



Weltunion der Schäferhund-Vereine (WUSV)

Circular Letter to the
WUSV-Member Organizations

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President

WUSV – FCI

Dear Presidents of the WUSV Member Clubs:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Today, you will receive a correspondence with regard to the relationship between the FCI and the WUSV which will differ significantly from those you were used to read during the course of the past decades.

Historical Review

The WUSV has always supported the FCI, and helped to path its way into countries to which the world organization did not have access by that time. Often, the WUSV had already been firmly established in those countries for a long time through its member clubs and the national authorities for service and police dogs.

The VDH – the Verband für das Deutsche Hundewesen which is the FCI member club in Germany – will confirm that the SV has always been a loyal member to the community which was very much to the benefit of the entire field of cynology, and in particular to the benefit of smaller member countries.

Many times, issues between the FCI and national German Shepherd Dog clubs could be settled through the mediation offered by the WUSV. The WUSV never ever encouraged any of their 92-member organizations in 85 countries worldwide to oppose toward the FCI.

Current Situation

Since the cooperation agreement was terminated, the FCI has been taking massive steps against the WUSV and its member organizations. The measures aim at essential issues in order to drain the life-blood of the worldwide most popular and largest dog breed.

1. Sole representation of the German Shepherd Dog breed by the national FCI clubs (foundation of further clubs for German Shepherd dogs and subsequently the liquidation of the WUSV member club in the respective countries);
2. Institution of Judges;
3. Issuing of Pedigrees;
4. Breed Standard.

At this point, dear WUSV member clubs, the very existence of your club, of the WUSV, and the autonomy of the breed and the German Shepherd Dog as such are at stake.

The German Shepherd Dog breed can only survive if it is supervised and supported by the founding organization and the specialized clubs all over the world. We all are the guardians of the legacy of Cavalry Captain Max von Stephanitz and his life achievements. We will not allow for all this to fall into the power of incompetent hands.

This is all about the breed and the loyalty of the WUSV member clubs! It's now or never, and every WUSV member club is asked to rally behind the WUSV and fight for our values and purpose! All this is the reason for the following appeal.

For a long period of time the WUSV tried to find an amicable solution in terms of the finalization of the cooperation agreement between the FCI and the WUSV. The WUSV was determined to find a way toward a roadmap for a peaceful coexistence if an official cooperation was no longer an option.

The WUSV strongly advocated to reassume respectively continue the dialogue with each other during many personal discussions with the respective board members of both organizations before and even after the General Annual Meeting of the FCI in 2017, and then again during the period of time until the termination of the contract became effective in May 2018.

Very much to our regret we already realized during talks that were held in October 2017 that the FCI board members foster a world view in which the mere existence of other worldwide organizations and their legitimate interest in the wellbeing and development of individual breeds seems to already be considered a lese majesty.

Attached you will find the so-called mission statement from the FCI annual report of 2017. From my point of view this is a classical textbook example of a verbal factual dissociation, and is tantamount to the arrogant incapacitation of all responsible and well managed organizations for dog breeding (founding clubs).

We would like to use this opportunity to once again and explicitly point out that the reasons for the termination of the cooperation agreement as presented by the FCI – namely the issues quoted in terms of countries such as Egypt, Turkey, Southern Africa, Bulgaria, Ireland, South Korea, Serbia and Pakistan – were totally false and also unfounded.

If existing problems are addressed without reflection and later used as a ground for the termination of the cooperation agreement, we consider this kind of alarming conduct rather questionable and would like to use this opportunity to once again express our utmost disapproval. We were never given any opportunity to comment on the accusations and charges that were raised against us. Apart from the fact that this behaviour contradicts the minimum requirements of decency and the principal constitutional rules of law, the entire issue actually requires a legal review.

Recently, we witnessed an intolerable accumulation of attacks against WUSV member clubs as launched by national FCI organizations. Primarily, those actions took place in the section of South America and the Caribbean, and it can be speculated that this kind of conduct met the support of the FCI and its national sections in that region. But not only there did we have to watch how WUSV member organizations were excluded from the national FCI clubs, and that separate new sections were founded by parties servile towards the FCI.

Also, standards and requirements are demanded on behalf of the FCI member clubs that are hardly ever based on cynological grounds but rather contribute to the maximisation of the FCI club budgets in terms of the recognition of pedigrees, fees raised for examinations, import and export to name but a few, and are in first place driven by financial purposes.

These measures are in their majority based on the termination of the cooperation agreement between the FCI and the WUSV. The aim of this deliberate procedure is to harm both the reputation of the German Shepherd Dog breed and the WUSV, and ensure the worldwide *fictional monopoly* of the FCI.

Ethical Background

The measures as described before interfere with the sovereign and natural rights, purposes and areas of every responsible breeding club for dogs, and does not only affect the Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde (SV) e.V.

The actions taken by the FCI and its national cynological organizations (NCO) are a real threat in particular for our breed because contrary to their alleged ambitious and highfalutin statutory requirements – as a matter of fact – all quality parameters in terms of dog breeding are neglected in favour of the profit maximization.

Ethic approaches in terms of pedigree dogs' breeding are more than ever demanded in modern and enlightened societies. In this respect please allow me to recall the numerous rational and irrational discussions around pedigree dogs in the media all over the world. Under these considerations it seems virtually naive and fatal to watch how the FCI ignores and sacrifices ideal values on the high altar of profit maximization.

In light of the foreseeable risks for global pedigree breeding the signatory cannot comprehend why responsible representatives of individual NCOs have never tried to put an end to those tendencies.

Parameters such as health, social acceptability and character as well as ethics in terms of identification and ancestry are the unshakeable cornerstones in modern pedigree dog breeding. At this point it is appropriate to look back with pride upon our unique and century-old endeavours in terms of our breed.

1. Sixty years ago, we successfully implemented and realized a scientifically supported screening program which is still continued to this day. During the past two decades the screening program was expanded and elbow and spinal diseases were included.
2. More than two decades ago we implemented an absolutely safe method for the identification and verification of a dog's ancestry by our unique and comprehensive DNA system at a worldwide level. We store the genetic material of up to ten generations which allows us to trace back and scientifically analyse genetically fixed disease patterns, specifications, and other properties in a differentiated fashion.
3. Within the framework of the global implementation of the character test within the WUSV a reproducible screening of social behaviour and the temper of all of our dogs will be possible. Within the next generation this will be scientifically verifiable.

This high-level quality control is unique all over the world and the foundation of our success. In this regard there is agreement and solidarity all throughout the WUSV. Please allow me to use this opportunity to thank you for your unanimous commitment towards the harmonization program on the occasion of the WUSV General Annual Assembly in Ulm in 2017.

For the signatory it is intolerable that FCI authorized pedigrees are issued for dogs in total disregard of the WUSV standard provisions, and that the offspring may still be called a German Shepherd Dog. Our provisions and regulations are thwarted by the self-proclaimed highest authorities of worldwide dogs' culture which is an irony of cynological world history and a paradox at the same time.

Although, we did tolerate the above-mentioned to this day, we are now determined to legally claim and implement our quality standards in terms of what we what we at the WUSV consider a true German Shepherd Dog.

Obviously, there are very different priorities in terms of the aims pursued at a world-wide level. As long as the FCI subjects its own requirements to economic considerations and the financial interests of individual parties we cannot – and with the best will in the world – comprehend this approach. To the contrary – this would be unacceptable to every organization that is seriously dedicated to the wellbeing of the breed.

Legal Consequences

For the above-mentioned reasons, we decided to subject the recent conduct of the FCI to a legal examination in terms of damage claims and cartel-related issues.

Please note that national disputes between our national WUSV member clubs and their national FCI organizations cannot be led by the WUSV. This remains – regardless of the aforementioned – still a strictly national affair. In case that you feel disadvantaged by your local NCO we recommend to take legal action against your national FCI organization at national level. As a matter of course, we will provide you with every possible support in this regard within the scope of our possibilities

In order to take a closer look into a couple of issues pending, we kindly ask our WUSV member clubs to let us have the audit papers and year end closing documents of your local FCI club. Furthermore, we would like to have a detailed documentation of the requirements for breeding and the issuing of pedigree documents that exceed the usual scope of provisions as demanded by the WUSV. In case that statements of costs or price-lists in this regard are available we would appreciate it very much if you let us have copies of those documents as well.

Pedigrees

Regardless of the information as spread by the FCI in terms of the recognition of pedigrees please note that the WUSV continues to recognize all pedigrees bearing the stamps and logos of the WUSV, the FCI, and other associated organizations in the same fashion and scope as before.

A number of member clubs are forced to issue their own pedigrees as a result of the conduct of individual NCOs. Please note that the WUSV recognizes all pedigrees as issued by our WUSV member clubs and all otherwise WUSV authorized pedigrees. The above-mentioned applies until further notice respectively until the issue pending with the FCI will have been definitely clarified.

In this respect we recommend to closely follow the template of the SV pedigrees. Where appropriate, we also offer to issue the pedigrees for individual WUSV member clubs in terms of commissioned work. The situation remains unchanged after the termination of the cooperation contract.

Sanctions against Judges

Certain circles from among the FCI deliberately spread wrong information regarding sanctions imposed on judges.

At this point we would like to use the opportunity to draw your attention to an excerpt from the minutes of the meeting of the FCI General Annual Meeting held in November 2017 in this regard in terms of sanctions against judges in Europe.

15.2

2. Application of the penalties for FCI judges who are judging at events not recognized by the FCI

*The FCI now has to wait for the 6-month termination notice. **However, it is clear that it is against EU laws to prohibit a judge from officiating at dissident events. So, the proposal cannot apply to EU countries. Spain experienced the opposite situation and all the cases related to that issue were won by RSCE. Since point 1 was voted, in 6 months, the countries where the application of penalties is possible will be able to implement them. The countries in the EU zone should not, in principle, be able to implement them. No vote is taken.***

The WUSV and its national member clubs are on firm grounds within the policy of its statutes and rule books. In this regard, reference is made again to the WUSV General Annual Assembly in Ulm in 2017.

Basic Concept

Please read a brief outline of the self-conception of the founding organization of the German Shepherd Dog Breed and its international umbrella organization.

1. It is self-explanatory that animals that are bred within the SV and the WUSV are per definition the only German Shepherd Dogs in accordance with the standard of the motherland and founder of the breed.
2. The implementation of this requirement is the responsibility of the SV and of the WUSV, particularly in terms of the quality control in compliance with the objectives of the founder of the breed and the mother country.
3. The founder club (SV) is the central data collection point at a worldwide level in terms of all data and information concerning the German Shepherd Dog breed.
4. Accordingly, all breed requirements and formalities are subject to SV/WUSV rules at a worldwide level.
5. Supplementary, decreased or expanding regulations requested by FCI or single national clubs are not an option.
6. The keeping of the studbooks falls into the scope of responsibilities of the different national member clubs of the WUSV, however, the studbook sovereignty will always remain a chartered right of the founding club - the SV.

7. In terms of studbook keeping the WUSV and SV recognizes pedigrees (with and without WUSV-Logo) when issued and published
 - by FCI-Member-Organizations
 - by recognized Kennel Clubs (for example: British Kennel Club (KC), American Kennel Club (AKC))
 - by specialized WUSV German Shepherd Dog Clubs in mutual agreement with the national FCI organization in their country to which they are affiliated and accepted pedigrees that are issued by WUSV member organizations under their own direction and responsibility".
8. For the participation in a show under WUSV/SV regulations the WUSV/SV accept pedigrees that are issued
 - in compliance with item 7
 - by WUSV member organizations under their own direction and responsibility.

Benchmark Data

- A) To guarantee the keeping of a studbook in accordance with SV rules, the WUSV member clubs and their officials (e.g. breed wardens) have to provide the breeders in their countries with comprehensive and close support.
- B) In case that a WUSV member club considers the administrative and technical cooperation with the local respectively national kennel club (FCI member) reasonable and useful, the WUSV member club can delegate specially defined or specific tasks to the kennel club. The respective fees for those services are to be negotiated in a mutual and amicable fashion between the parties involved.
- C) The administration of the studbook is under the responsibility of the special clubs for German Shepherd Dogs which have to ensure that the data obtained is verified and passed on to the entities and bodies as detailed under item 7 where the pedigrees are ultimately issued.
- D) In order to avoid disputes that in the majority of all cases are based on personal and/or financial issues a permanent arbitration board shall be installed with equal representation by members of both world organizations.
- E) The Chairman shall be an independent attorney. To protect the affected friends of the German Shepherd Dog breed and in order to guarantee a continuous course of club activity, and to avoid impairment among the clubs involved, in case of a dispute between an FCI- and WUSV member organization a spontaneous and unilateral sanction on behalf of either the FCI- or WUSV member organization is not a feasible option. If required the arbitration board has to be available to provide a solution to the problem pending at short notice but no later than within a quarter of a year after a proposal has been filed. The decision of the court shall be legally binding for all parties affected such as the national organizations as well as the FCI and WUSV umbrella organizations. Both organizations (WUSV and FCI) explicitly agree that they will inform each other about the admission of new member clubs or about any alterations concerning memberships that already exist. Both parties agree to the right to appeal in this respect.

We will not allow a self-proclaimed world organization with presumably highest standards and by their own grace – besides legally considered a private organization – to question the legacy of our founder, Cavalry Captain Max von Stephanitz and our German Shepherd Dog Breed.

Let me close by saying that the WUSV would be quite willing and in the position to substantiate the inconsistencies of the argumentation of the FCI as presented on the occasion of the FCI GAM with facts

I do hope that this correspondence serves for the clarification of quite a number of issues pending and I would like to use this opportunity to thank you for your continuous support in terms of our common cause.

August 09, 2018

With kind regards,

Prof. Dr. med. Heinrich Meßler

WUSV President