

USE OF ELECTRONIC SHOCK COLLARS IN COMPANION ANIMALS

The BVA supports the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) position statement (March 2006) on the use of electronic shock collars in companion animals, namely:

In principle, the BSAVA opposes the use of electronic shock collars for training and containment of animals. Shocks received during training may not only be acutely stressful, painful and frightening for the animal but also may produce long term adverse effects on behavioural and emotional responses.

The Association recognises that all electronic devices that employ shock as a means of punishing or controlling behaviour are open to potential abuse and that incorrect use of such training aids has the potential to cause welfare problems.

Apart from the potentially detrimental effect on the animal receiving the shocks there is also evidence that there is a risk to public safety from the use of shock-collar based containment systems, as they may evoke aggression in dogs under certain circumstances.

The BSAVA strongly recommends the use of positive reinforcement methods in training dogs wherever possible and supports investigation of positive reinforcement training methods that could replace those using aversive stimuli.

For further advice please contact BVA