



ACTIVITY and MEDIA ALERT

Attention: Dogs Australia Directors and Member Bodies

Update on RFG Scheme

Dear Hugh,

The Respiratory Function Grading Scheme is on the point of being launched.

The RFG Scheme is based on the Scheme developed by Jane Ladlow and her team at Cambridge University in the UK. This has subsequently been developed further and is being licensed by the KC. This scheme has been picked up by quite a few countries and has the strong backing of the FCI. DOGS AUSTRALIA and New Zealand KC are also signed up to participate.

Dr Arthur House from Victoria is the Chief Assessor for Australia, and he is in the process of setting up zoom meetings for the breed clubs of the French and British Bulldogs as well as Pugs. These meetings will explain how the scheme works and what the Scheme entails.

Similarly, Dr House is setting up training sessions for interested veterinarians throughout Australia so that they can become accredited. It is currently estimated we should be able to start testing in early 2023.

The way the Scheme works is that dogs when they are bought in for testing, are checked, scanned for their chip, weighed and their general health assessed. Their resting breathing is checked and noted. The dog is then lightly run for 3 minutes and then the breathing sounds are reassessed. Dogs are then Graded as normal, grade 1, grade 2 and grade 3. Dogs that are assessed as normal or grade 1 require no surgery. Dogs that are assessed as Grade 2 may require surgery at some time. Grade 3 dogs are assessed as needing surgery to improve respiratory function. It is recommended that Grade 3 dogs should not be used for breeding and grade 2 dogs are bred with care to normal dogs.

The Grading score sheets, and the breeding advice given will be available on the DOGS AUSTRALIA web site. Statistical numbers for each breed and grade should be available after sufficient numbers have been screened. Statistics from the UK show steady improvement over several years of testing. I will try and get these statistics available as soon as possible.

Karen Hedberg (BVSc) Sydney
Chair Dogs Australia Health and Wellbeing Committee
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