



NKU/VK (Scientific Committee) meeting 2023 – Minutes

Time	March 22-23, 2023
Place	Denmark, DKK
Present	DKK: Britta Sørensen, Helle Friis Proschowsky FKK: Kaisa Metteri-Gold, Kirsi Sainio (online, Day2, item 14-28) SKK: Helena Skarp, Sofia Malm Persson, Anna Björklund NKK: William Bredal, Renate Sjølie, Bettina Bachmann, Aud Fossum, Kim Bellamy (online) NKU X-ray panel: Jessica Ingman (Day 2, item 14) NKU IVDD panel: Anu Lappalainen (Day 2, item 14-15)

Meeting chair: Helena Skarp (SKK)

Meeting secretary: Sofia Malm Persson (SKK)

1. Opening of the meeting

Welcome and short presentation of the participants. Jessica Ingman, scrutinizer at SKK, will report from the NKU X-ray panel and Anu Lappalainen will report from the IVDD panel, on March 23 at 10-11 am (item 14 and 15, respectively).

2. Short presentation and organisational news from the national kennel clubs

DKK: Registrations have decreased but still more than before covid-19. Deficit in the economy in 2022. Resources have been used to acquire a property in Ringsted, Zealand, to establish a dog activity centre which can be used by breed clubs and others for activities, conferences etc. There is also a department in Jutland, where DKK rents offices and facilities at a horse activity centre.

FKK: New president of the board, Esa Kukkonen. Still needs to find a new place for the office that fulfils all requirements. Implementation of mandatory registry for registration of all dogs is delayed. Will be costly with double registrations, not appreciated by FKK breeders. Somewhat decreased registrations after covid-19 but increase in health screening. Debate in Finland regarding unhealthy dog breeding. Breeders and show judges have been criticised.

NKK: Nina Brogeland Laache, former head of the health and registration department, resigned in February. The new manager will begin in June, a veterinarian with a background in the feed industry. Kim is interim manager in the meantime. Decrease in registrations but increase in health screening. Many large projects related to RAS and breeding programmes (in connection with the new legislation in Norway and the court case regarding dog breeding). The verdict has been appealed to the supreme court and a new trial is expected during the spring. NKK now has a three to four weeks window when supplementary evidence may be submitted. Mandatory identification will be introduced in connection with the new legislation regarding dog breeding. All dogs used in breeding will have to be registered in a breeding organisation. NKK has a new CEO since January, Agnes Beathe Steen Fosse.

SKK: Registrations have decreased and numbers are low also compared to before covid-19. SKK administers an owner registry for cats. It has now become mandatory with owner registration of cats and a new registry has been introduced by the authorities. This will imply worse finances for SKK.



Some reorganisation at the office, e.g. the management team and the reception. SKK is planning for the General Assembly in September and works with a big vision project, "SKK 2030". An updated version of SKK's website [Köpahund.se](https://www.skp.se) was launched recently.

3. Minutes and Things-to-do from the last meeting, March 30-31, 2022

a. Minutes – Approval (NKU Google-Drive)

The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed and approved. The following was noted:

27. Vaccination rules for show-dogs: NKK informed that they have revised their vaccination rules. FKK aim to revise rules related to vaccination and competition in dog shows, based on the information from the vaccine companies.

28. Rules for pregnant bitches: changes made by NKK according to the agreement last year. SKK has not had the possibility to change the rules yet.

31b. Communication and sharing of information: Would be enhanced by a common chat group. **SKK now has Teams and we could try again to set up a chat group.**

b. Things-to-do (NKU Google-Drive)

The things-to-do list was reviewed. The index group has not been very active during the last years. It was decided that the group will remain but there is no need to provide a written report before each meeting.

4. Decisions from NKU/AU

Minutes from the NKU/AU meeting in March and in October 2022 were reviewed. NKU/VK noted that the statements and proposal forwarded to NKU/AU in 2022 had not been discussed. Sofia informed that she has sent a reminder to NKU/AU. Next meeting with NKU/AU is on March 28-29.

Proposal to NKU/AU: NKU/VK notes that both committees have many overlapping issues. NKU/VK suggests that a representative from the committee could participate at the NKU/AU meeting to give a report and present any statements and proposals from NKU/VK.

5. General update from each country regarding breeding and health issues

a. RAS

DKK: Still no mandatory RAS documents. Some breed clubs have it on a voluntary basis.

NKK: Will no longer have RAS in its current form. Will change to breeding programmes according to the new legislation stating that all breeding organisations need to have a breeding programme for all breeds. A working group has been created to design these breeding programmes. NKK will provide the general part regarding population structure and the breed clubs will provide breed-specific information. This might facilitate harmonisation of regulations. A lot of work to develop these breeding programmes that are to be approved by NKK's health committee. No clear deadline yet, but aim for this autumn for the first version.

FKK: Also planning for some changes in guidelines for RAS. The documents are often very long and heavy to read. FKK has awaited the new legislation before making any changes in the recommendations for RAS. Currently, 243 breeds have a RAS document. In 182 breeds there are some requirement (e.g., health programme) for registration of dogs.

SKK: Updated website about RAS in November 2022

(<https://www.skp.se/sv/uppfodning/funktionarsinfo/avelsfunktionar/ras--en-handlingsplan-for-aveln/vad-ar-ras/>). Digital meetings "To create and revise RAS" for breed clubs held in November



2022 and March 2023. Both meetings were very popular. The new guide/template for RAS is now published and in use (<https://www.skk.se/sv/uppfodning/funktionarsinfo/avelsfunktionar/ras--en-handlingsplan-for-aveln/mall-for-ras/>). The aim is to facilitate work for breed clubs and to make RAS easier to read and understand. There should be a clear summary of the main goals and recommendations in the beginning of the document. The new template has been used by some clubs and resulted in documents that are better structured, shorter and easier to read.

b. BSI

The BSI document is currently under revision. Nordic representatives in the working group are William Bredal (NKK), Lotta Olsson (SKK), two Finnish show judges (FKK), Jørgen Hindse (DKK).

Helena informed that SKK has produced a "Declaration of intent" (Programförklaring) regarding breeding of healthy dogs and priorities related to appearance in order to avoid exaggerations. The concerned breed clubs have been involved in this work as basis for further progress with respect to exaggerated appearance. Important that the priorities and main features in this declaration is incorporated in e.g., BSI, RAS and compendium for show judges.

Conclusion: NKU/VK agreed that it would be valuable with a common Nordic statement regarding breeding of healthy dogs and priorities related to appearance in order to avoid exaggerations.

c. Behaviour/mentality

DKK: No news. Same breeds that have mandatory mentality assessment as before.

FKK: Has been in contact with SKK regarding administration of "unacceptable behaviours". Currently only visible at the FKK website that the dog is disqualified, but not the cause. Sometimes difficult to define what is unwanted and what is unacceptable.

NKK: No news. Mandatory mentality assessment only in Rottweilers since many years.

SKK: Statistics from mentality assessments (BPH, MH and MT), by breed and birth year, were provided in a separate document. MH is still being used for all breed in the Working Dog Breeding Association, BPH for all other breeds. BPH is very popular and it is hard to meet the demand. "Mentalindex" based on BPH is available for Rhodesian Ridgeback since August 2022. Breeding values for the traits "Sociability", "Social security", "Playfulness", "None social fearfulness" and "Aggressiveness" are estimated. The work on developing mentalindex now continues together with the breed clubs for Perro de Agua Espanol, Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever based on BPH and for Rottweiler, Hovawart and Briard based on MH. Heritabilities for personality traits based on BPH are generally high for mentality traits (e.g., in Rhodesian Ridgeback 24-45%).

New methods of presenting BPH results on a breed basis, "the BPH clock", is being developed in collaboration with Kenth Svartberg. Facilitates for dog owners, breeders and breed clubs to evaluate and compare the breed's behaviour to other breeds.

Since February, SKK offers a self-study course about fear in dogs. The course is developed by SKK's Committee for Dogs' Mentality, KHM. The course suits dog owners as well as the ones who meet dogs in their profession. Experts are Åsa Nilsson, psychiatrist, and dog owner coach Memea Mohlin. The course covers why dogs get scared, different signs of fear and what strategies a scared dog can use to deal with its fear. It also contains tips on how fear can be prevented and advice on how a frightened dog should best be treated.

Working group for behaviour/mentality still not created. The proposal was sent to NKU/AU in 2022.



d. Cause of death – registrations

DKK: Possible to register causes of death but not very common that dog owners do this. A project started many years ago to establish a registry of all diagnoses including causes of death gathering data directly from the veterinary clinics. This has just finally begun, and Denmark and Norway are now using the same registry.

FKK: Possible for veterinarians to record diagnoses directly into the FKK database, but the information is difficult to compile. FKK also has an owner based registration of cause of death.

NKK: Possible to register cause of death/euthanasia through “My Pages”. Currently about 50,000 dogs registered as dead/euthanised by the dog owner, many of them with information about cause.

SKK: Launched registration of cause of death in 2021. Reported by the dog owner on a voluntary basis through “Mitt SKK”. Currently, more than 14,500 dogs have been reported (to be compared with 3000 dogs a year ago). Information for individual dogs is not official, but statistics on a breed basis could in the future be used as guidance in breeding strategies. The statistics is currently not available through Avelsdata.

e. Other breeding or health projects

No other projects reported.

6. Cavalier king Charles spaniel – measures for improved health

a. Short report from each country

DKK: New breeding rules from August 1, 2023. MRI scanning of both parents for SM will be mandatory. It is the b-scanning (at 3 years of age) which will be mandatory and will last the rest of the dog’s life. If breeders wish to breed their dogs before the age of three, they will need to get a c-scanning as well. Grade 0b and 1b can be used for breeding. Grade 1c are put into quarantine until they have a b-scanning. This is because a substantial number of 1c dogs get worse. In addition, the breed has mandatory scanning of the heart (18 months-4 years, 4-6 years, and more than 6 years old), DNA-test for Episodic Falling and Curly Coat Syndrom. MRIs are evaluated by Paul Mandigers or Dr. Deutschland.

FKK: Mandatory with heart auscultation (if heart murmur, then ultrasound is needed), knee examination and eye screening. The breed club recommends SM screening, if not screened the dog is considered as grade 2 in breeding recommendations and can only be combined with grade 0a, 0b, 1a or 1b. The breed club has sent in an application to make a cross-breeding programme. The breed club in the UK does not think this is necessary, but they will follow the project. Many potential breeds to cross with, but most probably Danish-Swedish Farmdog, Kooikerhondje and Papillon/Phalène.

NKK: No mandatory SM screening yet, but mandatory heart auscultation. Breeding from three years of age at the earliest, as a result of the heart programme. Several dogs currently screened in order to collect evidence in connection with the lawsuit (about 80 cavaliers screened in the last three weeks). MRIs for SM are evaluated in the US, by US diplomates. The heart programme was reviewed last year. The Norwegian breed club plans for a cross-breeding project.

SKK: Ongoing project with the breed club. Very ambitious club and keen to improve the health of their breed. Currently no mandatory SM screening. Some challenges in introducing an official CM/SM scheme e.g., with respect to availability of MRI (especially in the northern half of Sweden) and concerns with respect to popular sire effect and over use of the relatively few dogs that are SM grade 0. For now, SM screening will continue on a voluntary basis and registration of screening results



administered by the breed club. To improve the situation regarding CM/SM, in addition to postponing breeding debut until 3 years of age (which is already in place with the current heart programme), focus will be on skull shape in order to breed away from a skull shape predisposing for CM/SM (several scientific studies available in this field). Planning for a possible cross-breeding project is ongoing. This would be expected to be beneficial with respect to MVD, CM/SM and genetic variation.

7. Brachycephalic health issues

a. Short report from each country and information about RFG-Scheme

DKK: Started with RFG-S in March this year. Seven veterinarians educated. Meetings with the breed clubs concerned. New breeding rules from August 1 2023, BOAS-grading using RFG-S will be mandatory for Pugs, English and French bulldogs by first of August. Grade 3 cannot be used for breeding, grade 2 can only be mated to grade 0 or 1. A BOAS-result is valid for two years. Foreign dogs from countries without the possibility for BOAS-grading with RFG-S can only be used if the Danish bitch has grade 0 or 1. The same rule is applied for old frozen semen.

Large proportion of these breeds not registered in the DKK. Currently, tries to find a good solution to be able to offer the RFG-S also for unregistered dogs and be able to register the results in a separate database. Not yet clear how to handle dogs that have undergone surgery.

NKK: Mandatory RFG-S for all three breeds. 100 veterinarians certified, which is currently enough. Will arrange a BOAS conference in Norway on June, 20-21. Day 1 theory about BOAS and Day 2 open for about 100 persons with training of BOAS grading.

FKK: The FKK test now also includes BOAS grading, since January. Continental Bulldog added to the list of breeds tested. Mandatory testing in English Bulldog, French Bulldog, Pug and Pekingese. The FKK test is very similar to RFG-S.

SKK: Short report from the work in AG-RS (a working group for healthy pedigree dog breeds, currently with focus on some brachycephalic breeds). The group focuses on identifying conformational risk factors and to develop clear directions and aims for a healthy development, in collaboration with the concerned breed clubs.

RFG-S is now launched in Sweden, on a voluntary basis to begin with. The SKK Board recently decided to introduce mandatory screening from January 2025 (at least if the clubs have not reached the level of 80% of breeding animals examined). One lead assessor was educated this autumn. Education of veterinarians in January (currently 15). Difficult to recruit veterinarians in the northern parts of Sweden and in Värmland, mostly because there are few specialists in those areas. First examination was held in February, 18 dogs were tested. Several planned assessment-days around the country. Only grade 0 and 1 is accepted for breeding. To use dogs graded as 2 is not compatible with Swedish legislation.

Discussion about issues related to the RFG-S and possibilities for harmonisation. For example, how to handle results from other countries and in which country appeals should be made.

Decision: NKU/VK sees a need for a working group in order to further discuss details related to the RFG-Scheme and possibilities for harmonisation. Suggested participants in the working group: Anna Björklund (convener), Liisa Lilja-Maula, Britta Sørensen, Renate Sjølie.

Conclusion: NKU/VK would like to emphasize the importance of enabling RFG-screening also of unregistered dogs. In many countries, a considerable proportion of the breeds concerned are not registered with the kennel club. Hence, to take responsibility for the dogs' health, kennel clubs should offer RFG-S to all dogs of the concerned breeds. This will also imply more possibilities for practice for veterinarians performing these examinations.



- b. Further development (if any) regarding the Robinow like syndrome and genetic testing for DVL-2

FKK registers DNA-test results for DVL-2 in the Continental Bulldog. The DVL-2 test is mandatory for breeding in this breed. Combination of two carriers is not allowed. The test is also used for American Staffordshire terriers and French Bulldogs in Finland, but currently not mandatory for any other braky breed.

8. Aninova

- a. Update from each country regarding status and agreements

DKK: No further contacts with Aninova after attending the initial presentation.

FKK: No contacts with Aninova. Will launch a new webservice with dog/breed information shortly.

NKK: Norwegian Elk Hound Gray will set up a pilot study, mainly to get help with breeding values for hunting traits.

SKK: Contacts with Aninova regarding possible pilot study. Probably based on Norwegian Elk Hound. SKK is planning to update current "Avelsdata". One possibility is to contract Aninova for help with genetic analyses and possibly also with an updated platform. However, first step will be to make our database more available through APIs.

9. Genetic diversity (see documents in the "Genetic variation" folder on google drive)

- a. Report from meetings in working group

Kim gave a short report from the working group. The group had in total four meetings. Interesting and useful discussions but many uncertainties still and hard to move forward. At the last meeting, Aimee Llewellyn (IPFD) joined the meeting. IPFD recently had a workshop on the same theme. Discussions about possible collaboration. No news from Aimee after that meeting. The group has not yet produced a written Q&A, awaiting further contact with IPFD.

The working group has also discussed possibilities for research collaboration with respect to genetic variation. One topic for research might be genetic variation in the Nordic breeds. Another suggestion was assessing changes in genetic variation over time, with help of old samples.

Conclusion from the meeting with the DNA-group: Kim will approach Aimee again for an update on the work by IPFD. The working group will set up a new online meeting to discuss how to move forward.

10. Breed crosses and open studbooks

- a. Update from each country on current projects

DKK: Open stud book, i.e., exemption registration of unregistered dogs, in Danish-Swedish Farndog and Danish Spitz. Currently, no outcrossing projects.

FKK: Currently 11 breeds with open studbooks, i.e., exemption registration of unregistered dogs. Latest breed to open studbook is Saluki. Several outcrossing projects e.g., the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, French Bulldog and Dobermann. In addition, FKK takes part in an international outcrossing project in Leonberger. Positive with international collaboration in these issues.



NKK: Article about outcrossing project in the last issue of Hundesport. Recently, 18 Laponian herders were registered by exemption registration.

SKK: Several breed clubs interested in outcrossing, e.g. Schillerstövare, Smålandstövare (open studbook towards other closely related breeds). The Cavalier Club is preparing an application for an outcross project. Very positive response from breeders and potential dog owners. White Shepherd and White Elkhound also interested in outcrossing.

b. Routines for registration of breed crosses

FKK: Dogs in generation four will automatically be registered in the official studbook (FI-registration).

NKK: Project to create a separate registry (X registry), will facilitate outcrossing projects.

SKK: SKK will develop a new "X registry", planned to be launched in January 2024. Dogs will be registered with the prefix SX (exemption registrations and dogs with a pedigree not recognised by FCI) and SXX (dogs resulting from outcrosses, F1-F3).

SKK has developed a new template/guide for breed clubs that see a need for increased genetic variation in the breed. Guidance with respect to strategies (e.g., outcrossing, open studbook, exemption registration of unregistered dogs or re-definition of breeds and varieties of breeds) and how to create a plan for the project.

11. Limitations in breeding with respect to coat colour

a. General discussion/statement

Statement made at last meeting: *"NKU/VK would like to emphasise that improper coat colour should not be considered an eliminating fault that excludes dogs from breeding. Except for colours associated with health issues, e.g. merle."*

This statement still holds validity.

DKK: Have had discussions with the breed club regarding white boxers in breeding. This is now possible.

FKK: Merle collies can be mated if low risk or safe according to DNA test (Laboklin). Kaisa will look into the rules more in detail.

Discussion regarding mating between rough and short-haired Collie. These matings are allowed but not listed in the FCI document with guidelines about crosses of breeds and varieties.

b. Parti-coloured Poodles

DKK: Parti-coloured (black and white and black and tan) Poodles have been moved to the X registry. They may participate in dog shows, separately from Poodles. Parti-coloured offspring born as Poodle may be moved to the X registry upon request. Parti-coloured and solid dogs may be mated and offspring will be registered in the X registry. Solid offspring may be moved to the normal studbook, i.e. registered as Poodle, if DNA-tested and proven not carry any gene for parti-colour.

NKK: No breeding ban for parti-coloured dogs. Registered with information about actual colour as well as "colour not approved".

FKK: Parti-coloured Poodles registered as Poodles but with non-approved colour. Parti-coloured may not be mated with solid. Solid dogs with a parti-coloured parent will be registered as parti-coloured.

SKK: Application from the Swedish Breed Club to ban parti-coloured dogs from breeding, as well as litters where one or both of the parents are parti-coloured.



Statement from 2019 regarding recognition of new breeds:

“NKU/VK would like to stress the expressed view from March 2018 that our general opinion is that the negative effects of small populations should be taken into consideration when recognizing new breeds. The first choice should always be considering the new breed as a variety of an existing breed or permitting crossbreeding with related breeds. When new breeds (non-FCI recognized breeds) are recognized by NKU/AU on national basis, crossing with closely related breeds should be considered.”

In addition to this statement, NKU/VK would like to emphasize the that the negative effects of small populations should be taken into consideration also when dividing already existing breeds into sub-populations. It is highly desirable to maintain a gene flow (exchange of breeding animals) between sub-populations.

12. Breeds and varieties/recognition of new breeds

- a. Any news, new breeds?

DKK: Polski Spaniel Mysliwski

FKK: Polski Spaniel Mysliwski

NKK: No new breeds, does not have an X registry

SKK: Erdélyi Kopó, Polski Spaniel Mysliwski

13. Hip and Elbow Dysplasia

- a. Report from NKU/VK working group for HD - draft statement

The working group has written a draft document with information and statement regarding HD screening. The document clarifies the aim, advantages and limitations with screening for HD. Moreover, the document highlights the unique situation in the Nordic countries with respect to harmonisation and calibration.

Decision: NKU/VK is encouraged to read and comment the document. It will also be sent to the NKU X-ray panel for comments. When agreed/finished the document and statement will be sent to NKU/AU.

- b. Report from international seminar on HD in Copenhagen

Helle reported from the seminar. Before the meeting, revised criteria for HD grading had been prepared. These criteria have now been approved by FCI (see item 13c).

Conclusion: NKU/VK would like to state the importance of FCI taking lead in the implementation of these new criteria, with information to Kennel Clubs and scrutinisers.

- c. Implementation of new criteria for HD and ED classification (FCI criteria Copenhagen 2022 and IEWG, Nice 2022)

The NKU X-ray panel is requesting an official date when everyone starts using the criteria so that all countries can start at the same time. Also update IEWG criteria to using the ones from 2022. In practice not any changes

Decision: NKU/VK decided that these criteria should be implemented in the Nordic countries from June 1, 2023.



d. ED – new statement regarding breeding (SKK)

The SKK Breeding Committee has made a new statement regarding breeding and elbow dysplasia (ED). The statement will be implemented on January 1, 2024. In short, the statement implies that it cannot be considered compatible with the ethical guidelines to use a dog with ED grade 2 or 3 in breeding. In addition, dogs with clinical signs of ED, or dogs that have undergone surgery for ED, should never be used in breeding, regardless of ED grade. ED is considered by many to be a much greater cause of lameness than hip dysplasia, HD. It should be pointed out that dogs with any degree of ED, even mild ones, by definition have changes in the joint that have given or may give rise to osteoarthritis. In this respect, the grading of ED differs from that of HD. This, in combination with dogs carrying more weight on their front legs than hind legs, means that even mild ED can be expected to cause the individual more clinical problems than the corresponding degree of HD.

In Finland, dogs with ED grade 3 is not allowed for breeding. In addition, many breed clubs also exclude grade 2. NKK excludes ED grade 3 according to their ethical guidelines. In Denmark, allowed to take maximum one litter on a dog with ED grade 3, and the other breeding animal has to be grade 0 (only in breeds with an ED screening programme).

d. Nordic harmonisation of owner consent regarding data for research

In all countries except Norway, the owner approves by signing the requisition that data from HD/ED screening (both X-rays and results) may be used for research. In Denmark and Finland, it is also stated that the results are owned by DKK/FKK. NKK intends to add a paragraph with owner consent regarding data for research to their document.

e. Update from Sweden regarding decisions from the General Assembly

SKK informed about some decisions from the SKK General Assembly in 2021 related to HD, resulting in possible changes and projects. A standardised routine for sedation will be implemented. Mandatory education for clinics performing HD/ED screening will be introduced. All X-rays (only digital) for German Shepherds born in May during the years 2012-2018 will be sent to scrutinisers in three other countries (Germany, Holland and Italy) for evaluation/calibration. Data will be shared with the breed clubs concerned.

In addition, the General Assembly decided that all FCI certificates from other EU countries should be accepted for registration and that the protocol from the German GRSK (Gesellschaft für Röntgendiagnostik genetisch beeinflusster Skeletterkrankungen bei Kleintieren e.V) should be used by the Swedish scrutinisers. Both these decisions are difficult to implement and will imply a deviation from the harmonised procedures currently applied in the Nordic countries.

In DKK, the effect of Danish/foreign result is included in the statistical model for prediction of breeding values.

NKK accepts results that are approved by the kennel club in the country concerned. It is however, challenging and time consuming to determine what results to accept.

14. Report from the X-ray panel (by Jessica Ingman)

a. Facts and Procedures ("Faktarutan")

Not much changes in the Facts and procedures from last year.

1. Template for individual appeal cases in Facts and Procedure



Reminder to use the common Appeal requisition, attachment 3 in the Facts and Procedure (attachment 3) when sending appeal cases between the countries. The form is in the last page of the document and can be printed directly from there. The pdf file is now improved and can be filled in digitally.

b. Chondrodystrophic breeds, updated list

No new breeds were added to the list. However, all basset breeds have now been listed separately for clarification. In addition, the breed name for Podengo Portuguese Pequeno has been corrected.

1. Renaming of list

Slight change of the heading of the list to clarify that some breeds on the list are not considered chondrodystrophic, despite a chondrodystrophic limb shape. New heading: Chondrodystrophic breeds *and other breeds* not considered suitable for ED screening.

2. New dates for update of list (April 1 and October 1)

NKU/VK has already decided on the new dates for annual updates of the list: April 1 and October 1.

c. Review of compilation of appeal cases

No news.

d. New template for statistics regarding appeal cases – harmonisation

Would facilitate merging statistics if all countries used a common template. The purpose is not to have a very strict/fixed format. It should be easy to use and additional information will be possible to add. The X-ray panel would like the support from NKU/VK to implement this template when ready.

Conclusion: NKU/VK supports the development and implementation of a common template.

1. Password protection of files shared between countries

Files shared between countries should be protected in some way. It was suggested that the documents are uploaded to a common drive instead of sent around by e-mail. The Facts and Procedure could also be uploaded on this drive.

Decision: The secretary will look into the possibility to create a common drive.

2. Date for reporting of appeal statistics

The NKU X-ray panel meets twice a year. Appeal statistics cannot be evaluated at the first meeting each year. Hence, statistics will be evaluated regularly at the autumn meeting. The NKU X-ray panel would suggest they get the statistics by March 1. The panel will then have enough time to review the statistics.

Decision: Appeal statistics should be reported to the NKU X-ray panel by March 1, each year.

e. Hands-free technique for X-rays, applied in Finland

Application of hands-free technique is a question about radiation safety. Used to large extent in Finland. Radiologists will stick to the same criteria, but method used is flexible. Hence, it is positive to use those kinds of techniques and images should look the same regardless of method used (hands-free or traditional).

Conclusion: The X-ray panel was asked to communicate that they do not have any opinion on the choice of technique as long as the criteria for the quality of radiographs are met.



f. HD statement from the NKU/VK HD working group

NKU/VK would like the X-ray panel to review a document with information and statement regarding HD screening (see item 13 a). Next meeting with the panel is on September 6.

Decision: The secretary will send the document to Jessica who could forward it to the all the X-ray scrutinisers.

15. Report from the IVDD panel (Anu Lappalainen)

Anu gave a report from the IVDD panel. The panel consists of a small group of veterinarians. Harmonising the radiographic evaluation of IVDD was started in the first harmonisation meeting of 2022 (6.4.2022). The way of assessing calcified discs was very similar between the scrutinisers. The work will continue at least annually. In total, 10 interesting cases are chosen by scrutinisers (5 from Denmark/Norway and 5 from Finland/Sweden) and sent in DICOM format to the chairperson at least 2 weeks before the meeting. All breeds getting an IVDD score can be included.

At least two annual meetings are held, physical or online. Additional online meetings can be held when necessary. The physical meetings will be held at the same time and place as NKU X-ray panel meetings when possible. Before the first meeting of the year (spring meeting), each country must have sent in their reports on statistics; number of evaluations of IVDD as well as the number of appeals. Changes in routines etc. are reported orally at the meeting.

Appeal case statistics from the previous year are to be analysed in each autumn meeting. The chair of the group will remind the scrutinisers to gather the statistics, and send them to the chair. So far only two appeal cases.

In the future, appeals are handled in the meetings (additional meetings for appeals can be held). Images of the appeal cases are sent to all group members before the meeting by the offices, but the scrutiniser who has made the initial scoring, is not involved in the decision. New images can be asked, if it helps decision making.

Breeds getting IVDD scores differ between countries. Denmark and Norway: Dachshund, Coton de tuléar. Finland: Dachshund, Corgies, Pekingese, Coton de tular, Cocker Spaniel, Havanese dog, Swedish Vallhund, French bulldog, Tibetan spaniel, (Skye terrier 1.7.2022). Sweden: Dachshund.

16. Eye examinations – ECVO

a. Update from each country

DKK: Involved with development of a common database together with Origin. Results currently electronically recorded in the DKK database and transferred to VETZ. DKK will not cover the cost for this project, will be financed by the eye panellists, but it will probably be necessary for DKK to establish a “bridge” between the new ECVO database and hundeweb.

FKK: Uses their own system.

NKK: Admission for registration of results in the NKK database is signed by the dog owner on a separate document on the back of the ECVO document. This document is archived by the eye panellist. In the future, NKK hopes to have all requisitions at “My pages”.

SKK: Still not implemented ECVO, but diagnoses very similar to ECVO with some slight differences. SKK will implement the ECVO protocol, but has not yet decided on what technical solution to use.

Moreover, NKK informed that the Norwegian association for ophthalmologists wishes to introduce an upper age limit for who can practice as eye panellist. In addition, the association is currently revising the compendium with breeding recommendations related to various eye diseases.



17. Patellar luxation

- a. Short report from the working group

The working group had one meeting. William reported that he has not had time to follow up yet.

A new one-day course is offered in Finland for veterinarians that wish to perform official patellar luxation examinations. Both theory and practice. The course is arranged by the Veterinary University.

General question related to health programmes and calibration/validation came up. Quality assurance of veterinarians performing various examinations varies between countries and also differs depending on disease/health programme. Potentially a possibility for increased cooperation with veterinary associations in these matters.

Conclusion: The issue of calibration and quality assurance related to health programmes and veterinarians performing the examinations will be further discussed at the next meeting.

18. Registration and exchange of foreign health records – harmonisation

This item was postponed until next meeting.

19. Registration of tail length/natural Bob tail in pedigrees

How is this recorded in the different countries?

SKK: uses abbreviations (LS – long tail, KS – short tail (at least 8 vertebrae but less than normal for the breed, ST – stub tail (4-7 vertebrae), AS – no tail (0-3 vertebrae), KUS – cropped tail (not allowed for participation in dog shows). Information about tail length, the abbreviation, is printed on the pedigree/proof of registration. Based on information from the breeder.

FKK: mandatory with documentation of tail status (published on the web, according to Kirsi also published in the registration paper), due to animal welfare legislation. A veterinary certificate (must be done before 10 days of age) or a DNA-test is approved. However, cases with dogs that are genetically short tail (T-box mutation) but still have been docked.

DKK: tail status is only based on breeder's information.

Conclusion: All countries will look into this issue and send the information to the secretary.

20. DNA-test of T-box mutation for imported Australian shepherds

- a. Report on application of test in each country (mandatory?)

DKK: Does not require DNA-test of T-box mutation.

FKK: Requires DNA-test for all imported dogs in breeds with the T-box mutation.

NKK: Mandatory only for this breed.

SKK: No application of this DNA-test so far. Also, dogs with the T-box mutation (but short tail) are being cropped. In these cases, DNA-test is not helpful.

21. Surgical procedures - rules in various countries

Case with a Boston Terrier with surgically corrected nostrils. The dog was not allowed to compete in dog shows and obedience, but could still compete in agility and rally obedience. Following this case, NKK is now reviewing the rules related to competition and surgical procedures.

DKK: General rules apply for all, but mainly apply for corrections that affect the appearance of the dog. Surgical procedures that cover faults are not allowed.



FKK: Not allowed in dog shows, but still allowed in other sports, e.g., agility.

SKK: Not allowed to compete in any sport with a dog that is surgically corrected. Stated in the doping regulations.

Conclusion: All countries will look into their rules and send the information to the secretary.

22. Correction of ear position – statement from Veterinary Health Counsel in Denmark

Helle informed about a new statement from the Veterinary Health Counsel in Denmark stating that correction of ear position is not in accordance with the welfare law. Correction is usually done by using weights, glue or tape to get drop ears. The council states that the procedure probably only gives the dogs minor distress, but despite this it is not allowed.

23. Issues (if any) from the DNA group meeting

a. Clear by parentage - statement

Conclusion from the DNA group: The NKU DNA group will write a suggestion for a statement to put forward to the NKU/VK and NKU/AU.

NKU/VK reviewed and adopted the suggested statement from the DNA group. NKU/VK would like to make the following statement regarding clear by parentage, i.e., hereditary free dogs.

Statement: NKU/VK recommends a harmonised procedure with respect to clear by parentage (hereditary free dogs) in all the Nordic countries, implying a limitation of three generations. All Nordic countries have experienced several cases where parentage turned out to be wrong, test results have been wrong or dogs have been mixed up at the clinic or laboratory. These cases are very time consuming and often affect many dogs and dog owners. In addition, these inaccuracies imply a risk of affected offspring. So far, this procedure has been implemented in Sweden and Finland.

b. DNA tests to determine breed ancestry – statement

Conclusion from the DNA group: The NKU DNA group will write a suggestion for a statement to put forward to the NKU/VK and NKU/AU.

NKU/VK reviewed and adopted the suggested statement from the DNA group. NKU/VK would like to make the following statement regarding DNA tests to determine breed ancestry.

Statement: Molecular genetic analyses of breed ancestry can be of scientific value to study the genetic makeup of a breed and the relationship between breeds. However, the tests currently offered cannot be applied to determine with certainty whether a dog meets the FCI's requirement of three generations of the same breed and should not be used as basis for definition of a breed. Breed affiliation is traditionally based on phenotype and should not be equated with the individuals in the pedigree not showing any traces of any other breed based on DNA analyses. Recently created breeds, breeds with an open studbook or breeds where crosses have been made in the recent past can be expected to exhibit genetic variation from more than one breed. Moreover, NKU/VK would like to emphasize that breeding of pedigree dogs is facing challenges related to closed stud books and low genetic variation. This should be taken into account when applying new molecular genetic tools. In the case of suspected fraud, it is advised to use parentage testing to verify parentage when possible, rather than applying tests for breed ancestry.



24. Report from the FCI Breeding Commission

It has not been any meeting with the FCI Breeding Commission

25. Report from the FCI Scientific Commission

Kirsi Sainio gave a short report from the FCI Scientific Commission. The commission has a new president from Czech Republic.

26. Other international activities and conferences

a. FCI Committee for Dog Welfare and Health

There is an online recording available from the conference in Mexico on the FCI website. NKK has a representative in the group. For next year, NKK will ask her to give a short report from the work in this group.

b. IPFD

The next International Dog Health Workshop will be arranged in Finland, on June 13-16, 2024. The Canine and Feline Genomics and Genetics Conference will be held in connection with the workshop (before the workshop). IPFD has a new CEO, Marc Ralsky.

c. ICECDogs

Helena gave some information regarding purpose and work in the International Collaborative on Extreme Conformations in Dogs. As a global multi-stakeholder group, ICECDogs work together with members and collaborators to minimize welfare issues resulting from extreme conformations in dogs by seeking out and applying evidence-based canine and human approaches.

d. Canine Science Forum in Budapest, keynote by Peter Sandøe: Will dog breeds as we know them today soon be a thing of the past?

Helle informed about this upcoming meeting in June. Focus on behavioural issues.

e. WSAVA in Lisbon, September, Hereditary Diseases Committee tract on Responsible breeding

Helle will attend this meeting and will give a presentation.

f. BOAS conference in Norway

NKK informed about the upcoming BOAS conference in Norway, on June, 20-21. Day 1 theory about BOAS and Day 2 open for about 100 persons with training of BOAS grading.

27. Any other business

28. Next meeting

The date for next meeting was set to April 16-18 in Finland. The DNA-group will meet on April 16 and NKU/VK on April 17-18.