

CAESAREAN OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES WHICH ALTER THE NATURAL CONFORMATION OF A DOG

In 1990 the Kennel Club amended its rules so as to make it a condition of registration, or continued registration of any dog, that the owner consents to reports by a veterinary surgeon to the Kennel Club of the correction of any defect which altered the natural conformation of the dog.

In 2010 the Kennel Club further amended its rules to make it a condition of registration, or continued registration, that the owner consents to the reporting, to the Kennel Club, of any caesarean operation carried out on their bitch.

These registration conditions solve the problem of confidentiality in relation to veterinary surgeons making reports to the Kennel Club. The consent of the owner releases the veterinary surgeon from the professional obligation to maintain confidentiality, and the information provided to the Kennel Club –

- a) Provides information regarding breeding lines appearing to perpetuate certain defects;
- b) helps to deter breeders from breeding from animals displaying evidence of hereditary problems, or whose natural conformation has been altered, or where breeding routinely relies on caesarean operations.
- c) assists dog show judges to be sure that they are not being called upon to assess dogs with hereditary defects which have been so well corrected by surgical intervention that these can not be detected

Veterinary surgeons are encouraged to ask clients whether their dog is registered with the Kennel Club. However owners should be aware that a veterinary surgeon may not be aware that a dog is registered or may not be sure of a dog's identity without permanent identification, for example, microchipping. Also, a veterinary surgeon may be unsure of the full details of the Kennel Club registration, for example, the registration number. Any report should provide the information available, which, to the best of the veterinary surgeon's knowledge, is correct.

It is hoped that veterinary surgeons' reports to the Kennel Club will become an accepted part of the veterinary services provided to owners of Kennel Club registered dogs.

The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, British Veterinary Association, British Small Animal Veterinary Association and the Kennel Club consider that in the interests of animal welfare, reports should be made to the Kennel Club in appropriate cases, to help correct some of the breeding problems identified by several reports into the breeding of dogs.

For the present, the removal of dewclaws may be excluded from operations to be reported, since, of course, the results of such procedure will be self apparent.