



Australian National Kennel Council Ltd ABN 77 151 544 679 trading as Dogs Australia

LITTER REGISTRATION LIMITATIONS EXPLAINED

Litter Registration Limitations are mandatory requirements that are applied to the sire and dam of a litter of puppies prior to being able to register that litter. The “limitation” is some form of disease screening process that has been voted on and agreed to by the particular breed community, through the input of registered owners and/or breeders, State Breed Clubs and National Breed Councils.

Before considering whether a disease test should be made mandatory under this process, the

[Dogs Australia National Code of Practice for Hereditary Diseases](#)

should be taken into account, particularly the following parameters:

Dogs Australia recognises that before approving a screening procedure or test for a hereditary disease that procedure should be:-

- (a) scientifically validated*
- (b) reliable*
- (c) readily available*
- (d) cost effective*

According to Dogs Australia Regulation Part 6 Clause 8.18 Litter Registration Limitations

<https://dogsaustralia.org.au/members/rule-regulations/regulations/>

A National Breed Council (NBC) or Breed Specialty Club(s) (where an NBC does not exist) must agree that the disease(s) is/are a problem in the breed.

So, the considerations as to whether a disease within a breed should warrant a mandatory test of breeding dogs before their offspring can be registered must include:

- Is the disease truly a problem in the breed e.g. does it occur frequently through most bloodlines in this country; does it have a serious effect on the wellbeing of the dog?
- Is there a scientifically validated (i.e. published and peer reviewed) test for the disease?
- Is the mode of inheritance of the disease clearly understood?
- Is the test readily accessible to all breeders?
- Is the test cost effective?

Following these considerations, data indicating how widespread the disease (or carrier status for the disease) is within the gene pool should be carefully gathered in order to understand what effect on the size of the gene pool may occur if there were limitations on particular combinations of breeding stock.

- Should there simply be a requirement to test, or should the result of the test meet a certain minimum standard?
- If a DNA test, would there be certain combinations that are prohibited?

- Would there be a DNA status that should never be bred from, thus removing a dog from the gene pool completely?
- If the test is of the hip or elbow screening type, should there simply be a requirement that the test is performed, or
- Should the scores be taken in account, either in combination between sire and dam, or in reference to a breed average or median score?

With the importance of maintenance of genetic diversity in mind, the following considerations should be uppermost when dealing with DNA tests for simple recessive genes:

1. *The primary aim is not to produce any affected individuals.*
2. *The secondary aim is to keep the gene pool as open as possible.*
3. *Carriers and affected dogs (where the dogs are healthy through breeding age) can and should be used to clear/normal partners. (Government regulations permitting).*

Steps to be followed for implementation of LRLs:

1. The National Breed Council, through its constitutional process for obtaining direction from its member clubs, or (where there is no National Breed Council) a majority of State Breed Clubs must submit a Breed Survey (BS) to the Dogs Australia Canine Health and Wellbeing Committee. In the situation where there is no Breed Club, a BS can be drawn up by interested breeders or owners with the assistance of the State Body Canine Health and Wellbeing Committee or the Dogs Australia Canine Health and Wellbeing Committee.
2. The BS will be published in all State Journals inviting all members who are registered owners of the breed to vote on the BS.
3. The BS must contain the question "is xxxx (the disease) a problem in the breed?" It should also contain a brief explanation of what limitations will be imposed should the survey pass and also the date of implementation (normally 6 months following ratification by Dogs Australia, should it pass) Also included should be details of whether Clear By Parentage results (according to Dogs Australia protocols) will be accepted
4. The BS should be submitted to the Dogs Australia Canine Health and Wellbeing Committee for endorsement before it is distributed nationally in state journals for voting.

Prioritise Diseases:

- (1) Widely accepted as prevalent in the breed and must be tested for.
- (2) Common knowledge in breed, although given various different emphases.
- (3) Rare occurrence, emphasis dependant on severity.

Plans of action to deal with various diseases

Prevalent Diseases:

- ❖ Encourage stragglers
- ❖ Level of compulsion?
- ❖ Educate, educate, educate
- ❖ Encouragement (inclusion, not exclusion)
- ❖ Enforcing Club Codes of Ethics through puppy sales
- ❖ Breeder Forums
- ❖ **Litter Registration Limitations**

Common Knowledge:

- ❖ Ascertain spread throughout your gene pool (bloodline, country etc)
- ❖ Establish severity of effect
- ❖ Establish effect on gene pool of various testing regimes
- ❖ Breed club info sheets, Code of Ethics?

Rarer Disease:

- ❖ Ensure correct diagnosis and heritability
- ❖ Discuss widely and ascertain possible impact on welfare and diversity of gene pool
- ❖ Suggest information and advice sheet from breed club