



Belgian Shepherd Dog Club  
of QLD

**TITLE: BSDCQ HEALTH STRATEGY POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**PURPOSE:** To ensure that the sound health status of Belgian Shepherd Dogs (BSD) being bred by members of the Belgian Shepherd Dog Club of Queensland (BSDCQ) is maintained.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** The BSDCQ membership.

**POLICY**

- 1.0** The BSDCQ Health Strategy demonstrates a commitment to the future health of the BSD, and recognises the value of continuously focusing on health priorities and implementing actions to improve the health and welfare of the BSD.
- 2.0** The general sound health status of the BSD is the responsibility of everyone who loves the BSD; the BSDCQ, its' membership, and responsible breeders, are all critical in ensuring this sound health status is maintained.
- 3.0** The BSDCQ Breed Health Strategy will be reviewed once a year.  
Its key components will consist of:
  - A BSDCQ Position Statement
  - A BSDCQ Position Statement Rationale
  - A BSDCQ Health Strategy Policy and Procedure
  - A current BSDCQ Health Survey
  - Any required BSD Health Plans
  - A BSDCQ Breed Health Coordinator
- 4.0** The BSDCQ Health Strategy will guide the ongoing education provided by the BSDCQ to it's membership about maintaining and improving upon the health status of the BSD.
- 5.0** The benefits of a BSDCQ Health Strategy are that:
  - 5.1** Owners and potential puppy buyers of a BSD will enjoy:
    - A BSD that is fit for its function (invariably as a companion)
    - A BSD that will live a long and happy life, free from health problems
    - An owner will not to have to spend lots of money on veterinary fees caused by their BSD's conformation and breeding
  - 5.2** The BSDCQ will be able to:
    - Talk positively about all the actions they are taking to ensure the breed is healthy
    - Be confident that BSDCQ members and breeders fully support their plans for breed health improvement;
    - Be proud of their efforts to improve the BSD's health and welfare



## **PROCEDURE:**

- 1.0** The BSDCQ will appoint a volunteer BSDCQ Health Coordinator every two years.
- 2.0** The role of the BSDCQ Health Coordinator is described at Appendix A.
- 3.0** The BSDCQ will conduct a baseline breed health survey in 2019-2020, and then every five years. This survey will assist the BSDCQ to:
  - Gauge the current health status of the BSD
  - Clarify evidence of specific conditions
  - Pinpoint any problems and monitor progress in addressing these problems
  - Provide a baseline of health in the BSD, so as to be able to repeat the same survey and compare outcomes
  - Provide evidence-based guidance and recommendations for health tests to BSDCQ club members so as to maintain the good health status of the BSD.
- 4.0** The BSDCQ will use the outcomes of any current BSD Health Survey to develop BSD Health Plans (as required) at professionally facilitated BSDCQ Health Forums.
- 5.0** Each BSD Health Plan will include the following information:
  - 5.1 Evidence:** Facts about the identified health problem, how common and serious it is (as per BSD Health Survey), and information from published research about the problem
  - 5.2 Communication and education:** How information will be communicated to breeders, owners, and potential owners; how information will be built into BSD breed education programmes; and, how information will be communicated to vets and other specialists.
  - 5.3 Testing and screening:** What approach will be adopted for testing and screening of the breed (e.g. Clinical, X-ray, DNA); how breeders and owners will be encouraged to participate in testing and screening programmes, and the take-up rates.
  - 5.4 Health outcomes:** Facts about specific improvements being achieved (e.g. any reductions in disease prevalence; reductions in Breed Average COI).



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**6.0** The BSDCQ website will remain the primary source of information about the BSDCQ's approach to health and welfare and will be current and comprehensive.

Information provided will include:

- About the breed and its overall health status
- The top health priorities in the BSD
- What the BSDCQ is doing about these priorities
- What screening schemes are required or recommended
- What advice the BSDCQ provides to people wishing to breed
- News items (regularly updated)
- How the breed is tackling health improvement overall
- Research, screening and education programme
- How to submit a new health report
- Results and analysis of current health surveillance (survey).

Signature: .....*Roger Winton..*  
(President)

Date: .....25/09/2019.....

Review Date: .....



## **APPENDIX A: The role of the BSDCQ Health Coordinator**

1. Provide a central point of contact between the BSDCQ and Dogs Queensland for all matters concerning health;
2. Provide advice, help and support, in complete confidence, to owners/breeders on health matters affecting their dogs;
3. Provide accurate, reliable and consistent information to breeders/owners and the general public in order to educate and raise awareness about health issues that affect or could affect the BSD;
4. Liaise with Dogs Queensland to inform, update and consult with them over the breed's health and other relevant general canine health issues;
5. Research, compile and publish information and updates on all health matters affecting the BSD via the BSDCQ websites, newsletters/leaflets/flyers, yearbook and any other relevant publications;
6. Receive, record and monitor input from owners/breeders concerning reported cases of illness/disease and causes of death, in order to keep abreast of current health issues affecting the BSD and be alerted as early as possible to any significant new issues that may be emerging;
7. Compile annual health reports on behalf of the BSDCQ;
8. Communicate and liaise with professional associations and institutions (for example, EMBARK, ORIVET, veterinary practitioners, clinicians, researchers, geneticists, and other organisations concerned with canine health & welfare);
9. Keep abreast of developments in canine research, legislation, disease knowledge, both within Australia and worldwide;
10. Attend meetings, health related seminars, conferences etc. as and when necessary.

### **Reference**

The Kennel Club (2016). The Kennel Club breed health improvement strategy: A step by step guide.

Retrieved from <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/media/97934/bhcbreedhealthimpstrat.pdf>

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