

ARD Committee Stakeholder Event
Dog Breeding Establishments
Tuesday 18 September 2012
Group 1 – General comments

Topic 1: Definition of breeding establishments

- View made that a place where 3 breeding bitches are kept should be a registered kennel.
- Discussion around whether a bitch should have more than one litter per year
- Discussion around exemptions – should charities be licensed?
- The definition of the breeding establishment could be strengthened
- Need to ensure people do not fall through the net
- Suggestion made that the registration number of the breeders should be placed on advertisements when selling pups. This would give a reassurance of standards
- It was confirmed that 2d of the regulations has been amended to read, ‘from which the *business* of breeding, *supplying* or selling of puppies is advertised’

Topic 2: Period for compliance with new Regulations

- Discussion surrounding whether 6 months was too short as some people may need to ‘get their house in order’. However the view was made that if an establishment cannot come up to standard within 6 months then there is something wrong
- Idea of a 6 month compliance period with an ‘improvement notice system’ received some support around the table
- Registrations stay valid until they are due for renewal then the breeder will be subject to the new conditions. This could mean a longer compliance time.
- Education of the general public is a key issue
- There is a need for fully trained inspectors
- A stakeholder produced figures and explained that they showed the number of registered dog breeders across Northern Ireland in 2010. Concern was raised surrounding these as there were no registered dog breeders in Belfast for example. Figures identify there is a problem with the system of registration

Topic 3: Whelping facilities, normal behaviour and socialization of pups

- What is normal behaviour? Definition is a grey area
- View made that a socialization programme is red-tape exercise
- Will a written programme be for the benefit of the inspector rather than the breeder? The ‘proof is in the looking’ for inspectors
- Training and expertise of inspectors is key. Inspectors should be fully trained and monitored. Best practice guidelines should be available for the inspector and the breeder

- Suggestion made that pups sold should have a 'kite-mark'. This should be vet approved and would provide reassurance of standards
- View expressed that whelping bitches should be in a kennel of their own and not with other dogs. They should be in a quiet area with low levels of noise