GUIDLINE 2: 
DATABASE STORAGE OF MICROCHIP INFORMATION FOR ANIMALS

Policy

Database storage of information for animals implanted with microchips (transponders) requires both a guarantee of the uniqueness of microchip numbers and a record of the individual identification numbers of implanted microchips being managed and stored in a web-based database registry.

This policy stipulates database registry operations that will ensure the usefulness of microchips as a management tool for identifying animals both for identifying owned animals and their owners and identifying animals for a national registry.

Technology

All microchips sold and used in New Zealand must conform to NZS/ISO 11784:2001 and NZS/ISO 11785:2001.

Manufacturers shall ensure that microchips sold and used in New Zealand identify the manufacturer by code, as prescribed in NZS/ISO11784:2001.

The manufacturer may use only the granted manufacturer code and shall be responsible for the uniqueness of the individual microchip identification numbers in microchips carrying that manufacturer code.

The microchip reader must activate and read the transponder as defined in NZS/ISO 11785:2001 and must display the complete unique 15-digit identification number, namely the manufacturer code and the national identification code as defined in NZS/ISO 11784:2001.

Suppliers and distributors of microchips should maintain an audit trail of their products including skeleton records of imported devices, together with details of sales to distributors and implanting centres.

Recording of Information

The NZVA believes that only authorised implanters subject to a regular audit should implant microchips.

The Dog Control Act 1996 and the Dog Control [Microchip Transponder] Regulations 2005 are silent on who can implant microchips but only Registered Veterinarians and Warranted Animal Control Officers can verify that an animal has been microchipped.
The Dog Control Act 1996 requires dog owners to provide microchip certification when registering dogs. This information is stored on the Department of Internal Affairs National Dog Database.

For the New Zealand Companion Animal Council (NZCAC) New Zealand Companion Animal Registry (NZCAR) the implanter shall ensure that the information is forwarded to a database registry to reach it within five working days of implantation. The information may be sent in as hard copy, facsimile or electronic communication acceptable to the database registry.

For ALL registries, the implanter must authenticate the animal, owner and microchip details on a Veterinary Practice letterhead or NZCAR application form. Both the implanter and the animal owner must sign the form. On completion of this application form, information and details, constitute a legal document.

Veterinarians are encouraged to record the microchip number on the clinic records of the implanted animal.

Animal information recorded on the application form shall include:
- species
- breed
- name
- age, or date of birth
- colour
- sex
- any distinguishing marks
- reproductive status
- local authority external tag/disc registration number and date of expiry (where applicable)

Owner/agent information recorded shall include:
- title
- name (first and other names, surname)
- address (residential and postal)
- date of birth
- telephone and cell phone numbers
- email address
- second contact name and telephone number
- local authority.
- Implantation information recorded shall include:
- microchip transponder number
- name of person implanting, their address, contact details, signature and name of the veterinary practice.
- date of implantation
- number of external microchip tag issued (where applicable).
The authorised implanter should hold a secure PIN and access code for entry to the database.

**Governance**

Subject to the Dog Control Act 1996, the propietorial rights of animal owners [or agents] for recorded data is to be maintained by the Department of Internal Affairs on the National Dog Database, or an independent stakeholder’s trust. One such independent database is operated by the NZCAC, known as the Register (NZCAR) and includes stakeholders who are also trustees of an independent trust (NZCART) distributing profits from the proceeds from the microchip operation, by application, to worthy animal welfare projects throughout New Zealand.

The Trustees of the NZCART include nominated representatives from:
- The New Zealand Veterinary Association (NZVA)
- NZVA Companion Animal Society (CAS)
- The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA)
- New Zealand Kennel Club (NZKC)
- New Zealand Cat Fancy (NZCF)
- New Zealand Companion Animal Council (NZCAC)

**Management and operation protocols for database registry**

The NZVA believes that these protocols set out the minimum conditions for the design, management, control and operation of database registries containing data about animals permanently identified by implanted microchips, and their owners or agents.

1. The database Service Provider will enter into a legally binding agreement (which includes these protocols) with the Department of Internal Affairs (dog registration) or an independent stakeholder’s trust (all companion animals) to abide by these protocols for the operation of the database registry.

2. The Department of Internal Affairs (dog registration) or an independent stakeholder’s trust (all companion animals) will oversee and audit operations of the database registry by the Service Provider in accordance with these protocols, including facilitating the resolution of any complaints and monitoring adverse reactions.

**Objectives**

The objectives of a database registry are to ensure its efficient practical performance to enable:
- the prompt reunion of lost animals with their owners (or agents)
- the use of microchip technology as a means of permanent identification of animals as an aid for animal management
recording of information on all animals previously identified with microchips and recorded by offshore service providers on to a New Zealand database

other regulatory animal control requirements

The database registry must function to include all of the following:

- the recording of the animal and owner/agent identification information in the database registry for the entire lifetime of the animal
- cross-link provisions for one owner/agent to have several animals, and for joint ownership of animals. History of previous owner/agent-animal links must be stored as an archive
- change of information such as name of owner or agent, address, contact number, animal desexed status, death of animal, etc. Changes can be instituted only following the receipt of an approved form signed by the owner
- information to be readily available online or via an 0800 telephone number which is functional at all times
- access to the database registry only by an authorised person using a security PIN code for retrieval of owner details
- compatibility and integration with other systems so that the database registry can interface and communicate with other nominated database registries.
- acceptance or provision of information from, or to, any other approved database registry at all times
- acceptance of registration information from any approved identifiable implanter or implantation centre implanting microchip technology that conforms to NZS/ISO 11874:2001 and NZS/ISO 11785:2001
- continuity of database registry activity in the event of default by the Service Provider
- cost of recovery of data to be at the expense of the database registry Service Provider and be built into the registration fees for recording animal and owner/agent details
- no commercial exploitation of the data.

Security of Information

The registry database Service Provider shall ensure the following:

1. Animal identification and registration details must be generally available only to authorised persons (such as veterinarians, Animal Control Officers, Local Government Authorities, SPCA officers, NZ Police, Ministry for Primary Industries Animal Welfare Inspectors) on an individual animal basis using Personal Identification Numbers (PIN) or similar security codes.

2. The security of data control (such as data entry, data amendment) is the responsibility of the Service Provider.

3. The database registry shall provide and observe a multilevel security system amongst its employees and anyone else with access to the database, and provide security of the database itself, to the satisfaction of a RFID Trust.
4. There may be a need to retrieve large volumes of information for other purposes e.g. as entire lists for municipalities for updating/checking of data, for statistical or research studies. This type of data retrieval will be permissible only following specific consideration by, and with written instructions from, the Department of Internal Affairs (dog registration) or an independent stakeholder’s trust (all companion animals).

5. Apart from the situations outlined above, no person or organisation is to be permitted access to the data for any reason whatsoever without the clear and written consent of the Department of Internal Affairs (dog registration) or an independent stakeholder’s trust (all companion animals).

Definitions

"Authorised person" means a person who has been given authority to access the database.

"Database registry" (registry, register) means a store of data about domestic animals or wildlife that have been permanently identified by implanted RFID technology, and their owners.


"Implanter" means the person implanting the microchip.

"ISO" means the International Standards Organisation.

"Manufacturer" means manufacturer of RFID technology.


"Reader" (scanner) means the device used to interrogate the implanted transponder and read its unique identification number.

"RFID" means Radio Frequency Identification Device.

"Service Provider" means the commercial entity that operates the database registry.

References

Dog Control Act (1996)