

## **ANKC Member Update Transcript October 24, 2021**

Hugh Gent OAM

Welcome, thank you for your interest. We're going to brief you on an important change for the ANKC. We want you, our members, to understand how you are an important part of this change. It's exciting for us to share this presentation with you. We've been developing this for many months. Coming up, you'll hear from all the ANKC directors, so let me take the opportunity to introduce them to you in order of presentation today.

Hugh Gent OAM

Brian Parker, President of Dogs South Australia, Lyn Brown, currently Senior Vice President of Dogs New South Wales. Kristy Neiberding, President of Dogs ACT, Vin McPhee, President of Dogs Victoria, David Sales, President of Dogs, Tasmania, Ulla Greenwood, President of Dogs Queensland, Jan Robinson, Vice President of Dogs Victoria, Pam Campbell, Vice President of the ANKC and President of Dogs West and Karen Hedberg, President of Dogs New South Wales. Now, before we talk about the future of the ANKC, it's really important to understand where we started and why it was formed originally.

Hugh Gent OAM

The ANKC was established for international relationships organisations like the kennel club, the American Kennel Club wouldn't deal with 11 different entities, so now each state territory, they're responsible for their own management and decisions. They do their own marketing and promotional activities, because they're relevant to their local area, but they all representatives some national committees, talking about our disciplines and rules and regulations, which brings them together at a national level. Now, I'm really excited about what changes mean for all of us and dog lovers around Australia. I know you are all a very important part of making us grow, so we want to hear from you. So, I'll be back in a little while to tell you more about what we're doing, but in the meantime, please sit back and enjoy the presentations from our directors.

Brian Parker

So why is change important to the future of our organisations? While state and territory based has its advantage operationally, a national voice and conversation is imperative to grow our brand. When communicating, we need to move from silos to one organisation and lever off our strengths. We need to compete nationally and we need to be a recognized and respected voice. The reality is, to grow and sustain our organisations, we know we have a strong and responsible base of breeders who will continue to grow purebred dog breeds. Member growth will come through growing dog sports and the growth in dog sports will come through engaging pet families into our organisation. 72,000 purebred puppies registered last year. Imagine if all those new owners got involved in our community and became members?

Lynette Brown

We are better together. Nationally, we have over 32,000 members involved in our various communities and over 11,000 knowledgeable breeders. 72,000 dogs registered in over 180 diverse dog breeds in 2020 alone. 353 breed clubs with many members devoted to breeding, homing and rescue. 484 sporting clubs and 17 different types of dog sports in which to get involved.

Lynette Brown

We are accessible to everyone. We have members of all ages from all walks of life. We are linked internationally with the FCI with 93 member organisations and over one and a half million members and internationally recognised clubs such as the American Kennel Club and the UK Kennel Clubs. Statistics show, we are an impressive organisation.

Kristy Neiberding

So, now it's about understanding our audience. Our first audience is our media, our key stakeholders and our partners. And this is all about driving perception. It's focusing on who we are, what value we add and what we do. Our second audience is our consumers and this is about creating our future membership. It's educating and connecting our pet families to our community. Just imagine if we could even get a small percentage of the 72,000 puppies registered last year and got them involved in our community, in our dog sports and our conformation.

Kristy Neiberding

The third one is our breeders, our breed clubs and our dog sports and this is about retaining our memberships. It's maintaining our community through our values and connecting it back through our educating and connecting our pets and families. Let's understand who's responsible for communicating our message with our audience. The ANKC will be responsible for looking after the first two, the media, key stakeholders, partners, sponsors and our consumers. They will put out a national approach to contacting and communicating with these audiences. The breeders, the breed clubs and dog sports become a responsibility of our state controlling bodies. And the fourth one, which we slipped in was also important, they will also connect us with our government and state sponsorship and build those relationships.

Vin McPhee

Okay, thanks, Kristy. So, what is the ANKC's role for the future? The ANKC will have new strategic responsibilities that will bring together the strength and experience of the entire organisation and will drive communication to consumers, the media and the key stakeholders we have. Our key functions will be to manage international relationships such as with the Kennel Club in England or the AKC in America, or even the FCI.

Vin McPhee

To manage internal relationships with member bodies and assist and support their membership base. To support administrative functions, for example, our strong database, and to deliver two or three major communication campaigns each year. And finally, to build on the strength and experience of the groups we already have for the benefit of the whole organisation. And to achieve all of this, the ANK brand needs to become more recognisable, more consumer friendly, so it is my great pleasure to introduce our new brand.

David Sales

Dogs Australia will launch later this year, but let's look at what its purpose is. To create communities that are enriched by dogs, to celebrate the history and ensure the future of our great breeds of dogs and invest in creating a unified voice and advocacy for dogs and dog welfare. We will do this by providing a national voice for our members, supporting member organisations and administering breed standards.

David Sales

We'll manage relationships and key partners, promote the breeding of healthy dogs and fund research into canine diseases, instill ethical practices across all dog activities and bring together the skills and knowledge of the organisation as a whole. We will provide a registered breeder network, dog sports and training, educational programs and events, stakeholder and government relations, advocacy and research funding in canine health, provide a regulatory role together with the dog database and will provide judges training programs.

Vin McPhee

Okay, well, thanks, David. All right, so how will we communicate all these messages for Dogs Australia? Our goal is to move from our fragmented messages to one strong Dogs Australia message, a single voice. So, how will we do that? We'll do it through Dogs Australia coming together three times a year as one voice around a key campaign and we're going to call those Tent Poles. Dogs Australia will develop national marketing tools and we'll share that with states and territories for distribution. A national publicist will work on media. It's supported locally through our offices. States and territory members share marketing tools through social media and with members. Members share marketing tools through their network. Campaigns supported by performance marketing, that is social media advertising, will be important. And we'll have a rebranded national website that feeds into states and territory websites, so we will have one, strong Dogs Australia voice.

Vin McPhee

What are our first tent poles? Here are the first three. Jan's going to take us through the first campaign in more detail, but it's going to deal with researching the right dog for your family. Campaign two is the National Puppy Day. It'll highlight the depth and breadth of our ongoing classic breeds and the importance of a lifetime commitment. Dogs Australia will support this through breed clubs and dog sporting communities. Our third campaign will take place in August/September 2022, and it'll be called Dogs On Show. It'll showcase our total organisations from our diverse breeds and keeping dogs happy through our dog sports.

Ulla Greenwood

Okay, and we have scale. Let's think about it. Imagine if everyone shared these messages to their audiences at a local and state level, we've got these state and territory pages, individual members across Australia, the 32,000, all our breed clubs, we've got 351 different breed clubs, all breed clubs and having breed re homing and rescues with expertise to share. Sharing it through our 484 sporting clubs, all not for profit and out there with people in the community, giving dogs a job. We've got 11,000 registered breeders with their intense networks quietly getting on with breeding carefully selected bloodlines, so it's terrific scale. The question is, how do you fit in as a member? There'll be three elements to this. There'll be a PR campaign, social media campaign and the Dogs Australia website.

Ulla Greenwood

So, with the PR campaign, we'll be looking at campaigns flowing out, and that will cause consumer inquiries and really important that our members in the state and territories be primed up to respond to these inquiries, so it's a matter of being prepared. The social media campaign, we are looking at growing our grassroots and members in the states and territories. It's really important that you're out there spreading the news and sharing this information with your audience. So, it's a matter of getting out into the community more. With the Dogs Australia website, there'll be campaign feeds that'll be flowing into that website with links that go through to the various state and territory bodies.

Ulla Greenwood

And once again, that will cause inquiries to happen. So for you as members, it's really important that you be alert to this. So, let's remember, you are our most important asset, you are the public face of Dogs Australia and how you respond to consumer campaigns will grow what we all do, increase our profile out there in a positive way and that's what we're all about. Having more penetration in our community and more profile.

Jan Robinson

The first consumer campaign Dogs Australia will launch will take place in December 2022 and it will be to encourage prospective puppy buyers to research the right dog for themselves and their family. This will be a three step process. The first step will be to consider whether the time is right to purchase their puppy and we'll be asking prospective puppy purchasers to consider whether there might be major disruptions in their lives in the near future, that might be a change in jobs or moving house or enjoying a long anticipated holiday after the COVID period.

Jan Robinson

The second stage in the process, we will encourage prospective puppy purchasers to look on the Dogs Australia website, and go to the breed selector, which will assist them in identifying breeds that will be suitable for their lifestyles. 14 questions will be asked, which cover matters such as the size of the dog, its need for grooming, type of coat, the type of care that it will require, the need for exercise and play. It's important that prospective puppy purchasers identify suitable dogs. Each breed has special qualities, sometimes referred to as natural instincts. So, for example, some dogs have a special instinct for hunting, some for herding, and this may impact on its lifestyle needs for exercise and companionship. We need to encourage prospective puppy purchasers to understand that when they purchase a puppy, they have to make a commitment to care for the dog for its lifespan, which may range from seven or eight years for giant breeds to up to 15 or 16 years for other breeds.

Jan Robinson

The third stage in this process will be to select the right breeder. The Dogs Australia website will have an events calendar which will show the events, performance and confirmation available in each state and territory and we will encourage prospective puppy purchasers to go along to confirmation shows to meet breeders, look at the large variety of breeds that are available, engage in conversations and learn about those breeds. Or if the prospective puppy purchaser is already aware that they want to do obedience or agility or dancing with dogs or any of the other performance activities that we support, then the calendar will show them when those events are on and we will encourage those people to go along and discuss these matters with the participants at those events.

Jan Robinson

Why come to a Dogs Australia registered breeder? Well, our breeders all abide by a code of ethics, which requires that they breed for the betterment of the breed. This is very important and distinguishes Dogs Australia registered breeders from other breeders. Our breeders breed to an ideal or dog standard. This means that when you purchase a puppy from a Dogs Australia registered breeder, you will know what to expect when that dog becomes an adult, both in terms of its confirmation and especially in terms of its temperament. Our Dogs Australia registered breeders will research pedigrees to ensure that when they undertake a breeding, this will assist in maintaining the special breed qualities. They will also undertake all necessary health testing, and again, this will ensure that puppy purchasers of registered breeders will obtain a puppy that is as free from defect as is possible.

Jan Robinson

Also, Dogs Australia registered breeders provide long term support for their puppy purchasers. Puppy purchasers are always welcome to contact their breeder and discuss various aspects of the development of the dog and seek advice at any point along the dog's lifespan. So, what would we say when we talk to consumers? Are you considering buying a new dog? Then Dogs Australia can help you. We have a network of over 353 breed clubs and over 11,000 registered breeders, all passionate about putting the right dog into the right family. This means, not only can you discover all the amazing dogs we have, but we can also help you find the perfect dog for your lifestyle.

Jan Robinson

As Australia's leading not for profit advocate for dogs, Dogs Australia has been supporting breeding and caring for dogs for over 62 years from puppies to older dogs in our re home and rescue network, our registered breed experts can help you take a good look at what is right for your family. We know that buying a dog is only the beginning. With 17 different types of dog sporting and training activities approved by Dogs Australia that you can learn with your dog, we can help you bring out the best in your dog. You're guaranteed to find something you both love. So, go to the Dogs Australia website to discover how you and your dog can become part of our community too.

Lynette Brown

So, let's talk about our national media campaign. Dogs Australia will take this strong message to the media. What people should think about is puppies are for life. People should do their research to find the right dog to suit their lifestyle. Dogs Australia can assist with that research with our recommended three step process. We have a dog matching questionnaire highlighting 14 important considerations on our website. A new video series that can assist individuals to navigate the decision. We have registered breeders who are experts in their breed and are supported by breed clubs. These together offer lifetime support for the new puppy owner. Our registered breeders' health test, breed to a code of ethics and are required to provide a certified pedigree, demonstrating the lineage of every puppy we produce. We know buying a dog is just the beginning. We offer a national network of training and dog sports that brings into play their natural instincts and that dogs and their owners can participate in over their lifetime.

Lynette Brown

So, what does this look like for social media? Dogs Australia is an impressive organisation and here is how we bring that to life. By creating video showcasing our diverse breeds in our seven groups, highlighting the links to the inherent instincts within dogs that suit individual families and how these

instincts can create personal partnerships between owners and their dogs through participating in dog sports. These videos will be accessible by all, meaning we can share and create our own powerful platform reaching everyday dog lovers. These will be a tool to highlight our level of experience, the value of our original purebred breeds, our expertise and can commitment to breeding puppies that are healthy and sound in both mind and body. Imagine the impact if we all shared this powerful message together.

Pamela Campbell

Lynn has outlined the social media campaigns we'll be running and you are probably thinking, how can I get involved? The first step is to register to be on the Dogs Australia Bush Telegraph. The telegraph will keep you updated, keeping you across all campaigns ahead of time, because we want you to help spread the word. I think we all know and understand the power of social media, it's a very pervasive force. The concept is really simple. Share some information and let others share it on and within a short space of time, many people are seeing that information and sharing it. We've all heard and seen in social media, social posts going viral. We estimate that if our members share our campaigns and Facebook posts with 10 friends and associates who then share it on, our reach could easily run into hundreds of thousands across Australia. Such a small effort with no real cost can have a very large effect raising the profile of Dogs Australia, state member bodies and our members and of course, our dogs.

Pamela Campbell

So, what is the message that we want to share in social media? Around 40% of Australian households own a dog. The message that we want to spread across Australia is that Dogs Australia is the peak body about dogs in Australia and our members are experts about dogs. Spread across the seven states and territories of this big land, we are a large group of people with an enormous amount of expertise and knowledge about our dogs. Many of us are breed preservationists, protecting and conserving our wonderful breeds so that members of the community, as well as ourselves can have the joy of owning the breed of their choice. But we are much more than just about breeding. We have a great range of dog sports. We show our dogs, we dance with our dogs, we go retrieving with our dogs, we do obedience, agility and tricks with our dogs, tracking and endurance, herding, sledding and weight pulling, earth dogs and scent work and watch our dogs run like the wind in lure coursing.

Pamela Campbell

All these sports demonstrate the versatility of our breeds and the purposes many were bred for. Dogs of all shapes and sizes can take part in these activities and we want to encourage and welcome new members by telling them about the things that we do. We want to let the wider community know that not only do we have knowledge and expertise in the breeding, keeping and welfare of dogs, we also understand the importance of responsible pet ownership and might offer many activities to share with their dogs. It's about preserving our breeds, enjoying our breeds, living and having fun with our dogs and sharing them with others.

Karen Hedberg

So, how does this all impact you? As breeders and breed club members, there will be an increased demand for information about your breed. This will give you the opportunity to highlight information about your breed, its history, health testing, re homing and reach and rescue projects. There will be access to videos for your website about the different groups. Consider your website representation, some excellent examples of these are the Lagotto Ramognolo Club of New South Wales and my own

French Bulldog Club of New South Wales website, give you really good examples of how you can commercially present your breed.

Karen Hedberg

Also, there should be an increase in puppy demand, particularly in the popular breeds and you should be ready for that and probably have a puppy listing service. How does this impact you, sports and training clubs? The campaigns will grow the value of dog sports. It will highlight your role in puppy socialisation and training. It will also grow public demand for sports by showcasing your diverse dog sports and opportunities for participation in the promotion of various dog sports. Consider public feeder programs to drive membership and potential additional revenue. There are massive opportunities for puppy schools and teenage dog programs in this area.

Hugh Gent OAM

Having watched our presentation, if you've got thoughts about how we can maximise and leverage our consumer campaign, please let us know. If you have a concern that you feel you might have a solution for, please let us know. Is there a question you want answered? Please let us know. Just email us at [feedback@ankc.org.au](mailto:feedback@ankc.org.au). Can you join the Bush Telegraph? Just email us at [bushtelegraph@ankc.org.au](mailto:bushtelegraph@ankc.org.au). Let us know your organisation and key contacts. The future is going to transform us, but we can't do it without you. Please join us in uniting the dogs of Australia. Thank you.