



Proposal to the General Annual Assembly of the WUSV

Name of Club/ Proposer & Date: German Shepherd Dog Federation of South Africa & German Shepherd Dog Council of Australia Inc. 24 May 2022

Proposal regarding the WUSV Statutes or other Regulations

Titel:
(Paragraph and Headline) Suspension of Harmonisation Rules Pending an Investigation on Achievability

Old Version: Harmonisation Rules as published

New Version: The harmonization program should be suspended until a thorough investigation has been concluded to determine exactly what the various countries are individually capable of in the interests of the German Shepherd Dog (GSD) in each separate WUSV member-country.

Rationale: See attached motivation:

Motivation

In principle we have no problem with the resolution to comply with essentially the same rules as the SV to give a "VA" grading as a *stand-alone* "VA" grading. However,..... See attached for balance of motivation

Confirmation of Club Presidents


Frikkie J van Kraayenburg, President GSD Federation of SA


Sean Lynch, President GSD Council of Australia

Proposal

The harmonization program should be suspended until a thorough investigation has been concluded to determine exactly what the various countries are individually capable of in the interests of the German Shepherd Dog (GSD) in each separate WUSV member-country.

Motivation

For some years now there has been a serious decline in GSD activities, not only in Germany, but worldwide. However, a small handful of WUSV member-countries have managed to grow, or have at least stabilized the decline. The mere fact that there are member-countries where numbers are stable or growing, indicates that the declines experienced in other countries can be reversed.

Any further decline in membership and responsible GSD breeding is clearly not in the interests of the GSD, the WUSV or the SV. It therefore makes no sense whatsoever that the WUSV board, backed by a few rich European first-world member-countries, are attempting to introduce rules and procedures that will cause serious further declines in GSD activities globally. This will in turn cause a further deterioration in the market for German-bred puppies and dogs and continue the current death spiral.

In 2014 after his election, the President presented statistics during his speech at the Sieger Show Begrüssens Abend that if the SV does not change, the decline in registrations would reach zero in 2026. While the SV has made some progress in stabilising the decline by making regulations more attainable to their members, the WUSV has gone the opposite way. It has intentionally introduced regulatory demands and unachievable performance measures in the name of harmonisation on countries whose membership is already in severe decline.

If enforced, the harmonization rules as they now stand will seriously accelerate the decline amongst most WUSV member-countries in the rest of the world. Certainly, a large proportion of WUSV-member countries which do not have the resources of the rich first world countries will collapse completely or be absorbed into the local Kennel or FCI club. Some have already gone this route. This will weaken the WUSV, strengthen the FCI and make the WUSV and the SV much more vulnerable to demands from the FCI.

We wish to state up-front that we are not against *attainable* harmonization rules and regulations between WUSV member-countries, but in truth it is utterly impossible for what is probably the vast majority of WUSV members to comply with the same rules and regulations as the rich first-world countries of Europe. There is no suitable one-size-fits-all global solution for the WUSV.

A number of WUSV member-countries depend on and are regulated by the National FCI club or Kennel Club in their country and cannot operate outside these authorities. Expecting them to operate outside their country's regulatory body leaves them vulnerable to disaffiliation in their own jurisdiction. In most cases these authorities will not allow them to introduce many of the rule changes required in the harmonization program as it currently stands.

For many WUSV member-countries, the harmonisation schedules double up on current national DNA, ED and HD schemes that are already embedded in their own organisations. This is counter-productive and adds greater costs to the GSD enthusiasts who wish to follow the ideals of the WUSV.

In many WUSV member-countries outside Europe the climate alone rules out compliance. For example, tracking is impossible in some countries. Hence attaining any qualification that includes tracking such as ZAP or IGP is just not achievable.

It is clear that a majority of WUSV member-countries are for the moment simply ignoring the harmonization program. This is because they either simply do not understand the implications thereof or, for various reasons, most member-countries are simply not capable of implementing them without causing a serious decline in their membership and in GSD activities.

Many countries have limited capacity to provide quality infrastructures and expertise that support safe work practices for the training of dogs for many components of IGP. Poor training and lack of expertise could lead to further prejudices towards the GSD in countries that are bound by legislations that already oppose protection work as a recognised dog sport. Long distances and limitations in accessibility to training clubs in many countries further obstruct members that do not reside in highly populated areas.

For any kind of harmonization program to succeed, it is essential that at least 90% of member-countries *and their ordinary members* support the process.

This is nowhere near the case at present. Broad-based support is not going to be forthcoming if the program remains unattainable for ordinary people.

In some countries enforcement of the harmonization program as it currently stands may even cause the GSD breed to collapse completely at an organised level under the auspices of the WUSV. This would lead to the closure of the WUSV clubs in those countries. Once closed down, these clubs are unlikely to be resurrected.

A further unintended consequence of the harmonization program as it is now may also be that ordinary members may simply opt out of the official WUSV club and move to the ambit of the local FCI or Kennel Club jurisdiction where regulations are much more free. This will strengthen the FCI and weaken the WUSV.

This may then well lead to a situation such as in Pakistan where the non-WUSV GSD club operating within the Pakistani Kennel Club is bigger and more active than the official WUSV club. Trying to close down the non-WUSV club by starving them of SV judges and recognition is simply not going to work. They are giving VA gradings and the SV and the WUSV cannot stop this. It would be in contempt of the Anti-Monopoly Court Order recently obtained against the FCI.

The harmonization rules were mostly drawn up under the direct control of the President and some close allies without any regard whatsoever for the special circumstances of many countries outside Europe. The majority of WUSV-countries outside Europe had no input whatsoever.

While the signatory countries to this proposal could possibly manage some compulsory minimum standards such as a Show Grading of "G", Microchip/ Tattoo identification, DNA, HD and Ed schemes *processed in their own country*, they simply cannot administer these schemes via Germany. The costs would be exorbitant and unaffordable to most developing countries. In some developing countries the cost of DNA or HD alone, for example, would be more than some of their members would earn in a month.

Besides the exorbitant costs, another fatal flaw of forcing WUSV member-countries to submit their HD, ED and DNA via Germany would be the loss of statistics accumulated over the years. It would essentially mean starting these schemes from scratch.

The countries that cannot comply are at present doing nothing other than ignoring the harmonization rules because there is not much else a single country can do on its own, which is why we are presenting this as a group.

What will happen when the 5-year phase-in period expires no one knows. If the harmonization rules are enforced as they now stand, we predict that the decline in GSD activities will significantly accelerate globally until there is nothing left. German breeders will be increasingly unable to sell their dogs and puppies as the market shrinks.

The general feeling amongst the signatories is that we have worked far too hard for the GSD to let this happen in our countries. What has taken years to build can be destroyed in a very short time. SV judges will not be able to guide the breed outside Europe as they are confined only to judge at shows and trials run by member clubs.

The promotion of the GSD by the President as a "Ferrari that must have special rules" is an elitist viewpoint that is a road to disaster. It is our feeling that in the best interests of the GSD globally that it should be promoted as a dependable, well maintained, family orientated vehicle that ordinary people can afford. In the end, for any organisation to survive in the long term, it must keep growing.

We recommend that a working committee that represent a broad constituency be formed to review the harmonisation program to collaborate and work on a minimum standard that achieves an acceptable outcome that in the 21st Century meets the needs and best interests of the GSD globally.
