



## Technical Information Animal Welfare No 18.3

### Cat shows

Since 1 March 2018, events involving animals must be carried out in accordance with Articles 30a and 30b of the Swiss Animal Protection Ordinance (AniPO). This is to ensure that the animals' basic needs are better considered and that they are handled with care.

This technical information clarifies the above-mentioned provisions in regard to cat shows. It is aimed at event organisers, participants and the cantonal veterinary services responsible for enforcing animal welfare legislation.

### Obligations of persons involved

Responsibility for the careful handling of animals at events lies with both the organisers and individual participants. For example, both sides are obliged to minimise the risk of injury or disease and to avoid pain, suffering or harm. Animals must also be protected against overexertion (see Art. 30a(1) AniPO).

The different obligations of organisers and participants are set out below.

### Obligations of the organiser

In addition to organisational tasks, the event organiser has a supervisory role, in that it is required to take steps if participants fail to fulfil their obligations. It is also obliged to provide information to the enforcement authority (see Art. 30a(5) and (6) AniPO).

### Licensing requirement? Contact the cantonal veterinary service in good time!

Cat shows at which no animals are sold or exchanged are not subject to licensing requirements under Swiss animal welfare law. However, the cantons are entitled to enact further regulations and to require a licence for events involving animals.

Licensing requirements may also be founded on the legislation concerning epizootic diseases. The organiser must therefore contact the competent cantonal veterinary service in good time to inquire about the specific legal situation and, if necessary, to apply for a licence.

### Preliminary information for participants; inspections on entry to the event

Preliminary written information for participants concerning their animal welfare obligations at the event ensures smooth procedures and prevents unnecessary risks. This includes information concerning the rules on animal care, exhibition cages, health care and the ban on showing cats with breeding traits that cause strain. In consultation with the competent cantonal veterinary service, organisers should provide information on measures to prevent epizootic diseases. Information should also be provided on the special rules concerning the import and re-export of exhibition animals from abroad. By inspecting each cat for symptoms of infectious disease and unacceptable breeding traits on entry to the show, organisers can ensure that the event is animal welfare compliant.

## Removing cats with banned breeding traits that cause strain

Participants may not exhibit cats which show banned breeding traits that cause strain (see below the section “Ban on exhibiting cats with breeding traits that cause strain”).

If the event organiser learns that participants are not fulfilling this obligation, it must remove such cats from the event (see Art. 30a(5) in conjunction with (4)(b) AniPO).

## Minimising risks of disease and overexertion

The coming together of animals from different origins increases the risk of transmitting pathogens. It is therefore a basic requirement for an event that only healthy animals should take part (see Art. 30a(4)(a) AniPO).

The organiser must also comply with the following specific requirements (see Art. 30a(2) AniPO):

- An up-to-date **list** is available that shows the names and addresses of each participant and the breed and number of cats brought to the event. Where available, the identification of the animals, i.e. the microchip number, must also be shown.
- The event must be conducted in such a way as to permit adequate **rest and recuperation phases** for the animals. Stress or overexertion can be prevented by appropriately regulating public access. For example, cages should be placed at a sufficient distance from the entrance area or judging tables.
- The catering area for the public must be **physically separate from the animal area**.
- Care should be taken to ensure that cats do not suffer from **noise or climatic factors** such as draughts, or sunlight heating the cages. If fans are used, they must be installed outside the cage for safety reasons.
- **Animals which are overwhelmed** by the situation must be provided with suitable housing and appropriate care.

## Appointing a person to supervise the running of the event

The organiser must check that participants are fulfilling their obligations. If this is not the case, it must take the necessary steps (see Art. 30a(5) AniPO). To carry out these checks, the organiser must reasonably appoint one or more persons who will monitor the cats’ well-being at all times during the event’s opening hours and provide information to the enforcement authority on request.

## Obligations of the participants

### Responsibility for the cats’ well-being

Participants are responsible for their animals’ well-being. They must put the cats’ basic needs and careful handling above their personal interests and those of the organiser, e.g. when showing the animal (see Art. 30a(4)(a) AniPO).

Only healthy cats may be brought to an event (see Art. 30a(4)(a) AniPO). Cats participating in events must not be exposed to any risks which may lead to pain, damage, suffering or overexertion (see Art. 30a(1) AniPO). To protect all participating cats, every animal should be correctly vaccinated.

Cats which are overwhelmed by the event situation must be provided with suitable housing and appropriate care (see Art. 30a(2)(c) AniPO). If a stressed cat cannot be calmed, it must be removed from the public area of the event until it has recovered.

### Ban on exhibiting cats with breeding traits that cause strain

Cats which have been bred in pursuit of banned breeding aims or have been unlawfully bred may not be exhibited. A banned breeding aim is one that results in restricted bodily functions and/or sensory perception or deviations from species-specific behaviour (see Art. 25(2) AniPO and Annexes 1 and 2 to the Ordinance of the FSVO on the protection of animals in breeding (APBO)). A ban applies to the

breeding of animals in which body parts or organs are congenitally absent or malformed and the animal endures pain, suffering or harm as a result. A ban also applies to the breeding of animals with deviations from species-specific behaviour that make it very difficult or impossible for them to live together with conspecifics (see Art. 25(3) AniPO).

Breeding-related constraints may occur with the following breeds and forms of breeding. Individuals with the listed features and symptoms may therefore not be exhibited:

- **Brachycephalic individuals of the breeds Persian, Exotic Shorthair, British Shorthair and Burmese**, showing signs of chronic lacrimation or respiratory problems (see Annex 2 point 2.1 APBO).
- **Sphynx and other naked cats, Devon Rex and other Rex cats**, and other individuals with short or absent tactile hairs (see Annex 2 point 4.3 APBO).
- **White or predominantly white cats with blue, orange or green eyes of different breeds such as Foreign White, Turkish Angora, Van cats, Persian cats** etc., whose hearing cannot be certified by a veterinary certificate (see Annex 2 point 4.2 APBO).
- **Scottish Fold cats (Scottish Fold, Highland Fold, Scottish Straight, Highland Straight) and cross-breeds (Poodle Cats)**, unless a current veterinary certificate confirms that there are no cartilage or bone defects causing pain (see Art. 25(2) AniPO, Art. 9(c)(3) and Annex 2 point 1.1 APBO).

The breeding of cats with absent or malformed body parts is prohibited if this causes the animals significant strain (see Art. 25(3)(a) AniPO). The exhibition ban therefore applies to all individuals of the following breeds:

- **Manx and Cymric**: Due to the absent or shortened tail, these animals often suffer from coordination or movement disorders (see Annex 2 point 5.1 APBO).
- **Japanese Bobtail and Kurilian Bobtail**: The reshaped tail leads to increased sensitivity to pain in this area (see Annex 2 point 1.1 APBO).
- **Dachshund cat (Munchkin) and kangaroo cat (Squitten)**: The deformed limbs prevent proper locomotion (see Art. 9(c)(3), Art. 10(d) and Annex 2 point 1.1 APBO).

## Careful handling of cats

Handling of animals must be kept to a minimum.

## Requirements for exhibition cages

The exhibition cages described here never meet all of the legal standards for animal-friendly keeping of animals. Nor do they meet today's expectations in terms of species-appropriate animal housing and they must therefore be used only for short-term accommodation. The FSVO therefore recommends that, whenever possible, organisers should present a model cat enclosure measuring 7 m<sup>2</sup> in floor area and 2 m in height or at least display appropriate information material for the public.

Cages must be constructed and fitted out in such a way that the risk of injury to the animals is minimised, their health is not impaired, and they cannot escape (see Art. 7(1) AniPO). Cats participating in events may be kept for a **maximum of four days** in cages that deviate to a minor extent from the minimum dimensions stated in Annex 1 AniPO (see Art. 30b AniPO). Cages must be fitted out in accordance with Annex 1 Table 11 of the Animal Protection Ordinance (see the following section).

## Cage facilities

- **Cover / privacy / retreat area:** To ensure the well-being of cats in the cages, the public must be prevented from touching the cats through the bars. A suitable option is thin netting covering the entire length of the cage (see Art. 30a(4)(a) AniPO). Transparent plastic films may not be used, due to the reduced air circulation. A retreat area must be fitted on the side facing the public. For this purpose, the cage must be covered at one end with opaque material, e.g. a curtain or board fixed at top and bottom; this material must extend over the cage roof, the entire height of the short side and at least one third of the length. The retreat area must be accessible to all cats at the same time.
- **Resting area:** Every cat needs a resting area. Options include elevated resting areas (padded lying board or hammock) or tepees, beds or baskets.
- The cage floor must be covered with soft padding.
- There must be one **litter tray** per cage.
- While kept in the cages, animals must have constant **access to water**. Feed must be offered according to individual needs.
- Cats must be offered **activity material**, such as suitable toys.

## Cage dimensions at exhibitions

Cages must be large enough to accommodate the required facilities and allow species-appropriate use. Exhibition cages must have the following minimum dimensions:

- **70 x 140 cm for up to 2 cats**
- **70 x 70 cm for an individual cat**, except cats of the breed Maine Coon from the age of 7 months and animals of the following breeds from the age of 10 months: Norwegian Forest cat, Ragdoll, Neva Masquerade, Carthusian (Chartreux), Bengal, Siberian cat, Siamese, Oriental Longhair and Shorthair, Balinese and Peterbald. Cats weighing over 4 kg may also not be kept in individual cages.
- Cages must be **at least 70 cm high**. They must not be stacked on top of each other.
- Cats may **not be left in exhibition cages overnight**, as the cages are too small for this and the animals would be unsupervised.

## Legislation: Animal Protection Ordinance (AniPO, SR 455.1) and Ordinance of the FSVO on the protection of animals in breeding (APBO, SR 455.102.4)

### Art. 7 AniPO Enclosures

<sup>1</sup> Housing systems and enclosures must be constructed and fitted out in such a way that:

- a. the risk of injury to the animals is minimised;
- b. the health of the animals is not impaired; and
- c. the animals cannot escape.

<sup>2</sup> Housing and enclosures must be constructed and fitted out and be sufficiently spacious to allow the animals to express their species-specific behaviour.

### Art. 12 AniPO Noise

<sup>1</sup> Animals must not be exposed to excessive noise for a prolonged period.

<sup>2</sup> Noise is deemed to be excessive if it causes flight, avoidance or aggressive behaviour or freezing in the animal and the animal cannot escape the source of the noise.

**Art. 25 AniPO** Basic principles (breeding animals)

<sup>1</sup> Selective breeding must target to produce healthy animals that are free of characteristics and traits that undermine their dignity.

<sup>2</sup> Breeding objectives that result in restricted organ and sensory functions and deviations from species-specific behaviour are only permitted if it is possible to compensate for the deficits without the need for special measures in the care, housing or feeding of the animals that would expose them to stress, without interventions on the animals and without regular medical care.

<sup>3</sup> The following are prohibited:

- a. breeding animals which can be expected to have absent or malformed body parts or organs that are important for species-specific use and which can be expected to endure pain, suffering or harm as a result;
- b. breeding animals with deviations from species-specific behaviour that make it very difficult or impossible for them to live together with conspecifics.

**Art. 30a AniPO** Duties of the persons involved (events)

<sup>1</sup> Events must be planned and carried out in such a way that the affected animals are not exposed to any risks greater than those inherent in the event and that pain, suffering, damage or overexertion are avoided.

<sup>2</sup> In particular, the event organiser must ensure that:

- a. an up-to-date list is available that shows the address of each participant, the number of animals brought to the event as well as the number of animals, and, where available, the identification of the animals;
- b. the schedule of the event permits adequate rest and recuperation phases for the animals; and
- c. animals which are overwhelmed by the situation are provided with suitable housing and appropriate care.

<sup>3</sup> If the event organiser is in charge of the animals, an adequate number of animal carers as well as a person that assumes the responsibility of animal care must be appointed. This person must be skilled in the field and available at all times while the event is in progress.

<sup>4</sup> The participants must ensure, in particular, that:

- a. only healthy animals take part in the event and their well-being is ensured;
- b. no animals bred in pursuit of banned breeding aims (Art. 25 para. 2) take part in the event; and
- c. young animals that are still suckling are only exhibited with their dams.

<sup>5</sup> If the event organiser learns that participants are not fulfilling the obligations described in paragraph 4, it must take the necessary steps.

<sup>6</sup> The list described in paragraph 2 letter a must be presented to the competent authority on request.

**Art. 30b AniPO** Non-compliance with the minimum dimensions for a brief period (events)

<sup>1</sup> Animals participating in events may be kept for a maximum of four days in housing units and enclosures that deviate to a minor extent from the minimum dimensions stated in Annexes 1 and 2. If the animals are moved or trained sufficiently every day, they may be kept for a maximum of eight days in housing units and enclosures of this kind.

<sup>2</sup> However, the requirements concerning the installations and lighting in the housing units and enclosures must be fulfilled and the climatic conditions must be suitable for the animals.

**Annex 1 Table 11 AniPO** Additional requirements (keeping of domestic cats)

Elevated resting areas, facilities for retreat, suitable climbing and scratching structures, opportunities for activities and one litter tray per cat.

**Art. 9 APBO** Prohibited breeding uses

Animals may not be used for breeding if:

- c. they belong to a breeding variety which, on the basis of physiology or abilities:
  3. cannot move in ways appropriate to their species.

**Art. 10 APBO** Prohibited breeding varieties

The following breeding varieties are prohibited:

- a. cats with exceptionally short forelegs (kangaroo cats);

**Annex 2 APBO** Characteristics or symptoms which may lead to moderate or severe strain in connection with the breeding goal

- 1.1 Skeletal deformities or malformations such as locomotor abnormalities or paralysis.
- 2.1 Deformities of the skull with impeding effects, such as effects on tooth position, eye position, respiratory capacity, birth process.
- 4.2 Dysfunction of the auditory system, such as deafness.
- 4.3 Malformations [of the tactile hairs].
- 5.1 Coordination or movement disorders.