

BREEDER ACCREDITATION SCHEME – THE FACTS

BACKGROUND:

In early 2008 the Canine Control Council (Qld), now trading as Dogs Queensland, appointed a Sub-Committee and commenced a detailed and complete review of existing breeding practices. As the premier and most influential dog organisation within our state, we operate stud book breeding registers and promote the advantages of pure bred dogs specifically with our interested dog enthusiasts and more generally within the wider community.

Dogs Queensland promotes responsible dog ownership and is subject to the scrutiny of all stakeholders including Government, Welfare Agencies and the puppy buying public. Our breeding practices need continual review so that the health, structural soundness and wellbeing of our chosen breed(s) continue to improve.

Increasingly, the media are playing an important social conscience role by bringing to the attention of what they would describe as dubious breeding practices. There is no better illustration of this than in the BBC television documentary “pedigree dogs exposed”.

As the guardians of our wonderful registered pedigree dogs, it is important we continually strive to improve our breeding practices. Accordingly, our Sub-Committee was asked to review and, if necessary, further develop these existing practices to a level that will provide validation for our breeders. This, in turn, will give all members confidence to promote our organisation and themselves. It will also give potential puppy buyers the opportunity to compare our “value offer” and give them the confidence to make a well informed decision before they commit to purchasing a puppy.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED SO FAR?

We developed a survey for puppy buyers. Everyone who acquires a puppy from a registered member breeder in Queensland receives a letter congratulating them on their decision to own a registered pure bred dog. The office also sends an information booklet about Dogs Queensland and a “Puppy Purchaser Survey” so that they are able to give feedback on their experience with the breeder.

We have been gathering information from the surveys since September 2009. Our intention was to find out what breeders do and how those practices are perceived by the buying public. The results of the survey from September 2009 to February 2010 were presented at the General Meeting in March. In its own small way, the survey has produced enough data to establish that most of our member breeders are conforming with and surpassing Dogs Queensland Rules and Regulations and Code of Ethics. We will publish the results in future journals.

This is perfect timing, as our survey has established that most of our breeders already practice what is now recommended by the UK Kennel Club commissioned Independent Inquiry into Dog Breeding by Professor Sir Patrick Bateson after the documentary “pedigree dogs exposed” first went to air. This report includes 19 key recommendations concerning the health and welfare of the dog.

BREEDER ACCREDITATION SCHEME – THE FACTS

It is now TIME to let everyone know about the high standard of practices and care that these members are demonstrating. They have well established and efficient systems of science-based practice and although no-one can guarantee the “perfect puppy”, their disclosure of health issues with puppy purchasers and how they demonstrate commitment to the elimination of such diseases will give the buying public confidence when buying a registered pure bred dog.

We consider that existing breeders who are able to demonstrate their commitment to achieving the best possible outcomes with the health and welfare of their dogs when breeding should be recognised as Dogs Queensland Accredited Breeders.

WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

It is the process by which certification of a competency or credibility is presented (“Wikipedia”).

WHY ACCREDITATION?

As members of Dogs Queensland, our breeders are governed by Rules and Regulations and a Code of Ethics. These Regulations specify the mandatory minimum requirements. Accreditation is about an independent, continuous evaluation of performance against the agreed standards.

We are proposing an accreditation scheme under which, as an existing breeder, you should be able to apply for accreditation with confidence. If you are not yet a breeder, then we are proposing that you will need to find a Mentor. This will be an existing breeder who has obtained accreditation.

AS AN EXISTING BREEDER, WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO DO TO APPLY?

To make your Accreditation Application easier, we have developed a Self Evaluation Checklist (refer to the link provided above or navigate to the Members / Members Forms area of this website).

The Self Evaluation Check List contains:

- (a) All the requirements that comply with Dogs Queensland Rules and Regulations and Code of Ethics, ANKC Code of Ethics and the current ANKC National Code of Practice for Hereditary Diseases and all Local Government Legislation requirements.
- (b) Key health and welfare recommendations included in the “Independent Inquiry into Dog Breeding” (now commonly known as the “Bateson Report”).

COMPULSORY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Agree to comply with all criteria on the Self Evaluation Check List.
2. Show evidence of successfully completing the Accredited Prefix examination.

BREEDER ACCREDITATION SCHEME – THE FACTS

3. Supply a letter of reference from your veterinarian.
4. Supply two letters of reference from previous puppy purchasers.
5. Supply a reference from another breeder (may be any registered breeder from Queensland or another State or Territory).
6. Produce evidence of previous voluntary and / or mandatory health tests for your breed(s) if requested.

VOLUNTARY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Agree to Mentor new breeders if asked (see applicant criteria below).
2. Agree to be a *Site Visitor (see applicant criteria below).

Accreditation would need to be updated / renewed every 3 years. The Accreditation scheme may be revised from time to time to ensure compliance with current best practice breeding strategies.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ACCREDITATION?

Only Dogs Queensland Accredited Breeders will be entitled to:

- Use the specially designed logo.
- Describe themselves as a “Dogs Queensland Accredited Breeder”.
- Use the logo when advertising.
- Be provided with appropriate confirmation of your Accreditation on the Dogs Queensland website.

If you consider that you have all the attributes to qualify as a Dogs Queensland Accredited Breeder, please email or write to the Dogs Queensland office to obtain a copy of the application form.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

There is a small administration charge of \$22.00, including GST, to cover the cost of administration and processing.

*** MENTOR - WHAT WILL A MENTOR BE REQUIRED TO DO?**

A Mentor is “a wise and trusted councillor” (Macquarie Dictionary) and must:

1. Be available to answer questions pertaining to breeding.

BREEDER ACCREDITATION SCHEME – THE FACTS

2. Give assistance to new breeders using past knowledge gained from personal experience, or from others, learned behaviours and recommended readings.
3. Share useful and relevant methods and systems that will enable the new breeder to perform competently without assistance.
4. Possibly assist in the delivery of the litter when and where appropriate.

It would be envisaged that a mentor would use the Self-Evaluation Check List as a guide for their role and keep a record of all relevant information. The Sub-Committee recommends that under no circumstances should the mentor accept or take responsibility for the behaviour and actions of the new breeder in their role. They may report anyone who does not uphold the conditions of Dogs Queensland membership to the Dogs Queensland office.

***SITE VISITOR - WHAT WILL A SITE VISITOR BE REQUIRED TO DO?**

The Sub-Committee recommends that a site visitor will be a designated person who has been instructed and given strict criteria to address when visiting the site of a fellow breeder.

The site review will comprise of not less than two site visitors, one being acceptable to the breeder. The review of the site will be completed by the two site visitors and the results of that inspection reported to the General Manager of Dogs Queensland.

The site visit may be conducted as a regular practice or as a result of an enquiry or complaint.

The Site Visitor will visit a site as part of a team to investigate either an enquiry or complaint about a breeder and / or the condition of the site.

The specific purpose of the inspection will be decided beforehand by Dogs Queensland and written notice will be given prior to any site inspection.

Dogs Queensland will decide the criteria to be addressed before the visit is conducted.

A report will be submitted to The General Manager, Dogs Queensland addressing the purpose of the visit and the on-site conditions found at the time of the visit.

TO APPLY TO BE A MENTOR AND / OR SITE VISITOR, THE APPLICANT MUST:

1. Provide documentary evidence of a demonstrated commitment to the development and promotion of any ANKC canine activities. Note: Activities would NOT include simply participating in weekly competition events.
2. Provide evidence of active long term membership of an affiliated Club.

BREEDER ACCREDITATION SCHEME – THE FACTS

3. Provide evidence of having held office bearer / management committee status within that Club.
4. Have been a member of Dogs Queensland or ANKC equivalent for a minimum of 10 years.
5. Have been granted Breeder Accreditation.