RESULTS

RTA prevalence was 0.41% (95% confidence interval (CI): 0.38–0.44). Of the RTA cases, 615 (74.9%) were purebred, 322 (39.2%) were female, and 285 (54.8%) were insured. The median bodyweight was 17.0 (IQR: 9.1–26.9, range: 2.0–70.0) kg and the median age at diagnosis was 2.5 (IQR: 1.1–5.5, range: 0.0–17.0) years. After accounting for the effects of other factors using multivariable modelling, younger dogs had increased odds of an RTA event: dogs aged under three years showed 2.9 (95% CI 2.1–4.2, $P < 0.001$) times the odds and dogs aged between six and nine years showed 1.8 (95% CI 1.2–2.7, $P = 0.002$) times the odds of an RTA event compared with dogs aged over 14 years. Males had 1.4 (95% CI 1.2–1.6, $P < 0.001$) times the odds of an RTA event compared with females. Overall, 22.9% of cases died from a cause related to their RTA event. Of dogs with information

available, 34.0% underwent diagnostic imaging, 29.4% received intravenous fluid therapy, 71.1% received therapeutic pain relief, 46.0% were hospitalised and 15.6% had surgery performed under a general anaesthetic. Golden Retriever (OR: 0.2, 95% CI 0.1–0.7, $P = 0.006$), Shih-Tzu (OR: 0.5, 95% CI 0.2–0.9, $P = 0.030$) and West Highland White Terrier (OR: 0.4, 95% CI 0.2–0.8, $P = 0.015$) showed reduced odds of RTA compared with crossbred dogs.

CONCLUSION

This study identified important breed effects and demographic factors that were associated with RTA in dogs, notably being young and male. This information can assist preventive action by highlighting the subsets of dogs most at risk.

Breeder-reported canine perinatal mortality in the United Kingdom in 2013 and 2014

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This study aimed to determine current breeder-reported rates of canine perinatal mortality in the United Kingdom. For this study perinatal mortality was defined as the sum of stillbirths and neonate mortality, defined as the number of deaths from birth to 21 days of age.

An online survey was introduced to members of the Kennel Club Assured Breeders Scheme via email and social media. Breeders completed the survey anonymously, answering questions about one pedigree litter born during 2013 and 2014.

330 litters were reported representing 95 breeds and 2165 puppies. Perinatal mortality affected 47.6% of the litters. Excluding stillbirths, 27.9% of the litters suffered neonatal losses. Perinatal mortality at the puppy level was 16.5% with stillbirths accounting for 53% of these deaths. Of the puppies born alive, neonate mortality was 8.6% during the

first 21 days with 8.5% being lost in the first week of life. Stillborn rates for bitches aged 1–2 years at parturition was 3%, 2–3 years 34%, 3–4 years 31%, 4–5 years 17%, 5–6 years 10%, 6–7 years 4% and over 7 years of age 1%.

Dogs were categorised into small breeds (less than 30cm in height at the withers), medium (31–51cm) and large (over 52cm). Perinatal mortality for the small breeds was 15.6%, medium 13.3% and the large breeds 22.0%. Stillbirth rates for these groups were, small 6.25%, medium 8.21% and large 10.82%. Neonatal mortality up to 21 days of age was 10.0% in the small breeds, 5.5% for the medium and 12.8% for large breeds.

This survey reports similar rates and patterns to previous studies in that most puppy deaths occur close to birth. Excluding stillbirths, neonatal losses are mainly in the first week of life although much higher in medium and large than in small breeds. The stillbirth rates for large breed dogs is double that for the small breeds. Bitches aged between 2–4 years have significantly higher rates of stillbirths.

It is notoriously difficult to gather sensitive information from breeders. This is the first time that social media and online anonymous data collection has been employed to collect puppy mortality information and may be a useful method to expand this data collection on a wider scale with a prospective cohort study. Examining husbandry and breeder experience may give some insight to explain the mortality patterns seen.

Risk factors for road traffic accidents in the first year of a cat's life

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Road traffic accidents (RTAs) are a common cause of death and injury in domestic cats and a concern to many owners. This study assessed the potential risk factors for road traffic accidents in cats up to 12 months of age within a UK cat

cohort known as 'The Bristol Cats Study'. Data was obtained from three questionnaires, completed by cat owners when their cats were 8–16 weeks old, 6 months old and 12 months old. Information was gathered regarding environmental conditions, cat characteristics and owner management factors. Univariable and multivariable logistic regression analysis was used to assess potential associations between these factors and RTAs. Cats were only included in the study if they had outdoor access and if their owners had completed the questionnaire for 12 month old cats. Cats were excluded if they had left the study prior to reaching 12 months of age for any reason other than an RTA, or if the owner was not sure whether or not their cat had been involved in an RTA. Of 1264 eligible study cats, 49 (3.9%) had been involved in an RTA, of which 71.4% resulted in fatal injuries. Rural locations were

found to be a higher risk area for RTAs than towns, cities or suburban locations. Cats that were reported by their owners to hunt at the roadside were found to be at a greater risk of an RTA, as well as cats whose owners classified the stretch of road just by their house as being a 'long straight section of

road'. No significant associations were found between coat colour, breed, sex or neuter status and risk of an RTA. Results from the study may help owners and rehoming centres to more accurately assess the risk of an RTA and may also facilitate better management to reduce the risk of an RTA.

Road Traffic Accidents in cats attending emergency-care practices in the UK.

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BACKGROUND

Road traffic accidents (RTA) are a common veterinary presentation and are reportedly the most common cause of mortality in young cats. However, there are limited publications describing risk factors and survival for RTA. This study aimed to estimate the prevalence of RTA in cats attending emergency out-of-hours clinics and to identify risk factors for RTA occurrence and survival to discharge.

METHODS

Using the VetCompass database, RTA cases were identified from the electronic patient records of cats attending Vets Now emergency clinics between January 2012 and February 2014. Mixed effects logistic regression was used to identify risk factors for RTA occurrence. Logistic regression was used to identify risk factors associated with survival to discharge.

RESULTS

There were 1,407 RTA cases identified from 33,053 cats attending 50 emergency clinics during the study period, resulting in an apparent prevalence of 4.3% (95% Confidence Interval (C.I.) 4.0%–4.5%). Cats aged 6months–2years had increased odds of RTA in comparison to all other ages (Odds Ratio (OR) range 0.14–0.67 for all other ages, $p<0.0001$). Purebred cats (OR 0.53 95% C.I. 0.40–0.69 $p<0.001$) and female cats (OR 0.79 95% C.I. 0.75–0.96 $p<0.001$) had lower odds of RTA compared with crossbred and male cats respectively. A slight seasonal trend was present, with higher odds of RTA in the autumn (OR 1.19 95% C.I. 1.01–1.40 $p<0.0001$) in comparison with the spring. Spinal (OR 2.44 95% C.I. 1.41–4.25 $p=0.002$) and abdominal injury (OR 2.71 95% C.I. 1.32–5.53 $p=0.006$) were associated with increased odds of death prior to discharge, and skin injury was associated with reduced odds (OR 0.27 95% C.I. 0.16–0.46 $p<0.001$) in comparison with cats without those injury types. Increasing count of injuries were associated with increased odds of death before discharge (OR 1.6 95% C.I. 1.29–1.98 $p<0.001$).

CONCLUSION

About one in 25 cats presenting to emergency-care practice have experienced an RTA event. Younger cats, males, and crossbreeds are at increased odds of RTA. The body-area injured and the count of injuries were associated with survival to discharge. Awareness of these risks may aid veterinarians to predict the risk of RTA for owners and to improve prognostic estimates for recovery.

Attitudes to and opinions of neutering in dogs: results of a canine reproduction survey of veterinary surgeons

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An on-line survey was conducted to gather information about canine neutering. Invitations were placed on AnimalOracle.com, e-mailed to vetsurgeon.org members and

sent via press releases. Questionnaire items were attitude statements with 5 answer options (Strongly agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree, No opinion) asking veterinary surgeons (VS) about perceptions and options to prevent breeding and sexual behaviours in dogs; most were asked on separate pages and respondents could not return to a question once they had moved on. A total of 411 VS completed the survey: 71% were female, two-thirds were <40 years of age. Most recommended neutering of males and females although there was awareness of various alternatives to surgical neutering: 80% named Alizin to treat misalliance; 33% Suprelorin for temporary medical castration and 27% named Ypzoalan to treat BPH.

Question:	Yes		No	
	N	(%)	N	(%)
Do you recommend neutering as a routine procedure for all dogs ?	310	(76)	100	(24)
Do you always recommend surgical neutering for female dogs not intended for breeding?	386	(94)	24	(6)
... .. male ...?	251	(62)	157	(38)
Do you consider the various options available to owners when recommending methods to prevent unwanted puppies ?	248	(60)	162	(40)
Do you offer owners alternatives to surgical neutering?	211	(52)	198	(48)

Guest (guest)

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On: Wed, 26 Apr 2023 14:29:08