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Committee for Veterinary Medicinal Products (CVMP)

## Reflection paper on the chemical structure and properties criteria to be considered for the evaluation of New Active Substance (NAS) status of chemical substances for veterinary medical products

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\*The current revision consists of administrative changes made in order to align the guideline with Regulation (EU) 2019/6, as amended. The references to the legislation applicable and other scientific guidelines have also been updated as appropriate. As no changes were made to the scientific content, no concept paper and no public consultation were deemed necessary.

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## Executive Summary

This reflection paper is intended to reflect the current experience of the Quality Working Party (QWP), of the Committee for Veterinary Medicinal Products (CVMP) concerning the definition of a New Active Substance (NAS) in the context of preparation of dossiers and submissions of applications for Marketing Authorisation (MAA) in the Centralised Procedure (CP) for chemical medicinal products for veterinary use under Articles 8, 23 or 25 of Regulation 2019/6.

The paper describes the chemical structure and properties criteria to be taken into account by the competent authorities to qualify a chemical active substance as NAS, as well as the required elements to be submitted by applicants to substantiate their claims.

### 1. Introduction

This reflection paper intends to provide clarifications for applicants on the elements that need to be substantiated in relation to a claim of considering an active substance as NAS. Assessment of the NAS status will be performed in light of principles defined in Article 18.2 of Regulation 2019/6 as well as the evidence required to substantiate the claim of NAS in a MAA. However it cannot cover every scenario *a priori*, and therefore applicants are invited to obtain scientific advice on the studies that may be appropriate to substantiate the NAS claim, especially for scenarios not covered in this reflection paper.

The above assessment is without prejudice to any assumption at the time of eligibility to the centralised procedure (CP), or to the grant of an International Non-proprietary Name (INN) by the WHO.

The CP is mandatory for all NAS. However, eligibility to the CP based on the claim that the medicinal product for veterinary use contains a new active substance must be dissociated from the assessment of the scientific data submitted in support of the NAS claim during evaluation of the marketing authorisation application. Final designation as a NAS can only be made after a detailed assessment of the application.

Applicants are invited to consult the 'pre-submission guidance' on the EMA website for further details on the eligibility to the CP.

#### 1.1. Scope

This reflection paper describes the chemical structure and properties criteria to be taken into account to qualify a chemical active substance as NAS in light of principles defined in Article 18.2 of the Regulation 2019/6, as well as the required elements to be submitted by applicants. It applies to marketing authorisation applications including solely chemical active substance(s) eligible to the centralised procedure.

Biological and biotechnological active substances are excluded from the scope of this reflection paper.

#### 1.2. Legal basis and relevant guidelines

According to Article 18.2 of Regulation 2019/6, where the active substance of a veterinary medicinal product consists of salts, esters, ethers, isomers and mixtures of isomers, complexes or derivatives differing from the active substance used in an authorised veterinary medicinal product in the Union, both active substances shall be considered the same, unless they differ significantly in respect of properties with regard to safety or efficacy. Where there is significant difference in respect of those

properties, the applicant shall submit additional information in order to prove the safety or efficacy of the various salts, esters or derivatives of the active substance.

Therefore, a new chemical veterinary active substance includes:

- a chemical substance not previously authorised in a veterinary medicinal product in the European Union;
- an isomer, mixture of isomers, a complex or derivative or salt of a chemical substance previously authorised in a veterinary medicinal product in the European Union but differing significantly in properties with regard to safety and/or efficacy from that chemical substance previously authorised.

## 2. Discussion and guidance

A chemical active substance that is not previously authorised in a medicinal product for veterinary use in the European Union and that is from a chemical structure point of view not related to any other authorised substances should be considered as a NAS. Such substance is considered to be new in itself, when the administration of the applied active substance would not expose animals to the same therapeutic moiety as already authorised active substance(s) in the European Union.

If the chemical active substance is structurally related as a salt, ester, ether, isomer, mixture of isomers, complex or derivative of an already-approved active substance(s) in the European Union, it should be assessed whether it shares the same therapeutic moiety at the site of the biological activity as the already-approved active substance and if so whether it differs significantly in properties with regard to safety and/or efficacy.

Guidance is provided below to define the elements taken into account to qualify a salt, ester, ether, isomer, mixture of isomers, complex or derivative of an active substance as NAS in the context of the NAS status claim.

### 2.1. Isomers

Isomers should in this context be understood as enantiomers. Other types of isomers are presumed not to share the same therapeutic moiety unless they are able to isomerise *in vivo*. Stereoisomers related to each other as enantiomers have the same connectivity but are non-superimposable mirror images of each other. This implies that enantiomers have the same chemical and physical properties (except their ability to rotate plane polarized light), i.e. act in exactly the same manner, except when they interact with other chiral structures. In the case one enantiomer is applied for where the other enantiomer is the active substance in a previously authorised medicinal product for veterinary use within the European Union it has to be assessed whether they differ significantly with respect to safety and/or efficacy properties. This assessment will be based on the data provided by the applicant.

When an isomer that is not the enantiomer of an already-approved active substance (diastereoisomer, geometrical isomer, regioisomer, constitutional isomer etc.) is applied for it is presumed that it will not expose animals to the same therapeutic moiety, unless it is able to isomerise *in vivo*, and could be considered as a NAS. In such cases, evidence that the substance is not able to isomerise *in vivo* may need to be provided.

## 2.2. Mixtures of isomers

Where a previously authorised medicinal product for veterinary use in the European Union includes a racemate and a new application for only one of the two enantiomers of the racemate is submitted, this enantiomer would have been a substantial part (50%) of the racemate and would therefore not be considered as a NAS, unless the applicant provides evidence that the two substances differ significantly in properties with regard to safety and/or efficacy.

This does also apply to other situations where mixtures of diastereoisomers or other isomers have been authorised as medicinal products for veterinary use and a new application contains only one of the isomers of the mixture.

## 2.3. Complexes

The term 'complexes' may be used to refer to a wide variety of structures. Two categories of complexes used as medicinal products are discussed below:

- a) Complexes intended to release an active substance that is entrapped by the complex in the blood circulation or elsewhere. Examples of such complexes are e.g. Iron dextran or meglumine antimoniate.
- b) Another type of complexes is those intended to remain intact in the body and for which examples can be found in human medicinal products, e.g. a number of gadolinium complexes, with different complexing ligands, and with extremely low dissociation constant. They exhibit their effect by distributing gadolinium to places where it enhances the images obtained by NMR imaging. Due to the toxicity of free gadolinium they are designed to remain intact (not dissociate and release the metal).

Complexes of the category a. above prepared from an already-approved active substance are designed to release the original substance *in vivo* and will consequently not be considered as NAS in themselves. Therefore the NAS status will have to be justified by significant differences with regard to safety and/or efficacy. On the contrary, complexes of the category b. exhibit their effect without dissociating, and different ligands may be used to complex the same metal. Because they do not dissociate the therapeutic moieties are presumed to be different and could be considered as NAS. In such cases, evidence that the complex does not dissociate may need to be provided.

## 2.4. Derivative

The term derivative, in the context of this reflection paper, includes related active substances which expose the animal to the same therapeutic moiety.

This includes notably situations:

- a) Where the original substance or its active metabolite(s) *in vivo* will be derived from the new substance applied for in such a manner that the animals are exposed to the same therapeutic moiety of the original substance (the applied substance is a prodrug).
- b) Where the new active substance applied for is the same substance as the therapeutic moiety that the animals were exposed to when treated with the original active substance (the substance applied for is a metabolite).

In these situations, substances related as a "derivative" to the active substance of an already-approved medicinal product for veterinary use in the European Union will not be confirmed as NAS

unless the applicant provides evidence that the substance being evaluated differs significantly in properties with regard to the safety and/or efficacy from the substance already approved.

The above mentioned situations also apply to stereoisomers which isomerise to authorised active substances *in vivo*.

## **2.5. Esters and ethers**

Converting an active substance to certain esters or ethers is a well-established way of preparing so-called prodrugs. The purpose of a prodrug is to deliver the same therapeutic moiety to the patient, possibly with some differences such as a different bioavailability, a different *in vivo* distribution pattern, etc. Such esters or ethers of an already-approved medicinal product in the European Union that are designed to be hydrolysed *in vivo* and expose the animal to the same therapeutic moiety as the original active substance will not be considered as NAS unless the applicant provides evidence that the substance being evaluated differs significantly in properties with regard to safety and/or efficacy from the one already approved.

If the applicant provides evidence that an ester or ether of an already-approved medicinal product in the European Union exerts its effect in an intact shape (is not hydrolysed *in vivo*), and the animals are not exposed to the same therapeutic moiety as with the already-approved medicine it could be considered as NAS. In such cases, evidence that the substance exerts its effect in an intact shape (is not hydrolysed *in vivo*) may need to be provided.

## **2.6. Salts**

Salts usually dissociate in aqueous solution and the therapeutic moiety is no longer associated with the counter ion but is rather surrounded by solvent molecules and ions present in the solution. A different salt of an active substance previously authorised as part of a veterinary medicinal product in the European Union would not be considered as NAS, unless the applicant provides evidence that the substance being evaluated differs significantly in properties with regard to safety and/or efficacy from the one already-approved.

## **2.7. Solid state forms and NAS status**

Since cocrystals, hydrates and solvates are held together by weak interactions that usually dissociate in a similar way as salts upon dissolution they will expose an animal to the same therapeutic moiety. As for salts, they will not be considered as NAS unless the applicant provides evidence that the substance being evaluated differs significantly in properties with regard to safety and/or efficacy from the one already approved.

Regarding the different crystalline polymorphs of an active substance in principle the differences between such polymorphic forms will immediately disappear when dissolved and therefore will not be presumed as NAS.

## **2.8. Documentation**

Where an applicant submits a claim of NAS, the applicant should demonstrate whether the active substance(s) subject of the application shares the same therapeutic moiety with the active substance(s) previously authorised in medicinal product(s) for veterinary use. This should include a demonstration that the administration of the applied active substance would not expose the animal to the same therapeutic moiety as an already authorised active substance in the European Union. It is

recommended that this is substantiated by comparison of structural substance/features which can be obtained using established databases and discussion on the therapeutic moieties for any structurally related already authorised substances in relation to the therapeutic moiety of the claimed NAS. Results of such investigations should be provided within the dossier.

When a substance applied for exposes the animal to the same therapeutic moiety as the previously active substance(s) as part of a veterinary medicinal product(s) authorised in the European Union, the applicant should provide evidence that the related active substances differ significantly in properties with regard to safety and/or efficacy. The documentation needed to substantiate such a claim will be dependent on the particular case details; applicants are advised to seek scientific advice accordingly.

### **3. References**

Regulation (EU) 2019/6 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on veterinary medicinal products.

EMA/CHMP/QWP/104223/2015: Reflection paper on the chemical structure and properties criteria to be considered for the evaluation of new active substance (NAS) status of chemical substances.