

Microchip Report 2004

The number of adverse reactions to implanted microchips in companion animals reported to BSAVA has stayed constant over the last two years (table 1). However, the total numbers are still very small compared to the number of animals that have been implanted. The Dog Identification Group (DIG) estimate that out of a population of approximately 6.4 million dogs in the UK, 2.3 million (36%) have been implanted.

The changing face of microchips

Prior to about 1998 only FDX-A microchips were sold in the United Kingdom, but since that time they have been replaced with FDX-B transponders which are the only ones conforming to the ISO standards. The number of animals still walking, flying or swimming about with the old style microchip is declining but members must be aware that microchip readers designed only to read FDX-B transponders will not identify or read the old style microchips. A proportion of the "Microchip failed" reports received by the BSAVA concern old style microchips and the use of ISO readers which can not identify them. The BSAVA Microchip Advisory Group (MAG) is currently conducting a survey of microchip readers available in the United Kingdom and their ability to read the different types of microchip. This information will be published in the JSAP shortly.

Database registration

In a few cases the details of the owner and the animal carrying the microchip are not recorded on the database. As the microchip and registration are bought as a package from the supplier and sold as a package to the client, the registration of the owners and animals details becomes part of the service. Members are encouraged to post the registration details themselves and not leave this important task to the client.

The Central Re-unification Number through which the details of all implanted animals can be traced remains

0870 6066751

This number is manned 24 hours a day.

Code of Practice

The BSAVA MAG has agreed a voluntary Code of Practice for microchip suppliers and databases. Details of the Code can be found on the BSAVA web site. On 25th March 2005 the following companies had agreed to abide by the Code

PetCode

The Kennel Club – PetLog

Pet-iD UK Ltd

Virbac Ltd

BSAVA members are encouraged to support those companies that have agreed to conduct their business in line with the Code of Practice.

Dog identification Month

June 2005 has been designated microchip awareness month. Some microchip suppliers will be offering promotions of their products during this

time and the Kennel Club will be co-ordinating a variety of activities. Further details can be found on www.the-kennel-club.org.uk

PET travel scheme

All pets travelling under the PET travel scheme must be identified by microchip. DEFRA report that there have been over 200,000 individual pet movements since the scheme was introduced in 1998 – some individual animals, of course, having made several trips. Although DEFRA officials report a remarkably low incidence of problems with identification microchips they will soon be releasing a series of protocols for dealing with those that do occasionally arise. These will be available on the DEFRA and BSAVA web sites.

Table 1 Adverse reaction reports received

Year	<2000	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Number	79	75	21	15	49	48	287

All reports in 2004 came from the UK. No data is available from other countries.

Table 2 Species affected

Species	<2000	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
Dog	70	54	18	13	39	41	235
Cat	3	15	1	2	10	5	36
Unknown	6	6	2	0	0	2	16

Migration remains the commonest problem with the elbow and shoulder being the favourite locations of wayward microchips. The most disastrous report received during 2004 concerned an attempt to implant a struggling kitten resulting in sudden death. During the post mortem examination the microchip was found in the brainstem.

Table 3 Type of reaction:

Reaction	Unknown	Migration	Infection	Failure	Swelling	Loss	Removed
<2000	1	62	4	3	3	8	1
2000	1	33	2	4	1	34	0
2001	0	9	1	7	1	3	0
2002	0	7	1	1	2	2	0
2003	1	22	0	11	8	7	0
2004	1	32	2	7	1	5	4
Total	4	165	10	33	16	59	5

The distribution of reports received by manufacturer is listed below. The relative share of the market attributed to each company is not known, so the relative incidence by manufacturer is not reliable

Table 4 Reported reactions by manufacturer:

Manufacturer	Unknown	Avid	Animalcare	Datamars	Bayer	PetID	Indexel	Destro
<2000	5	36	14	9	19	0	0	0
2000	5	11	29	0	23	2	4	1
2001	1	0	7	0	11	0	1	1
2002	2	0	0	0	10	1	0	0
2003	9	7	10	5	14	4	0	4
2004	9	1	10	0	20	1	0	0
Totals	31	55	70	14	97	8	5	6

To differentiate between lost and failed microchips, radiographs should be taken. In some cases microchip companies have assisted with the financial cost of these investigations

Table 5 Radiographed cases

Year	< 2000	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Number	5	7	3	0	8	6

Members of the BSAVA Microchip Advisory Group would like to encourage everyone to complete reports whenever problems are identified with implanted microchips in any species. Blank forms can be obtained from the BSAVA web site or from the Practice Support secretariat at BSAVA headquarters. Telephone number 01452 727707. MAG is very grateful to all those who took the time and trouble to report adverse reactions during 2004.

Fred Nind / Chairman MAG.