

Note to the Agility Liaison Council

(DHG) Activities Health & Welfare Sub-Group

International Agility Festival Research

Three research projects were carried out at the International Agility Festival, at the last meeting of the Dog Health Group Activities H&W Sub-group the following progress reports were received:

Judges Incident Report Forms

The results collated from the Judge's Incident Reports collected at the International Agility Festival highlights for the first time the relationship between reported injuries and the number of competitive runs completed. The group noted the relative risk and concluded that this was a worthwhile exercise as it helps to put the risk of injury during Agility competitions into context. It was agreed that the results of this study should be published in due course.

Body Condition Scoring

The outcome of the Body Condition Score survey was discussed. It was concluded that the result was probably skewed due to the owners of larger and more overweight dogs' being unwilling to participate in the voluntary research. It was agreed the study should be repeated at the International Agility Festival in 2014. To gain more respondents, and a wider range of body conditions, it was noted that the body condition score could be incorporated into other assessments the Sub-group has proposed be carried out at the International Agility Festival (which are still subject to the agreement of the IAF Working Party and the ASC).

Jumping Research

Due to the significant amount of data collected and the need to collate the information relating to the over 100 dogs taking part it had not been possible to complete the necessary work in time for the December meeting. As the data was not yet in a condition suitable for analysis a deadline for a more detailed report to be presented to the Sub-group was set for its next meeting in March 2014.

When available, a separate report including a summary of the findings from each of the three research studies will be provided to the Activities Sub Committee for review.

Incident Recording

The Sub-group discussed the need for on-going research into incidents related to canine activities and pointed out a similar recommendation has been made about the recording of injuries in a recently published research paper (Cullern *et al.* 2013).

It was agreed that permission for further studies to be conducted at other large shows should be sought and that the potential for recording such incidents or injuries at agility shows in the Incident Book should be referred to the Activities Sub Committee for further discussion.

Health Surveys

Agility

The group noted the report could be taken forward for publication in a peer-reviewed journal and in the Kennel Club and Agility related press. It was noted that the results from the Agility health questionnaire could be turned into practical advice for dog owners. A rough draft will be prepared by the office for review by the Sub-group at its next meeting.

It was also agreed the health questionnaires for Obedience and Heelwork To Music/Freestyle would be updated and sent out in early 2014.

Code of Conduct for Canine Welfare Management and Training for Dogs Taking Part in Canine Activities

The aim of this code of conduct is to set out the obligations that show and event organisers, clubs, trainers / instructors, owners / handlers have for the welfare of dogs taking part in Kennel Club licensed Canine Activities. The initial draft of this document has now been reviewed by the Dog Health Group and the Activities Sub Committee, the concerns highlighted by both have now been addressed.

A revised version will be circulated again (to these committees) for discussion before wider consultation takes place with other stakeholders involved in Kennel Club canine activities.

Steve Croxford

Chairman, DHG Activities Health & Welfare Sub-group
January 2014