanie Hicks, identified, while continuity on the Committee would be maintained.

It was reported that the MNC had also reviewed candidates in connection with the recent Ordinary Board Member process and confirmed that candidates presented met the requirements of the position.

The General Assembly was advised that membership matters were grouped for consideration under the consent agenda, including: associate membership extension requests, changes in membership category, and new member applications (General, Associate, and Affiliate). Members were reminded that items could be removed from the consent agenda for separate discussion if requested.

The following membership matters were presented with the MNC's recommendations:

- Tunisia: A one-year extension of Associate Membership was recommended to support progression toward General Membership, with timing of the relevant vote noted.
- Caribbean Veterinary Medical Association: A change in membership category from Associate to General Membership was recommended.
- Colegio de Medicos Veterinarios de Honduras (CMVH): Approval as a WSAVA General Member was recommended.
- Associação Brasileira de Odontologia Veterinária (ABOV): Approval as a WSAVA Affiliate Member was recommended.
- Association of Venezuelan Veterinarians in Exile (AVVE): A correction/clarification to the pre-read wording was noted. It was clarified that the association did not intend to represent the veterinary profession within Venezuela and that no formal position would be expressed by the Venezuelan Society of Small Animal Veterinarians regarding AVVE's admission, as this was a decision of the General Assembly. The MNC reaffirmed its recommendation that AVVE be approved as an Affiliate Member.
- Venezuelan Society of Small Animal Veterinarians (SOVEMEVEPA): It was noted separately that an extension request for Associate Membership had not been submitted and, as a result, the Society's WSAVA membership had ended. Additional contextual information regarding restructuring and intent to continue international engagement was noted.

As quorum had not been reached, it was noted that approval of statutory membership matters would proceed through the confirmed online voting process following the General Assembly, in line with WSAVA's procedures. All present applying associations were invited on stage to present their associations to the General Assembly.

2.9 Membership Policy and Process Manual – Discussion

The General Assembly was informed of proposed updates to the WSAVA Membership Policy and Process Manual. It was explained that the revisions are intended primarily to streamline the document by removing duplication, consolidating member obligations into a single section, and reducing repetition across membership categories. Policies that are mandated by the bylaws would be removed from the manual and replaced with

signposting to the relevant bylaw provisions, with the aim of improving clarity, reducing document length, and minimizing the risk of transcription errors.

It was further noted that the revised manual includes the addition of a section addressing the proposed Non-Voting Adjunct Membership category, as well as clarification of processes relating to Affiliate and Adjunct Membership. These elements were presented as contingent on approval of the corresponding bylaw amendments. No objections were raised during discussion.

2.10 Membership of Russian Associations – Discussion

The General Assembly then considered a request submitted by the Ukrainian Small Animal Veterinary Association to remove two Russian member associations from WSAVA membership, in light of the ongoing war. Members were asked to approach the discussion with sensitivity and respect, given the emotional and geopolitical context.

It was reported that, following submission of the request, the Russian Small Animal Veterinary Association had voluntarily and temporarily withdrawn its membership from WSAVA and FECAVA. A letter confirming this decision was read into the record, stating that the withdrawal was undertaken to avoid political conflict, protect personal safety, and allow WSAVA to focus on professional veterinary matters. It was clarified that this withdrawal applied only to the Russian Small Animal Veterinary Association and not to the St. Petersburg Veterinary Society.

Reference was made to the WSAVA bylaws regarding resignation from membership, noting that resignation becomes effective upon delivery of written notice. It was confirmed that the Russian Small Animal Veterinary Association's withdrawal therefore took immediate effect, and as a result, it was no longer part of the matter under consideration.

The discussion therefore focused solely on whether the St. Petersburg Veterinary Society should remain a WSAVA member. It was reiterated that WSAVA has historically sought to maintain neutrality in matters of geopolitical conflict and to focus on its professional, scientific, and educational mission. Board members confirmed that they had deliberately refrained from expressing views, in order to allow the discussion to be member-led.

Members expressed a wide range of views. Several emphasized that WSAVA is a global scientific organisation and should not adjudicate political actions of governments or associations, cautioning that doing so could create precedents without clear limits. Others highlighted the importance of community, collegiality, and maintaining dialogue among veterinarians worldwide, particularly during times of conflict. Consideration was also given to the impact of any decision on animal welfare and on veterinary colleagues working in affected regions.

Questions were raised regarding whether associations could be invited to reconsider their position or re-engage with WSAVA under alternative membership categories in the

future. It was clarified that, at present, WSAVA recognises only voting membership categories, and that any future non-voting category would be subject to member approval and formal application at a subsequent General Assembly. It was further noted that any return to membership would need to follow established procedures and timelines.

Members also discussed the absence of a formally documented policy addressing WSAVA's apolitical position. It was acknowledged that while neutrality has been an established practice, it is not currently codified in policy. There was general agreement that clearer written guidance may be beneficial and could be considered as part of future bylaw or policy reviews.

As quorum was not reached, the discussion was noted as exploratory only. It was confirmed that the proposed vote would be amended to remove reference to the Russian Small Animal Veterinary Association and would address only the status of the St. Petersburg Veterinary Society. All members were reminded that recordings of the discussion would be available to member representatives.

2.11 Presentations from Partner and Member Associations

World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH)

An update was provided on recent global developments relating to antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Reference was made to the United Nations Political Declaration on AMR adopted in September 2024, noting that companion animal health was explicitly included for the first time. It was reported that commitments now address responsible antimicrobial use in animal health, disease prevention through vaccination, and equitable access to veterinary services. The revision of the Global Action Plan on AMR was noted, with confirmation that animal health, environmental health, plant health, and companion animals are now reflected. Members were encouraged to provide feedback on the draft revision within the consultation period. An increase in country-level reporting on antimicrobial use in companion animals was highlighted, along with ongoing efforts to link usage and resistance data to support evidence-based interventions. Collaboration with WSAVA and other partners on AMR awareness materials and stewardship initiatives was acknowledged.

World Veterinary Association (WVA)

An overview was provided of WVA's mission, governance structure, and strategic priorities. Recent activities included seminars on medicine stewardship, One Health, veterinary education, and animal welfare held in conjunction with the World Veterinary Congress. The successful delivery of the 40th World Veterinary Congress in Washington, DC, was noted, as well as engagement with global partners within the Quadripartite framework. Renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding with the World Medical Association was highlighted as a significant step in strengthening One Health collaboration. Outreach to veterinary students and participation in regional meetings were also reported.

Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations (FECAVA)

An update was provided on FECAVA's policy and advocacy work within the European Union. Key areas included veterinary medicines regulation, antimicrobial use, access to medicines, animal welfare, and microchipping and registration of companion animals. Collaboration with the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe and engagement with European institutions were noted, alongside work on veterinary wellbeing initiatives and continuing education. Recent educational activities, including a European congress and the launch of updated branding, were also reported.

Federation of Asian Small Animal Veterinary Associations (FASAVA)

Information was shared regarding the upcoming FASAVA 2025 Congress to be held in Daegu, Republic of Korea, in collaboration with national and regional veterinary conferences. Reference was made to Daegu's accessibility and capacity, joint programming arrangements, and international participation opportunities. It was noted that the Congress builds on previous successful joint WSAVA–FASAVA events.

Veterinary Medical Association Executives (VMAE)

An introduction was provided to VMAE, outlining its role in supporting professional leadership and management of veterinary associations, primarily in North America. Membership composition, professional association management expertise, and interest in expanding global collaboration were highlighted. The value of knowledge exchange across regions and differing regulatory environments was emphasized.

ProSalus Foundation

An update was provided on the Foundation's recent rebranding from the WSAVA Foundation to ProSalus Foundation, undertaken to clarify its mission and fundraising identity. Ongoing collaboration with WSAVA was confirmed through an existing memorandum of understanding. Activities reported included scholarship programmes, support for veterinary capacity-building initiatives in Africa and Latin America, assistance to Ukrainian colleagues through financial aid and equipment donations, rabies outreach programmes, and expansion of twinning and education initiatives. Governance changes, including incorporation as a charitable organisation in the United States, were noted. Members were invited to engage with current fundraising initiatives supporting the Foundation's work.

2.12 Acknowledgements and Awards

The General Assembly formally acknowledged and thanked committee chairs who concluded their terms during the year, recognising the significant time, expertise, and commitment contributed alongside their professional responsibilities. Appreciation was expressed to:

Dr. Brooke Niemiec, outgoing Chair of the Dental Committee

Dr. Mike Topper, outgoing Chair of the Membership and Nominations Committee, with appreciation also noted for his forthcoming role as Chair of the Finance Committee

Dr. Marge Chandler, outgoing Chair of the Nutrition Committee

Dr. Ann Hohenhaus, outgoing Chair of the Oncology Committee

Dr. Dave Miller, outgoing member of the Financial Advisory Committee

President's Award

Dr Berry presented the **President's Award**, noting that this distinction is awarded at the President's discretion in recognition of exceptional and sustained service to WSAVA and to companion animal veterinary medicine globally.

The 2025 President's Award was presented to **Dr. Lawson Cairns**, in recognition of his long-standing contributions to veterinary education, leadership within the profession, and extensive support for continuing education and capacity-building initiatives across sub-Saharan Africa. His involvement in WSAVA committees, regional Congress activities, and the development of AFSCAN initiatives was highlighted, as was his continued voluntary professional engagement.

Dr. Cairns accepted the award and expressed appreciation for the recognition, acknowledging the collaborative nature of the work and the support received from colleagues, partner organisations, and his family. The General Assembly congratulated Dr. Cairns on the award.

2.13 Any Other Business (AOB)

A member raised points relating to the review of membership applications, specifically noting the importance of collaboration between affiliate and national associations where possible, with reference to the Venezuelan context. Clarification was provided that Affiliate Membership does not require formal association with a national body and that the relevant application had been reviewed and recommended by the Membership and Nominations Committee in accordance with WSAVA policies.

A further point was raised regarding transparency of online voting results. It was confirmed that vote breakdowns are published for all non-election-related matters, while individual candidate vote totals in elections are not disclosed in order to avoid unnecessary personal impact on unsuccessful candidates.

Appreciation was expressed by members for the provision of Spanish interpretation during the General Assembly, and thanks were extended to those supporting translation and interpretation services.

2.14 Future General Assembly and Congress

Members were advised that the next WSAVA General Assembly is scheduled to take place on 12 October 2026, in conjunction with the WSAVA–FECVA–PSAVA Joint Congress in Warsaw, Poland. An invitation to attend was extended, and confidence was expressed in the host association's preparations.

2.15 Voting Process and Close of Session

It was confirmed that audio recordings and supporting materials from the General Assembly would be distributed to member representatives. Online voting would be conducted via ElectionBuddy, opening seven days following the General Assembly and remaining open for a seven-day period. Members were encouraged to participate fully in the voting process, noting that outcomes would reflect the discussions held during the Assembly.

The President thanked members for a collegial, constructive, and well-attended General Assembly. The afternoon session of the WSAVA General Assembly was formally closed.

3 Vote Results

The results of all formal votes presented to the membership are summarized on the next page.