

KENNEL UNION OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (KUSA)

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2024

For the KUSA Office, and for the elected Federal Council of KUSA, the year 2024 was like being on a never-ending rollercoaster ride, dominated by two major unforeseen projects. These projects had a severe impact on KUSA's day-to-day operations and often necessitated a hasty redeployment of especially the new staff members appointed earlier in the year.

I'll briefly reflect on these two key projects:

1. On 23 March 2024, the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) issued a Directive that, with effect from 1 April 2024, the importation and exportation of live animals and genetic material of animals, would be subject to the acquisition of a permit issued in terms of the Animal Improvement Act (AIA). On 10.04.2024, a KUSA Statement on the DALRRD Directive was placed on the website, alerting members to the situation and informing them that KUSA was in the process of establishing, as had been requested by several members, whether the Directive was applicable to dogs. By then, KUSA had already set up a meeting with the DALRRD to obtain clarity on the Directive.

Consultation with the DALRRD revealed that dogs were very much included. Excluded were game and/or wild animals, cats, birds and fish. Having established that the Directive included dogs, KUSA notified the Membership on 19.04.2024 of the required "Compliance with the Animal Improvement Act No. 62 of 1998 – Importation of Dogs into SA from 1 April 2024". On the same date, the DALRRD also issued a "Media Statement" to clarify the new requirements under the AIA.

On 12.06.2024, KUSA Members were provided with clarity on the permits required under the AIA for dogs leaving South Africa and returning to the country. Members were advised that dogs travelling on either INTER-TERRITORIAL MOVEMENT PERMITS or travelling for RECREATIONAL PURPOSES were also required to apply to the DALRRD for Import/Export Permits. The AIA Permits were required in addition to the customary Veterinary Permits/Inter-Territorial Permits.

The AIA requires that the relevant Breeders' Society/Registering Authority sign a declaration confirming that the dog complies with the prescribed registration requirements of the Breeders' Society/Registering Authority. The DALRRD also relied heavily on the KUSA Office to assist them with the assessment of permit applications for breeds not recognised by KUSA. There can be no doubt that the DALRRD Directive resulted in an enormous administrative burden on the KUSA Office. Extensive, often time-consuming meetings with the DALRRD were required to determine exactly what was expected from KUSA, and to set the procedures in place to work within the set parameters and meet the required timelines. Amidst all the uncertainty and speculation, the KUSA Office is to be congratulated on the way the staff have since dealt with the situation, in particular the patience with which they continue to handle all the queries from importers of dogs. Under the guidance of the General Manager, this new initiative has been integrated into the daily operational routine of the KUSA Office. A special word of thanks goes to the two KUSA Members who were invited to attend the first meeting with the DALRRD as external consultants. Their input and advice were invaluable.

2. AFFIXES (Kennel Names)

Notice on KUSA Website

03.10.2024 Important Announcement. KUSA AFFIX (Kennel Name) REGISTRATION – MANDATORY SIMULTANEOUS REGISTRATION OF FCI INTERNATIONAL KENNEL NAME REGISTER. In this Statement, the membership was informed as follows:

We are pleased to inform KUSA Members with registered KUSA Affixes (Kennel Names) of a new and exciting development that will enhance the status of the KUSA Affixes internationally and protect KUSA Affixes from possible duplication, exploitation and expropriation in FCI member countries.

As a condition of its FCI membership, KUSA is obligated to adhere to the FCI Internal Rules pertaining to Breed Standards, Studbooks and Kennel Names. In assessing the methods through which KUSA might ultimately achieve compliance with FCI Internal Rules in respect of Kennel Names, the Federal Council favoured an incremental approach and, in June 2023, directed the KUSA Office to seek the FCI's agreement to a proposed Protocol in accordance with which KUSA's compliance with the FCI requirements with regard to KUSA Affixes would be phased in over a period of five (5) years.

Article 18 of the FCI Internal Rules requires FCI member countries to register the Affixes (Kennel Names) approved and accepted by the individual National Canine Organisations (NCOs) on the FCI International Kennel Name Register. Applications for registration on the FCI International Kennel Name Register may only be submitted to the FCI Head Office by NCOs acting on behalf of breeders who are legally resident in the country of jurisdiction of the particular NCO.

KUSA's proposal to the FCI for compliance to be phased in over a five-year period was accepted with an envisaged implementation date of 31 January 2024. Due to other administrative priorities, e.g. the introduction of the AIA Permit, the latter implementation date unfortunately proved unachievable and, with Fedco's approval, was postponed.

We are pleased to advise that, finally, the KUSA Office is in a position to roll out the new policy and implement the agreed Protocol on 1 October 2024. As from that date, all new KUSA Affixes, and all Affixes falling due for renewal, need to be dual registered by KUSA and the FCI.

[What followed on, in brief, was the process envisaged by the Protocol, (read more under the NEWS section of the KUSA Website)].

This was another project that took an enormous toll on the time and resources of the KUSA Office. The roll-out had to be delayed as the FCI had adjusted its Regulations and fees in the early part of January 2024 and the KUSA Office had to make enhancements to the new online transaction portal to accommodate the requirement for dual registration of Affixes with KUSA and the FCI.

Annual Financial Report:

Through the prudent management of the KUSA's finances over the past 12 years, the funds accumulated have stood the organisation in good stead. Growing KUSA's reserves involved containing fees at an acceptable level and curbing expenditure, despite the rapid increase in costs across the board. I would like to not only thank the Budget Committee, the General Manager, and the KUSA Finance and HR Administrator for their prudence and caution. I also applaud the members of the Federal Council for their understanding and wisdom when difficult decisions had to be made. As for the future, hopefully KUSA can continue with its conservative

monitory trajectory and persist in pursuing initiatives which can grow the organisation and broaden the scope of its influence.

The KZN KUSA Classic Weekend was held at the Shongweni Polo Grounds near Durban from Thursday, 30 May until Sunday, 2 June 2024. The event included Breed and Dogsport and wearying effort went into the organisation to ensure the weekend's success. Six international Judges were contracted for Breed, with local Judges from around the country officiated for the various forms of Dogsport. Unfortunately, after significant funds had been expended, our President, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, announced that the country's General Election would take place on Wednesday, 29 May 2024, something that was out of the Organising Committee's control. A decision was made to continue with the KZN KUSA Classic, as cancelling the event would have resulted in a catastrophic loss of revenue. As expected, fear of unrest during the elections caused some exhibitors to stay away, which contributed to the weekend's failure to turn a profit.

By all accounts, the K9 Admin System Upgrade Project is progressing well. There is still some way to go, but we are confident that the time and resources committed to the upgrade project will prove well worth it in the end.

The Judges Education Council, a *sui generis* Council in terms of Article 3.11 of the KUSA Constitution, continues to perform well. Under the newly appointed JEC Chairman, Michael Vorster, we can look forward to some fresh initiatives in the future. The Breed webinars, presented by foreign and local breed specialists during 2024, were of an exceptionally high standard and the JEC thanks those Clubs that had assisted with presenting Ad Hoc Seminars and arranging various Hands-on Meet-the-Breeds initiatives to supplement the JEC's educational endeavours. Fedco and I commend the Judges Education Council for its ongoing commitment to the education and guidance of KUSA Judges.

To the KUSA staff, ably led by Pascale Midgley, I express my gratitude for their continued dedication to ensure an efficient and effective service to members and the public.

To the Executive Committee under the chairmanship of Bruce Jenkins, Fedco joins me in thanking all the members for giving up their time to ensure the good governance and effective oversight of KUSA's administrative affairs.

To the members of KUSA, thank you for your ongoing support of KUSA. Without this support, we would not be the strong organisation that we've become.

I thank all the Sponsors who have generously supported the KUSA Clubs and their shows during the past year. Without your assistance, our shows would not be the success that they were.

To the Provincial Councils, the Breed and Liaison Councils, the National Sub-Committees, the Affiliated Clubs and the various Ad Hoc Committees, thank you for the work you do to assist KUSA in its mission of responsible governance of canine affairs.

I was discussing some KUSA issues with a colleague a while ago and we both remarked on how fortunate KUSA had been to have had a past President with two very important visions – the one that KUSA should become a full Member of the FCI, and the other that KUSA should become compliant with South African laws by becoming the Registering Authority and Breeders' Society for canines under the Animal Improvement Act. We indeed owe a debt of gratitude to the Late Greg Eva for his leadership and his relentless efforts to elevate KUSA's status and influence nationally and internationally.

In the dog world, South Africa is looked upon as a small country with great potential, and with a high standard of breeding and rearing of dogs. I express my sincere thanks to all those who had supported KUSA during the past year and who had the courage to come forward with constructive ideas with the potential of benefiting us all for the future. Many of them were volunteers who sacrificed a part of their private lives to further the interests of KUSA. I salute them all.

I thank my colleagues on the Federal Council, and Councillor Nico du Preez, in his capacity as KUSA Legal Adviser, for all the assistance and support I've received. I'm grateful and privileged to work with a team of highly informed, proactive Councillors – a team working together for all things KUSA. I, too, do my best to serve KUSA in as many capacities as my business acumen and experience allow.

In closing, I wish you and your loved ones, and all your very special dogs, a successful 2025, filled with kindness and patience towards each other and all animals. To our colleagues and friends in the KUSA Office, I wish you a joyous Festive Season and good health. May you, your families and loved ones stay safe and secure.

Jenny Hubbard

30 November 2024