

GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA Inc.

# NATIONAL BREED COMMISSION MEETING

Date: Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July and Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024

Venue: Best Western Airport Motel & Convention Centre  
33 Ardlie Street Attwood Victoria 3049



## MINUTES

### 1. Opening & Welcome:

President advised that Melanie Groth (NBC Registrar) would be chairing the meeting due to Ian Urie stepping aside for the meetings. Ian advised the meeting that he had reflected on his Facebook post about a newly imported dog, that his post was inappropriate, it reflected poorly on his role as NBC Chair and he apologized for impacting the image of Council.

Chair: Melanie Groth (NBC registrar). Meeting opened at 3:45pm

### 2. Present & Apologies:

See list at end of these minutes

### 3. Adoption of the Agenda:

Adoption of the Agenda for the National Breed Commission meeting.

**"That the Agenda for the National Breed Commission Meeting as circulated, be adopted".**

Moved: Andrew O'Loughlin

Seconded: Mel Adamson

**Carried**

### 4. Confirmation of the Minutes:

**"That the minutes of the National Breed Commission Meeting held on Saturday xx August 2023 be adopted."**

Moved: Robyn Knuckey

Seconded: Alastair Henderson

**Carried**

### 5. Business Arising from the 2023 Minutes:

#### 5.1 GSDCA HD/ED schemes - Review procedures

A working party was established to consider and recommend procedures to modernise the management of our schemes. The working party comprised Candy Baker, Ian Urie, Sharon Ballantyne- Gordon, Frank Moody, Jacinta Poole, Natalie Humphries, Salvatore Pittelli, Doug West, and Kurt Morton. Thank you to all who participated for your input. Achievements have been reported to 2024 AGM:

- Reviewed and proposed changes to how the scheme is managed including processes and technology to be developed.

- Appointed a new adjudicator Dr Mariano Makara for HD & ED reviews/appeals.
- Appointed Dr Ana Hayes as an additional reader for the scheme.
- Proposal for accepting CHEDS results for Breed Survey, and approval at AGM to award 'A' stamp with purchase of a GSDCA contract.
- New digital platform for purchase of contracts from GSDCA website, electronic submission of x-rays, and receipt of results from readers was approved at AGM and has been created by Jacinta Poole and demonstrated to Executive, Club Presidents and State Registrars.
- New digital processes to commence on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024. Thank you, Jacinta.

Discussion: Jacinta Poole advised that the system went live on 1/7/24 and is working well. She noted that Dr Lavelle is keen for GSDCA members to move to on line system as soon as possible to reduce administration at his end.

The meeting congratulated Jacinta and her team on the new digital process. Melanie Groth noted that the Council is indebted to Jacinta for her outstanding skills.

Ian Urie advised that New Zealand Council would like to use the digital process. The meeting agreed with this request.

Action: Secretary to confirm to NZ that they are invited to use the system. Jacinta to liaise with their officers to implement.

## **5.2 Update on DNA Proposal and pilot scheme - Dr Candy Baker**

Refer agenda item 10.3

## **5.3 Report from Closed Breed Surveyor and Specialist Judges Meeting**

- Current Aspirant Surveyors – status report.

Glenn Gregory and Jess Kada were appointed Breed Surveyors effectively immediately.

Kurt Morton was appointed as Breed Surveyor which will be effective from completion of his 10th judging appointment.

- New Application

Nicky McDermott was appointed Aspirant Breed Surveyor.

The meeting congratulated Glenn, Jess, Kurt and Nicky. It noted that it is important that clubs continue to encourage members into club roles as a pathway to judge and breed surveyor status.

## **5.4 Any other Business Arising**

nil

# **6. National Breed Commission Reports**

## **6.1 National Breed Commission Chair - NBC Executive**

Ian Urie acknowledged retiring State Survey Co-ordinators Carol O'Rourke and Faye Stokes

- National HD/ED Registrar - Jacinta Poole

Jacinta confirmed that the online scheme commenced on 1/7/24 and is going well. CHEDS data is available as at the 2024 AGM when the process was agreed for use of CHEDS reports for our scheme. She will update the rolling average data chart in the report and annotate it for when digital x-rays started.

**Action:** NBC to develop strategy to encourage people who normally use CHEDS to use the GSDCA online system

- NBC Registrar - Melanie Groth

Mel noted that it is the role of the State Survey Co-ordinator to lead their survey team. She reminded Breed Surveyors to include the club prefix when entering data.

**Action:** NBC Chair - circulate the Breed Survey process section from Mel's report to Breed Surveyors for inclusion in their BS resources.

**Action:** NBC Chair - arrange to add a drop down box to the data base to allow selection of State/Territory prefix from list.

- Breed Health & Welfare Committee Chair & Haemophilia - Dr. Candy Baker

DNA: Candy noted her DNA parentage article in the recent QNR. Discussed further at item 10.3.

Health Profile report: 3 forms submitted in past 12 months.

**Action:** NBC Chair - Promote Health Profile forms to members.

**Action:** NBC Chair - Update Health Profile form to require pedigree name of dog, diagnosis, and +/-5 generation pedigree

Lumbosacral disease: this area of the spine is sometimes noted on in the comments section

**Action:** HD/ED Registrar - where this is commented upon in the HD/ED report, Jacinta to compile data for analysis by Dr Baker

Puppy Folder Education:

**Action:** Publicity Officer – arrange JPS information and early de-sexing article on website and to clubs for breeders to provide to new owners

- Title Verification Officer - Mr. Kurt Morton

**Action:** NBC Chair - add Title Verification information to the NBC report before published

- National Database Coordinator - Mr. Frank Moody

Frank noted the decline in participation in GSDCA Breed Improvement Schemes. The number of puppies bred each year is down 40% over 10 years, and the number of breeders has declined.

Meeting discussed the rise of cross breed dogs. How do we promote the benefits of purebred dogs and the GSD? Ideas: develop a promotional video with professional voice over suitable for social media grabs; social media would need a moderation plan; need communication plan

Action: Publicity Officer - write to Dogs Australia seeking information on communication strategies/resources that they are using to promote purebred dogs, and responsible breeders, that we could access; and availability of any communications funding to support GSDCA.

Meeting thanked Frank for all his work with the database and his report

## 7. Matters Arising from the National Breed Commission Chairman's Report

See actions arising in 6.1

## 8. Matters Referred to the 2024 NBC Meeting from GSDCA Member Clubs, Breed Surveyors and Judges:

### 8.1 Submitted by Jenny De Lucia - Motion withdrawn

**Motion:**

**That all results, pass or fail, from animals x-rayed through the GSDCA HD/ED scheme be recorded on the GSDCA Database.**

Option 1 - Record as a "F" under appropriate heading, or

Option 2 - Record with scores as e.g. F 35:3, Z 0:0 etc.

**Rationale:** Animals that are 18 months or older have sufficient time to be x-rayed before being exhibited in the Intermediate and/or Open class at specialties. Even though the Open class is available for animals from 6 months and over it is extremely rare for an animal under 2 years of age to be exhibited in the open class. The Hip and Elbow status of an animal is critical for its ability to breed on, and the GSDCA database of HD & ED Animals must prove as a guide for breeding practices. In addition, in accordance with the FCI German Shepherd Dog Breed Standard, under Disqualifying Faults it states - "(b) Dogs with proven severe Hip Dysplasia." Once an animal has failed either or both x-rays it no longer has any breed worth. It cannot be mated. If such an animal is highly placed at a Breed Specialty there is no benefit to the owners. An animal must be sound to be graded the highest possible grading.

Comment from NBC Chair: GSDCA have until now had a policy that Fails will not be published. However, it is obvious to anybody looking at results in the database where an animal has an 'A' recorded with a score but no 'Z', or a 'Z' result with no hip score, that the animal has failed one or the other. Whether it has any link to shows or not, are we now at a stage where we feel we can publish ALL results? (If so, should it be shown as 'F' for failure or should the score be included.) It must be noted that all scores, including failures, are included in the Sires progeny statistics tables for hips and elbows, including the numbers of progeny with scores within certain ranges.

GSDCSA queried why the NBC chair had added comment to this motion.

Action: Executive agreed to explore the validity of NBC Chair commenting on motions from clubs.

### 8.2 Submitted by Melanie Groth

**Discussion**

- How should we address ZAP Assessment data at Breed Survey, and why?
- How can we further promote Breed Survey?

Action: NBC Chair – update the Breed Survey Manual to add the requirement to send ZAP certificate with documents supplied with Breed Survey application

Action: NBC Chair – update the Breed Survey Manual to add the requirement to send Tooth Certificate (where applicable) with documents supplied with Breed Survey application

Action: NBC Chair - surveyors to promote that dog has done ZAP, and take account of ZAP assessment in making breeding recommendations

Action: GSDCV President - GSDCV to share their Structural Assessment process with other Clubs

### **8.3 Workshop item, led by NBC Registrar Mel Groth - BS7 Survey Worksheet**

Discuss suggested amendments to the BS 7 form in line with emerging issues in the breed – backline, rib cage, narrowness through, tail faults etc

Attendees participated in a workshop to update the BS7 form.

Action: NBC Chair – consolidate the master sheets from each table and develop an updated BS7 sheet for approval by Executive

### **8.4 Submitted by Natalie Humphries**

#### **Sires Progeny at National**

Motion 1 That all judges and surveyors, including trainees present at a National show, be invited into the ring to observe the Sires Progeny groups. It goes without saying that if someone has a dog with a progeny group they should excuse themselves whilst that dog's group is being critiqued.

Motion 2 That there is a template developed (if there isn't already one) for critiquing each dog's group, so there is a uniform approach, and all relevant aspects are discussed for each dog.

**Rationale:** This allows judges and particularly breed surveyors to get a good look at the progeny of prominent dogs, which will assist with breed direction advice. There's only so much you can see outside the ring. It gives a united front to exhibitors and is a valuable learning experience for judges/surveyors who may not get the opportunity to critique progeny groups at all.

The template will assist people to learn what's required when assessing progeny groups and ensure each dog's group is assessed and most importantly critiqued verbally to observers in the same format.

Discussion: The meeting supported motion 1 in principle, noting the need for this to occur in a separate area of the ring so as to not disrupt (slow down) the class - suggest designated area within but at edge of the ring.

Action: NBC Chair - Present motion to AGM 2025 re judges and surveyors observing sires progeny at National

Action: NBC Chair – update the current sires progeny assessment template to make it look professional, and add reference to how many dogs have completed ZAP in the group.

### **8.5 Discussion on backlines and excessive hind angulation - NBC Chair**

- How do these issues affect movement and functionality of the dog?
- Balance between hindquarter thrust, length of stride, and forehand reach.
- How should we address these issues at Breed Survey?
- How should we address them when judging shows – is there and/or should there be a difference?
- When is too much too much, and how do we respond to these issues without throwing out the best animals?

Ian presented a powerpoint on this topic. Meeting agreed further discussion and education is required.

Action: NBC Chair – organize discussion/professional development for BS/Judges on this matter.

## 9. Matters Referred to the 2024 NBC Meeting from GSDCA Annual General Meeting:

### 9.1 Breed Surveyor Competency Reviews - NBC Chair

A motion to approve this process in principle was carried at the 2024 AGM, pending clarification of the process and checklist by NBC Chair. A document is attached with this agenda FYI.

Discussion: Judges meeting agreed to change the word 'several' to 'three' in the second last paragraph, add a self-reflection assessment to the process, a flowchart and descriptors of the criteria.

The document will be reviewed regularly, including at next NBC.

See actions Judges Committee Meeting item 5.3

### 9.2 Sound sensitivity testing – Clapper Board demonstration

Substitution of the clapper board in situations where the use of a starting pistol is not permitted (motion carried at 2024 AGM). Testing is required for Excellent grading as per Reg 2.14.2 (2017)

Ian Urie and John De Lucia demonstrated the Clapper Board.

## 10. Any Other Business:

### 10.1 Format for future meetings. In-person or online?

Discussion: Meeting agreed that face to face meetings are very beneficial particularly for professional development, presentations/discussion such as Dr Lavelle session; discussion that comes from being in the room with other participants. Sean noted that he was a supporter of Zoom but following successful meetings he is a convert to the value of face to face. Meeting agreed to face to face NBC in 2025 with a further review at that time. Sharon Thorp suggested online presentations to Breed Surveyors and Judges occur throughout the year. Glenn Gregory suggested putting up sessions from this weekend as videos on the website

Action: Treasurer – prepare a budget for next year's meetings to present to Executive.

Action: NBC Chair – develop a program of on line presentations for Breed Surveyors/Judges over the year, and arrange relevant videos from this NBC to be uploaded to the GSDCA website.

### 10.2 Presentation from Dr Roger Lavelle on Sunday commencing at 9:00 am

Topic – Scoring HD/ED and Transitional Vertebrae.

Dr Lavelle delivered a presentation covering the history of hip and elbow scoring, how x-rays are assessed, and the structure/potential issues with transitional vertebrae. Issues of note were x-rays are for screening and are not diagnostic; heritability of features of different parts of the hip (refer work of Professor Clare Wade University of Sydney); hip scores have decreased over time and ideally dogs should only be bred from with scores at or below the breed mean or average; for now track any commentary re transitional vertebrae on HD forms – a watching brief.

Action: NBC Chair – Consider Dr Lavelle's advice to lower the acceptable hip score for breeding. First step analyse hip data to work how many dogs would be excluded by a change, and consider what affect this would have on the gene pool. Present information to the Executive for discussion.

**10.3** Presentation on DNA proposal from Michelle Fremaux and Candy Baker. Michelle is the Director of InfogeneNZ, Massey University NZ.

Michelle Fremaux joined the meeting by Zoom and gave an overview of DNA and the services offered by her company in Parentage, Disease and Desirable Trait testing.

Candy Baker gave a presentation on the process of DNA collection, transport and reporting. She has been piloting the InfogeneNZ process. Options for collection include Dam at whelping and puppies at Hip and Elbow x-rays. Benefits of DNA testing include clarity of pedigree, alignment with SV program, easy access to disease trait testing. Starting point for a GSDCA scheme will be parentage.

**Action:** NBC Chair – write to Dogs Australia Health and Welfare Committee advising of our intent to adopt DNA for parentage (with the option to expand to disease) and asking that this matter be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Seek advice re their plans and timeframe to expand parentage DNA to all State and Territory bodies, capacity to add data to ORCHID; availability of funding to assist GSDCA with moving forward.

**10.4** Linebreeding update and inbreeding depression (interactive discussion, time permitting).

- Proper notation of linebreeding on Surveys.
- What can we expect when linebreeding on particular animals?
- What traits do these animals carry and hopefully transmit to their progeny?
- What are the downsides to close or excessive inbreeding?

**Action:** NBC Chair – Arrange for Dr. Karen Hedberg’s presentation at Lerma on inbreeding depression to be loaded to the website; facilitate an article for the QNR; and arrange an NBC Breeders’ Forum on this topic with Dr Hedberg.

**10.5** Special Trophies as the National

John De Lucia moved a motion that “ to reduce the costs for Clubs for the National Show and Trial that we return to the original concept of the Special Trophies/Memorial Plaques being the first place for the class the dog wins. That means one plaque/one first place is the one trophy. The memorial plaque becomes the first place trophy for the National Show and Trial.”

Seconded: Paul York

**Action:** Judges Committee Chair – confirm the original intent of special trophies, and subject to this implement the motion as an administrative change.

**10.6** Sharon Thorp advised that it is her understanding that the SV is considering allowing (say) 100 breeding units to be released to other countries from German sires, to diversify the gene pool across countries.

**Action:** Delegates to raise this matter at the meeting with the SV President in September.

**10.7** HD/ED Scores in QNR Advertisements

**Action:** QNR Editor to consider verifying hip and elbow scores included on QNR Advertisements.

## 11. Date & Venue for 2025:

Date and Venue for the 2025 National Breed Commission Meeting

Location: Sydney, Venue tbd

Dates: 2 - 3 August 2024

## 12. Close of Meeting:

Meeting closed at: 2.25pm Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## 13. Attendance and Apologies:

ATTENDEES	
Sean Lynch	President
Jenny De Lucia	Judges Committee Chair & BS/Judge
Melanie Groth	NBC Registrar, and BS/Judge
Peter Flynn	Treasurer, and BS/Judge
Ian Urie	National Breed Commission Chair & BS/Judge
Janet Haase	Secretary
Alastair Henderson	Obedience Committee Chair (Day 1 only)
Gail Donald	Editor QNR
Gabrielle Peacock	Minutes Secretary
John De Lucia	GSDSA Delegate
Andrew O'Loughlin	GSDCSA Delegate/Specialist Judge
Graeme Stephenson	GSDL Delegate/Specialist Judge/BS
Robyn Knuckey	GSDAWA Delegate/BS/Specialist Judge
Vince Ebejer	GSDCV Delegate
Lorraine Massis	GSDCT Delegate
Sharon Thorp	GSDCQ Delegate
Glenn Gregory	ACTGSDA Delegate/Specialist Judge/BS
Paul York	NHRGSDC Delegate
Frank Moody (part meeting)	Database Co-ordinator
Kurt Morton	Specialist Judge
Jane Pike	BS/Specialist Judge
Candice Wedge	Breed Health and Welfare Committee Chair
Jessica Kada	BS/Specialist Judge
Ian Cooke	Specialist Judge
Mel Adamson	Specialist Judge
Nicky McDermott	Specialist Judge
Mathew Morris	Trainee Specialist Judge
Jacinta Poole (part meeting)	HD/ED Administrator/Web Administrator
Intermittent Zoom Observers: Jean Butterfield Natalie Humphries Jenny Yuen Jan Brabham	



Doug West Salvatore Pittelli Kim Gregory (Sunday only)	
Val Moody (part meeting)	Observer
<b>APOLOGY</b>	
Vince Tantaro	BS/Specialist Judge
Fay Stokes	BS/Specialist Judge
Sue Bruno	Specialist Judge
Pieter Tjerkstra	Specialist Judge
Louis Donald	BS/Specialist Judge
Sharon Ballantyne-Gordon	BS/Specialist Judge
Greg Green	BS/Specialist Judge
Carol O'Rourke	BS/Specialist Judge
Terry Jarvis	BS/Specialist Judge
Jo Cathie	BS/Specialist Judge
Wolf Meffert	ACTGSDA
John Fenner	BS/Specialist Judge
Karen Hedberg	BS/Specialist Judge
<b>No Attendance – No Apology</b>	
Robert Zammit	Specialist Judge
Stephen Collins	BS/Specialist Judge