

# Centre for Service and Working Dog Health and Research

## Introduction

It has been reported that New Zealand has more working dogs in the farming sector than all other countries except Russia. Despite this, very little has been published regarding the health and welfare of working farm dogs in New Zealand. In 2008 staff of the Centre for Companion Animal Health, Massey University Veterinary Teaching Hospital and the EpiCentre met to identify areas for future research of relevance to the NZ community. Working and Service dogs were identified as the core focus of the development of a new Research Centre, namely the **Centre for Service and Working Dog Health and Research (CSWDHR)**.

The **CSWDHR** was established within the University framework as a research focussed centre will have close ties to the agricultural sector, the NZ Police, Guide Dog Services, and the Department of Conservation. The **CSWDHR** combines researchers across several disciplines: medicine, surgery, epidemiology, behaviour, legislation and welfare.

## Research focus and objectives

- To better the health of service dogs (Guide, Police and Department of Conservation) and working farm dogs in New Zealand.
- To increase the longevity and working life of New Zealand service and working dogs.
- To study health issues and disease states by scientific enquiry, retrospective and prospective analysis and experimental initiatives
- To become a world leader in Service and Working dog Health

## Directors

Andrew Worth, Nick Cave, Kate Hill, Naomi Cogger, Paul Hughes, Roy Farman, Boyd Jones.

## Establishing a Working Farm Dog Focus Group of Veterinarians

One primary intention is to facilitate the formation of a focus-group of practitioners under the leadership of Roy Farman. Roy is a retired veterinarian with an interest in bettering the health of NZ working farm dogs. A working dog focus group would establish links within the profession, and as a member, the **CSWDHR** can contribute and benefit from the ties forged. There is a wealth of experience and skill in practice that needs to be harnessed to identify areas for research, provide collaborative initiatives and generate data.

Roy would like to begin the focus group by inviting practitioners who have an interest in Working Dog health to contact him. A contact list will be set up and with time an e-mail or paper newsletter will keep the group informed of subjects of interest. The idea is to stimulate discussion and debate and to find out which issues are relevant and require further investigation.

## How to become involved

- Contact Roy Farman to join the focus group
- roy.farman@xtra.co.nz Ph: 06 378 7282
- or contact: Andrew Worth A.J.Worth@massey.ac.nz  
Nick Cave N.J.Cave@massey.ac.nz  
Kate Hill K.Hill@massey.ac.nz

Centre for Service and Working Dog Health and Research now has a website <http://workingdogs.massey.ac.nz>