

COMPULSORY MICROCHIPPING OF DOGS

1. In February 2009, the BVA called for the compulsory identification of all registered pedigree dogs to facilitate the reporting of hereditary health problems and surgical procedures resulting in conformation changes, and added that the introduction of a 'pet passport' database, which would be linked to a microchip, would allow information such as parentage, DNA and health test results to be known for a particular animal.¹
2. Permanent identification, particularly by microchip, has become increasingly common over the past decade, and is the most effective means of reuniting a stray dog with its owner. It has a number of advantages over the use of a collar and tag which are often left off or slip off. Collars can also be easily removed from stolen dogs. Permanent identification is effective at all times and is virtually impossible to alter or remove.
3. The veterinary profession promotes responsible pet ownership and can explain to owners the benefits of permanent identification for dogs. However the BVA considers that legislation should be put in place to require all dogs to be permanently identified before the first change of ownership or at first veterinary examination if earlier. Such identification should be through microchipping.
4. The new legislation should include a requirement to keep the information on a microchip and/or relevant database up to date with the current name and address of the owner. Owners should be issued with a certificate to show the details registered on the database. The format of the certificate should include a tear-off section to notify changes of ownership to the database.

¹ BVA submission to the Associate Parliamentary Group for Animal Welfare inquiry into health and welfare issues surrounding the breeding of pedigree dogs