



## **Ultrasound Guidelines Council**

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### **UGC Board Meeting**

September 28, 2012  
Oklahoma City

### **Board Meeting Minutes**

**Members present:** Bill Bowman, Becky Hays, Larry Keenan, Rethel King, Wade Shafer, Mike Tess, Robert Williams, Casey Worrell

**Members on conference call:** Scott Greiner, Mark Henry, J.R. Tait

**Members absent:** Dean Pringle

Chair, LK called the meeting to order at 1:10 PM.

#### **Agenda**

##### **1. Financial Report**

- MT discussed the cash flow summary that was mailed out last week.
  - He noted that all dues had not yet been received, and projected a small negative cash flow for the year, similar to that projected in the 2012 budget.
- MH suggested a review of UGC finances - including projections from breed associations on animal counts; however the breed association reps were doubtful that meaningful projections could be produced.
- MH requested a formal review of MT as executive director.
  - LK agreed that this was a good idea and requested input from all board members.
- RW - Motion to approve report. 2<sup>nd</sup> –RK.
  - Passed.

##### **2. Study Guide**

- MT briefly updated the board on the completion and publication of the study guide and thanked the authors for their work.

##### **3. South America Report**

- MT shared his impressions of the status of ultrasound in South America (primarily Brazil).
  - There is now a cooperative organization in Brazil; but details of the organization, funding and membership are not known.
- There is a certification tentatively set for late November in Uberaba.

#### 4. Reference Techs at Field Certifications

- RK questioned the need for 3 reference techs at field certifications, especially when such a small number of Classic machines are used during certification and the cost per reference tech is high.
  - NOTE: One reference tech normally uses a Classic or Aquila machine.
- MH offered to serve as Classic/Aquila Reference Tech at no cost, since he usually attends all field certifications.
- JRT emphasized that the criteria for the number of reference techs should be based on getting the best characterization of the data.
- No motion was presented.

#### 5. Independent Images

- LK asked MT to review the discussion and findings related to independent IMF images.
- MT briefly summarized the results from the analyses of reference tech data from the spring field certification.
- JRT emphasized two points from MT's report to the board.
  - There is not a rigorous and defensible way for the labs to monitor independence at this time.
  - The integrity of field techs is the best insurance.
- BH emphasized the importance of freezing images before saving them.
- BB reminded the board that UGC has relied on labs and their relationships with field techs to monitor IQ and correct problems.
- SG – Motion have labs discuss and agree on a recommendation to the board. 2<sup>nd</sup> – MH.
  - After considerable discussion SG withdrew the motion to replace it.
- SG – Motion. IMF images should be independent and frozen prior to saving. Independence will be determined by time and date stamps, and appropriate reference points resulting in uniqueness of images. 2<sup>nd</sup> – MH.
  - Passed.

#### 6. Clipping

- BH suggested that the board consider making clipping to 0.5 inch a board policy.
  - NOTE: this has been recommended practice per the study guide for many years.
- CW offered that dirt in the hair is a bigger issue than hair; and that he would prefer blowing policy.
- MH stated the critical issue was the length of the hair (i.e., 0.5 inch or less), not clipping per se.
- SG questioned how labs would be able to determine hair length.
- BB emphasized that the field tech is the one at risk if the animal is not clipped due to poor image quality.
- MH advised that the board did not need a formal policy at this time.

NOTE: SG left the conference call.

#### 7. Absentia Policies and Refunds

- This discussion was in response to an email to the board from four techs who had failed re-certification in absentia due to image quality.
- In the letter, the techs requested that their absentia fees be applied to field certification.
  - Considerable discussion regarding the pros and cons of this suggestion.

- MH – motion to apply all but \$50 of the absentia fee towards field certification (for past two years only). 2<sup>nd</sup> – BH.
  - Failed.
- MH recommended that, in the future, UGC should explicitly state that absentia fees will not be applied towards field certification if techs fail.
- In the letter the techs requested that image quality thresholds for re-certification in absentia be based solely on the percentage of rejected images.
  - JRT – motion that absentia criteria should continue to be based on marginal and rejected images. RK – 2<sup>nd</sup>.
    - Passed.
- LK will work with MT to draft letter in response to the techs and send to board for editing.

#### 8. The State of Ultrasound and UGC

- MT spoke at length to the board, emphasizing the following points:
  - UGC creates value for the beef industry by providing high-quality data for genetic evaluation.
    - Image quality is the foundation of data quality, and absentia techs are the standard bearers for image quality.
    - UGC has worked to encourage re-certification in absentia, making it more convenient and less expensive; but the price for techs is image quality.
    - Trust, reputation, and low maintenance are key elements of our relationships with the breeds.
  - Ultrasound is a mature business with a declining future.
    - DNA works and is expected to get better and less expensive.
    - Some in the ultrasound industry take comfort in the fact that academics continue to call for phenotypes, including ultrasound; however, we must remember that ultrasound, like DNA, is an indicator trait for traits measured in the packing house cooler.
    - The highest accuracy DNA tests will be developed and validated from carcass data, not ultrasound.
  - UGC is a cooperative organization of competitors.
    - UGC best serves the ultrasound business and the beef industry when its members (i.e., breeds, labs, techs) work as a team.
      - This means working together and supporting the team even when we don't like all the plays called.

LK adjourned the meeting at ~ 5:00 PM.

MWT – 10/2/12