

ABN 15 211 513 464

Paul McGreevy
Professor

Room 062
RMC Gunn Building (B19)
The University of Sydney
NSW 2006 AUSTRALIA
Telephone: +61 2 9351 2810
Facsimile: +61 2 9351 3957
Email: paul.mcgreevy@sydney.edu.au
Web:
<http://sydney.edu.au/science/people/paul.mcgreevy.php>

Animal Behaviour and Research Questionnaire (A-BARQ)

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is this study about?

You are invited to take part in a research study about animal behaviour and management. The study is designed to gather information on how we manage and handle animals and to investigate how these practices affect behaviour. A-BARQ is the first project of its kind to cover multiple aspects of animal behaviour and training and it follows in the footsteps of the very successful C-BARQ that has already proved so useful to dog owners, enthusiasts and professionals.

You have been invited to participate in this study, the Animal Behaviour Assessment and Research Questionnaire (A-BARQ) because you are a animal owner and familiar with your own animal's behaviour. This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary.

By giving your consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described.

You can download a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by the following researchers:

Kate Fenner is conducting this study as the basis for the degree of PhD at The University of Sydney. This will take place under the supervision of Prof Paul McGreevy.

(3) What will the study involve for me?

The survey will ask you questions about your animal, starting with your animal's species, age and breed and then moving on to particulars about your animal's behaviour. We know that you know your animal better than anyone, so you are the best person to describe your animal's behaviour as well as details about how your animal is housed and trained.

Several factors effect how we manage our animals and A-BARQ will gather information about you as an animal owner or handler, including questions relating to your personality, gender and country of residence.

Many people have more than one animal of a given species and you are welcome to do a separate survey for each animal that you own but we suggest starting with the animal you spend the most time with. There are separate sections for companion animals, young animals, breeding or resting animals, and you will be presented with only the questions that apply to your particular situation.

If you own or are the caregiver of an animal, you are welcome to complete the survey. We will ask for your email address so that we can send you a follow-up survey in 6 months' time, which will enable you to record any changes in your animal's behaviour. Your email address will be securely stored at Sydney University and not used for any other purpose. If you do not wish to take the follow-up survey, and you are under no obligation to do so, you can simply ignore the email.

(4) How much of my time will the study take?

The survey should take about 20-30 minutes to complete and is in a tick-box format with no requests for answers that require typing.

(5) Who can take part in the study?

If you own or are the caregiver of an animal or have regular contact with and control over an animal's management and training, you can take the A-BARQ survey.

(6) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I've started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of Sydney.

Submitting your completed questionnaire is an indication of your consent to participate in the study. You can withdraw your responses if you change your mind about having them included in the study, up to the point that we have analysed and published the results.

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind later, you are free to withdraw at any time. You can do this by ignoring the follow-up email or replying to that email requesting withdrawal. There are no consequences to withdrawal from the survey.

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study. In some cases, you may find that the study raises some concerns about your animal's behaviour. We urge you to discuss these concerns with a suitable professional, particularly if you find the outcome distressing in any way. Our priority is the safety of you and your animal/s.

(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

While there are no direct benefits to being involved in the study, you will be contributing to the body of knowledge on animal behaviour and training, and helping to improve animal welfare in the long term. If you decide to do the follow-up survey, you will also be able to see how changes in your management and training affect your animal's behaviour.

The Share-&-Compare graph, available on completion of your A-BARQ questionnaire, will show you how your animal compares to the population, thus has the benefit of alerting you to any possible behavioural concerns, enabling you to address those. The A-BARQ questionnaires are also an excellent way to monitor your animal's progress in terms of their training and management and resulting behaviour by using the Share-&-Compare feedback graphs.

(9) What will happen to information about me that is collected during the study?

The only piece of information about you will be an email address for the purposes of notifying you when the follow-up survey is available for you. This will not be shared with others. It will be kept within Sydney University's secure data base.

At the end of the survey, you will be able to compare your animal's behaviour to others that have been described via the A-BARQ. When we have gathered a significant number of responses, results will be analysed and they will appear in journal publications.

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting personal information about you for the purposes of this research study. Your information will only be used for the purposes outlined in this Participant Information Statement, unless you consent otherwise.

Your information will be stored securely and your identity/information will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. Study findings may be published, but you will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

We will keep the information we collect for this study, and we may use it in future projects. By providing your consent you are allowing us to use your information in future projects. We don't know at this stage what these other projects will involve. We will seek ethical approval before using the information in these future projects.

(10) Can I tell other people about the study?

Yes, you are welcome to tell other people about the study.

(11) What if I would like further information about the study?

When you have read this information, Kate Fenner will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to know more at any stage during the study, please feel free to contact Kate Fenner at kfen3285@uni.sydney.edu.au

(12) Will I be told the results of the study?

You have a right to receive feedback about your individual results of this questionnaire and will do so immediately after completing your survey in the form of the Share-&-Compare graph.

Your individual results will be available to you on completion of the survey and, once entered into the system, no individual results will be accessible to others.

If you would like to receive information on publications resulting from the A-BARQ study, you will be invited to complete a newsletter sign up form once you have submitted your survey.

(13) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

Research involving humans in Australia is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the HREC of the University of Sydney 2012/656. As part of this process, we have agreed to carry out the study according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. This statement has been developed to protect people who agree to take part in research studies.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the university using the details outlined below. Please quote the study title and protocol number.

The Manager, Ethics Administration, University of Sydney:

- **Telephone:** +61 2 8627 8176
- **Email:** human.ethics@sydney.edu.au
- **Fax:** +61 2 8627 8177 (Facsimile)