

Report from the Activities Health & Welfare Sub-Group meeting on 10 September 2018

Veterinary assessments at prestige events

The issue of veterinary assessments at prestige events remained under review.

Discipline-specific survey analysis

The Sub-Group noted a report regarding the analysis of previously undertaken discipline-specific surveys provided by Dr Gomez Alvarez and Dr Den Uijl. The intention of the surveys, which had been undertaken in 2016 and 2017, was to provide a broad overview of injury issues across a range of disciplines. The report had concluded that, across all disciplines, in broad terms, there was a correlation between injuries and the age of the dog, however it was unclear as to whether this was due to older dogs being subject to increased training, or competing at a higher level in the relevant discipline. Other factors influencing the potential for injury related to the level of competition and weather conditions. The most common injuries cited were soft tissue injuries, however it was acknowledged that in many cases injuries reported via the questionnaires were self-diagnosed by the owners of the dogs concerned and that this may have introduced a level of bias. Also in many cases it was difficult to ascertain the exact time or cause of an injury occurring as it may not have been immediately noticed by the owner.

Pre-competition video

The Sub-Group was in the process of developing a 'preparing a dog for competition' film for inclusion on the Kennel Club Academy, which would include information on ways in which a dog may be warmed up prior to competing. The Sub-Group acknowledged that there was a widespread perception that warming up a dog would reduce the potential for injury, however it accepted that there was currently no research evidence to support this. Research into human athletes did suggest that warming up may have some impact on preventing or reducing injuries, and that it may improve performance.