

STATUTES OF THE AMERICAN CONFEDERATION OF THE GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG

COAPA

CHAPTER I NATURE, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Article 1.- Nature. The American Confederation of the German Shepherd Dog (Confederación Americana del Perro Pastor Alemán, hereinafter “COAPA”) is an international non-profit organisation that brings together the German Shepherd Dog breed clubs of the Americas.

Article 2.- Main purpose. The main purpose of COAPA is to develop and promote in the Americas, through its affiliated organisations, the breeding and training of the German Shepherd Dog in accordance with the official breed standard and the technical guidelines of the Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde (SV) e.V. and the Weltunion der Vereine für Deutsche Schäferhunde (WUSV).

Article 3.- Objectives. To fulfil its purpose, COAPA has the following objectives:

- a) To promote the qualities of the German Shepherd Dog and its usefulness to people and society in civilian activities, as well as in auxiliary tasks of the armed forces, police and security services.
- b) To promote, through its members, the recognition of the German Shepherd Dog as an excellent companion and social utility dog.
- c) To facilitate the continuous exchange of information, publications and technical and scientific developments concerning the breed among the members and with COAPA.
- d) To propose to the members the harmonisation of their technical regulations for breed and working shows, as well as their breeding rules and training trials.
- e) To organise each year, through the member of the host country, the COAPA Annual Event, comprising a Breed Show and a Working Championship among representatives of the members, together with the Ordinary General Assembly.
- f) To maintain the best institutional relations with the SV, the WUSV and the Fédération Cynologique Internationale (FCI).

CHAPTER II CAPACITY, ASSETS AND SEAT

Article 4.- Capacity. COAPA has the capacity conferred on it by these Statutes, by recognition from other organisations of equal rank and by the laws of the countries of its members. COAPA shall seek to obtain legal personality in the country of its Permanent Administrative Seat.

Article 5.- Assets. The assets of COAPA consist of:

- a) The membership fees set by the General Assembly.
- b) Voluntary contributions and donations from organisations or individuals.
- c) Income from its technical or scientific activities.
- d) Property acquired with the authorisation of the General Assembly, in accordance with the law of the country where it is acquired.

COAPA may deal with public or private, domestic or foreign banks and financial institutions and may acquire foreign currency, subject to a favourable opinion of the Finance and Audit Commission.

Article 6.- Seat. The Ordinary General Assembly shall decide the country of the Permanent Administrative Seat. Until it does so, the legal seat shall be in the country of residence of the President, at the address the President designates, which may not be that of a member organisation. The General Assembly may establish branches in member countries under the same conditions.

Article 7.- Administration and financial year. The Board administers the resources of COAPA and reports annually to the Ordinary General Assembly. The financial year ends on 31 December each year.

CHAPTER III MEMBERS

Article 8.- One member per country. Only one German Shepherd Dog breed club per country may be a member of COAPA.

Article 9.- Countries with an FCI-recognised organisation. In countries where there is a kennel club, federation or other cynological organisation recognised by the FCI, only clubs that, in addition to meeting the requirements of Article 11, are recognised by that organisation and maintain institutional relations with it may be admitted.

Article 10.- Countries without an FCI-recognised organisation. In countries where there is no organisation recognised by the FCI, the Ordinary General Assembly shall decide on the admission of the applicant club.

Article 11.- Application for membership. Breed clubs from countries not represented in COAPA may apply for membership by written application to the Board, accompanied by:

- a) A copy of their statutes and regulations, legalised by the competent authorities of their country.
- b) The number of members and a summary of their activities during the three years preceding the application.
- c) A list of officers, and the legal and actual address of their headquarters.
- d) Where applicable, evidence of compliance with the requirement of Article 9.

Article 12.- Procedure. The Board shall verify the requirements and submit the application to the next Ordinary General Assembly with a reasoned opinion recommending its acceptance or rejection. The Assembly shall decide by simple majority.

Article 13.- Rights and obligations. Members are entitled to speak and vote at the General Assembly, to take part in COAPA's activities and to receive information from the Board. They are obliged to comply with the Statutes, regulations and resolutions of COAPA's bodies and to pay their fees on time.

Article 14.- Termination of membership. Membership ends upon:

- a) Written resignation submitted to the Board, without prejudice to outstanding fees.
- b) Exclusion decided in accordance with Chapter VII.
- c) Dissolution of the member organisation.
- d) Disaffiliation at the request of the national organisation recognised by the FCI. Exclusion of a member by that organisation does not entail its automatic disaffiliation from COAPA. The FCI organisation may request it by showing that the member has committed serious breaches of breeding rules or of the FCI's international regulations. The General Assembly shall decide by a two-thirds majority of the members present and entitled to vote, after an opinion of the Mediation and Arbitration Commission and after hearing the member concerned.

CHAPTER IV BODIES

Article 15.- Bodies. The bodies of COAPA are:

- a) The General Assembly, the supreme body of the Confederation.
- b) The Board.
- c) The Ethics and Disciplinary Tribunal.
- d) The Mediation and Arbitration Commission.
- e) The Finance and Audit Commission.

Unless otherwise provided, members of elected bodies serve a four-year term and may be removed only by the General Assembly, for just cause, by a two-thirds majority of the members present and entitled to vote.

CHAPTER V GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Article 16.- Composition and representation. The General Assembly consists of the members, represented by their lawful officers authorised under their own statutes. Each member may accredit up to three representatives with the right to speak, but has only one vote. A representative of one member may not represent another member, even if he or she belongs to it.

Article 17.- Ordinary Assembly. The Ordinary General Assembly meets once a year during the COAPA Annual Event, save in cases of force majeure. The Board convenes it by electronic means at least sixty days in advance, stating the place, date, time and agenda.

Article 18.- Extraordinary Assembly. The Extraordinary General Assembly is convened by the Board whenever it considers it necessary, or at the request of five or more members, at least thirty days in advance. If the Board fails to convene it within thirty days of receiving the request, the Finance and Audit Commission may convene it.

Article 19.- Quorum. The Assembly is quorate when more than half of the members entitled to vote are present. If this quorum is not reached within one hour, the Assembly may proceed with the members present, except for amending the Statutes or dissolving COAPA, for which the initial quorum is always required. Participation by videoconference or other means allowing simultaneous communication is permitted.

Article 20.- Accreditation and voting rights. Representatives shall document their authority before a Credentials Committee, composed of the members of the Ethics and Disciplinary Tribunal present or, failing them, of persons appointed by the President, which shall convene one hour before the session begins. Its decisions may be appealed to the Assembly itself, which decides by simple majority. Only members whose fees are paid up may vote; fees may be paid until the start of deliberations.

Article 21.- Majorities and casting vote. Resolutions are adopted by a simple majority of the members present and entitled to vote, unless these Statutes require a special majority. In the event of a tie, the chair of the Assembly has a casting vote, except in the election of the President or Vice-President when the chair is a candidate for either office.

Article 22.- Chairing the Assembly. The Assembly is chaired by the President of COAPA or, in the President's absence, by the Vice-President. If both are absent, the Assembly elects its chair; in the event of a tie, lots are drawn among those receiving the most votes.

Article 23.- Powers of the Ordinary Assembly. The Ordinary General Assembly shall:

- a) Elect the members of the Board, the Ethics and Disciplinary Tribunal, the Mediation and Arbitration Commission and the Finance and Audit Commission, and appoint the Director of the Mediation and Arbitration Commission.

- b) Approve the annual report, the annual accounts, the budget and the membership fees.
- c) Decide on the admission of new members.
- d) Designate the host country of the COAPA Annual Event and of the Assembly for subsequent years.
- e) Decide on the Permanent Administrative Seat.
- f) Approve the regulations proposed by the Board or the Ethics and Disciplinary Tribunal.
- g) Decide on matters raised by the Board or, through it, by the members.
- h) Act as the appeal body under Article 34.

Article 24.- Powers of the Extraordinary Assembly. The Extraordinary General Assembly shall:

- a) Decide on the matters for which it was convened.
- b) Amend the Statutes by a three-quarters majority of the members present and entitled to vote.
- c) Dissolve COAPA in accordance with Article 45.

CHAPTER VI BOARD

Article 25.- Composition. The Board consists of a President, a Vice-President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and three Board Members, elected by the General Assembly, and of the immediate Past President, with the right to speak and vote. The Assembly also elects three Alternate Board Members, who replace the regular members in the event of a vacancy, in the order of their election.

Article 26.- Requirements and election. All Board members must be active or retired judges of their respective clubs. Each elected member, regular or alternate, must belong to a different club, with the exception of the Past President. The President and the Vice-President must have a solid cynological record and at least ten years of uninterrupted membership in the breed club of their country. Before voting, the Assembly decides whether the election is by individual candidates or by slate.

Article 27.- President. The President is the sole legal representative of COAPA and personally directs the work of the Board. The President's term is four years, from the Assembly that elects the President until the Assembly that renews the officers. The President may be re-elected for one further term by simple majority; a third or subsequent consecutive term requires three quarters of the votes of the members present and entitled to vote.

Article 28.- Vice-President. The Vice-President has the same term and re-election rules as the President. The Vice-President assists the President when requested and deputises temporarily in the event of absence or temporary incapacity. In the event of a permanent vacancy due to resignation, permanent incapacity or death, the Vice-President succeeds the President for the remainder of the term.

Article 29.- Vacancies. If the office of Secretary, Treasurer or Board Member becomes vacant, the Board shall appoint a replacement from among the Alternate Board Members until the next Ordinary General Assembly.

Article 30.- Proceedings. The Board meets, in person or by electronic means, when convened by the President or at the request of three of its members. It is quorate when a majority of its voting members are present and decides by simple majority; in the event of a tie, the President decides. Minutes are kept of each meeting.

Article 31.- Powers. The Board shall:

- a) Draw up the annual work plan and budget.
- b) Provide members with the detailed information they request.

- c) Convene the General Assemblies, set their agenda and include items requested in writing by members at least thirty days in advance.
- d) Propose to the Assembly measures not on the agenda, if the Assembly unanimously declares them to be of “urgent and manifest necessity”.
- e) Propose to the Assembly the regulations needed to achieve COAPA's purposes.
- f) Publish at least every six months a bulletin with technical, administrative, institutional and financial information, which may be financed from own resources or advertising.
- g) Represent COAPA before cynological bodies and attend the meetings and congresses of the FCI, the WUSV and the SV in order to make the voice of the breed clubs of the Americas heard. Travel and representation expenses are not borne by COAPA.
- h) Keep the register of COAPA judges in accordance with Article 43.

CHAPTER VII

ETHICS AND DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

Article 32.- Composition. The Ethics and Disciplinary Tribunal consists of three regular and two alternate members, elected by the General Assembly. The three regular members must belong to members from three different countries. Their re-election is governed by the rules of Article 27. The Tribunal shall propose its rules of procedure to the Assembly, which must guarantee due process and the right of defence.

Article 33.- Jurisdiction over members. The Tribunal has exclusive jurisdiction to rule on breaches by members of the Statutes, regulations and resolutions of the Assembly. It acts at the request of the Board or, through the Board, of one third of the members entitled to vote. Depending on the seriousness of the offence, it may impose the following sanctions:

- a) Reprimand.
- b) Suspension of rights for up to two years.
- c) Exclusion, for serious breaches or conduct damaging COAPA's reputation. Exclusion requires a unanimous vote of the Tribunal.

Article 34.- Appeals. A sanctioned member may request reconsideration by the Board within twenty calendar days of formal notification. If the sanction is upheld, it may appeal within the same period to the next General Assembly, which shall decide by a two-thirds majority of the members present and entitled to vote. Appeals do not suspend the sanction.

Article 35.- Jurisdiction at COAPA events. The Tribunal also rules on individuals belonging to member organisations for disturbances at events organised, sponsored or supported by COAPA, and for public and disrespectful criticism of the decisions of judges invited to its shows, tournaments or championships. Such sanctions apply only to COAPA events and are communicated to all members.

CHAPTER VIII

MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION COMMISSION

Article 36.- Composition. The Mediation and Arbitration Commission consists of three persons from members of three different countries, nominated by them and elected by the General Assembly, which appoints one of them as Director of the Commission. Its members must have at least five years of membership in their organisation and a recognised cynological record.

Article 37.- Jurisdiction. At the written request of any party, the Commission deals with disputes between two or more members and with disagreements on the interpretation, scope or application of the Statutes. At the request of the Board it also issues non-binding opinions on matters referred to it, including that provided for in Article 14 d).

Article 38.- Procedure. The Commission follows this procedure:

- a) The interested party submits its request in writing to the President of COAPA and gives formal notice to the other parties.
- b) Within fifteen days, the President forwards it to the Director of the Commission, who asks the requesting party for a reasoned statement of its claim and serves it on the other party, which must reply in writing, with supporting documents, within twenty calendar days of notification.
- c) The Director of the Commission forwards the file to the other two members, and the Commission begins mediation, which may not exceed six months.
- d) If mediation fails, the Director of the Commission sets the date, time and place of a hearing with the parties.
- e) Within sixty days after the hearing, the Commission issues a reasoned award based on the Statutes, equity, established practice, general principles of law and any rules agreed by the parties.
- f) For the duration of the proceedings, the parties shall not make their dispute public.

Article 39.- Withdrawal and challenge. A Commission member who belongs to one of the parties must withdraw. The Director of the Commission appoints a replacement from among persons from other countries, always maintaining an odd number. Challenges for cause are decided by the other members of the Commission.

Article 40.- Award. The award is final and not subject to appeal. Failure to comply with it constitutes a serious breach and shall be dealt with by the Ethics and Disciplinary Tribunal in accordance with Chapter VII.

CHAPTER IX FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMISSION

Article 41.- Composition. The Finance and Audit Commission consists of a regular Auditor and an alternate, elected by the General Assembly from among the persons nominated by the members.

Article 42.- Powers. The Commission shall:

- a) Advise the Board and the Assembly on economic, financial and investment matters.
- b) Report to the Assembly on the economic and financial situation at the end of each financial year.
- c) Give an opinion on the budget.
- d) Supervise the administration of COAPA.
- e) Convene the Ordinary General Assembly if the Board is without officers or fails to do so.

CHAPTER X JUDGES

Article 43.- COAPA judges. The panel of COAPA Breed and Working Judges consists of the international breed or working judges licensed by the members, who are recognised by COAPA and by all its members. Each member shall send its list of judges to the Board, which shall publish it on COAPA's official website.

CHAPTER XI LANGUAGES

Article 44.- Official languages. The official languages of COAPA are Spanish, Portuguese and English. In the event of discrepancies between versions, the Spanish text prevails.

CHAPTER XII DISSOLUTION

Article 45.- Dissolution. COAPA may be dissolved only by resolution of an Extraordinary General Assembly convened for that purpose, by a three-quarters majority of the members entitled to vote. The same Assembly shall appoint the liquidators. After settlement of liabilities, the remaining assets shall be transferred to a non-profit organisation dedicated to the German Shepherd Dog designated by that Assembly.

CHAPTER XIII FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 46.- Matters not provided for. Matters not provided for in these Statutes shall be decided by the Board, subject to ratification by the next Ordinary General Assembly or by an Extraordinary General Assembly convened for that purpose.

Article 47.- Entry into force. These Statutes enter into force on the date of their approval by the Extraordinary General Assembly and replace the previous statutes in their entirety. Officers in office shall complete their terms.

Approved by the Extraordinary General Assembly of COAPA held in _____ on _____, 20__.

President

Secretary