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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Working Dog Survey: an audit of working dogs in Australia 2009

(1) What is the study about?

Working dogs are those used by humans to perform a specific role such as moving stock, explosive and drug detection, police/security work and sport, such as greyhound racing. This project is funded by the Australian Animal Welfare Strategy (through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry) aims to collect data about working dogs in Australia.

(2) Who is carrying out the study?

The study is being conducted by Dr Nick Branson [Independent Veterinary Researcher] and Ms Mia Cobb [Guide Dogs Victoria] under the supervision of Associate Professor Paul McGreevy. It is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

(3) What does the study involve?

This research uses a survey to gather data about how you train, handle, house and care for your working dogs. It aims to develop the first database of information about working dogs in Australia. The reason underlying the collection of these data is to provide insights into the welfare status of dogs used in work by humans. There are currently few opportunities for collaboration between the different working dog sectors at both an Australian and international level. We anticipate that this study will facilitate collaboration between the industries involved to enhance knowledge sharing and hence improve efficiency, output and functionality of working dog programs.

(4) How much time will the study take?

Approximately 10 minutes of your time.

(5) Can I withdraw from the study?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you are not under any obligation to consent to complete the survey. Submitting a completed questionnaire/survey is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. You can withdraw any time prior to submitting your completed survey. Once you have submitted your survey anonymously, your responses cannot be withdrawn.

(6) Will anyone else know the results?

All aspects of the study, including results, will be strictly confidential and only the researchers will have access to information on participants, except as required by law. A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be identifiable in such a report.

(7) Will the study benefit me?

A report of the study will be submitted for publication. This will allow you to see how your approach to the training, handling, housing and care of your working dogs compares and contrasts with others in your area and with that of dogs working in other areas.

(8) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes.

(9) What if I require further information?

Dr Branson can be contacted via nick.branson@deakin.edu.au to assist you further. If you would like to know more at any stage, please feel free to contact Associate Professor Paul McGreevy 02 9351 2810.

(10) What if I have a complaint or concerns?

Any person with concerns or complaints about the conduct of a research study can contact the Manager, Ethics Administration, can now be contacted on (02) 8627 8175 (Telephone) and (02) 8627 8180 (Facsimile) or gbriody@usyd.edu.au (Email).

This information sheet is for you to keep