



MINUTES OF THE WORKING TRIALS LIAISON COUNCIL
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2019 AT 10.30 AM
IN THE BOARDROOM, THE KENNEL CLUB, CLARGES
STREET

PRESENT

Mrs P Bann	Essex Working Trials Society
Miss J Carruthers	North East Counties Working Trials Society
Mr M Drewitt	New Forest Working Trials Society
Mr B Gilbert	ASPADS Working Trials Society
Mr N Hines	Lincolnshire German Shepherd Dog & All Breeds Training Society
Mrs J Holt	North West Working Trials Society
Mrs J Howells	Hampshire Working Trials Society
Mr M Lewindon	Surrey Dog Training Society
Mrs D Ling	East Anglian Working Trials Training Society
Mrs L Marlow	Southern Alsatian Training Society
Mr G Martin	Midland Counties German Shepherd Dog Association
Mr R Musgrave	Yorkshire Working Trials Society
Mr D Robertson	Association of Bloodhound Breeders
Mr B Russell	Scottish Kennel Club
Mr N Sutcliffe	Bloodhound Club
Mrs S Tannert	British Association for German Shepherd Dogs
Mr J West	Wessex Working Trials Club
Mr J Wykes	Leamington Dog Training Club

GUEST

Mrs S Garner	Chair, Activities Committee
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IN ATTENDANCE

Miss D Deuchar	Senior Manager - Governance & Education
Miss R Mansfield	Senior Officer - Working Dog Activities Team
Mrs A Mitchell	Senior Committee Secretary - Working Dog Activities Team

ITEM 1. TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL

1. There being no other nominations, Mr Gilbert was re-elected as Chairman for the term of the Council.

IN THE CHAIR

MR B GILBERT



ITEM 2. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL

2. Miss Carruthers and Mr Martin were proposed and seconded for the role of Vice Chairman for the term of the Council. Following a ballot, Mr Martin was duly elected.

ITEM 3. TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE ONTO THE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE EFFECTIVE FROM JUNE 2019 TO MAY 2022

3. Mr Martin and Miss Carruthers were proposed and seconded for the role of representative onto the Activities Committee.
4. Following a ballot, Mr Martin was duly elected.

ITEM 4. TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE ONTO THE ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL

5. Mr Gilbert was proposed and seconded for the role of representative onto the Activities Health and Welfare Sub-Group for the above term. There being no other nominations, Mr Gilbert was duly re-elected.

ITEM 5. PRESENTATION TO THE COUNCIL ON KENNEL CLUB STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

6. The Council noted a presentation which explained Kennel Club and Liaison Council structures and procedures.

ITEM 6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

7. Apologies were received from Mrs K Herbert.
8. Mrs Garner, attending the meeting as a guest in her capacity as Chair of the Activities Committee was welcomed.
9. The Council noted with sadness the death of Mr G Talbot, a previous member of the Council. Mr Talbot had been nominated and approved for the current term of office.

ITEM 7. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

10. The minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2018 were approved as an accurate record.

ITEM 8. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

11. The Council noted that the following amendments to I Regulations were approved by the Board at its meeting on 17 July 2018:

Regulation I(C)4.:

TO:

Down (Introductory Stake **and CD** 5 Minutes. Other Stakes 10 Minutes).

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective date 1 January 2019)

A consequential amendment was also approved:



Regulation I(A)9.a.

TO:

9. Schedule of Exercises and Points.

a. INTRODUCTORY AND COMPANION DOG (CD) STAKE

	Maximum Marks	Group Total	Minimum Group Qualifying Mark
6. Down (Introductory Stake 5 Minutes; CD Stake 10 5 Minutes) (Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.) (Effective date 1 January 2019)	10	50	35

Regulation I30.i.

One close fitting smooth collar must be worn. The only attachment permitted is a form of identification. Dogs must not wear any type of slip or half-slip collar when under test.

(Insertion in bold)

Effective date: 1 January 2019

Regulation I(C)2

TO:

2. Heelwork. - ... Where required the lead should be ~~of a slip type or attached to a smooth~~ **close fitting smooth** collar ~~or slip chain~~. Retractable leads or head collars are not to be used.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective date 1 January 2019)

Regulation I(A)9. Schedule of Exercises and Points

TO:

a. INTRODUCTORY AND COMPANION DOG (CD) STAKE

Group II Agility

	Maximum Marks	Group Total	Minimum Group Qualifying Mark
9. Scale (3) Stay (2) (1) Position (1) Recall (5)	10	20	14

b. UTILITY DOG (UD) STAKE

Group II Agility

	Maximum Marks	Group Total	Minimum Group Qualifying Mark
8. Scale (3) Stay (2) (1) Position (1) Recall (5)	10	20	14

c. WORKING DOG (WD) STAKE

Group II Agility

	Maximum Marks	Group Total	Minimum Group Qualifying Mark



8. Scale (3) Stay (~~2~~) **(1) Position (1)** Recall (5) 10 20 14

d. TRACKING DOG (TD) STAKE
Group II Agility

	Maximum Marks	Group Total	Minimum Group Qualifying Mark
8. Scale (3) Stay (2) (1) Position (1) Recall (5)	10	20	14

e. PATROL DOG (PD) STAKE
Group II Agility

	Maximum Marks	Group Total	Minimum Group Qualifying Mark
8. Scale (3) Stay (2) (1) Position (1) Recall (5)	10	20	14

(Deletions struck through. Insertions in bold.)
(Effective date 1 January 2019)

A concern was raised that Regulation I30.i. did not appear as stated above in the 2019 Regulation booklet. The office undertook to amend the wording to reflect the revised Regulation as agreed by the Activities Committee.

Progression and eligibility issues

12. The Council considered a suggestion from the Activities Committee that it should consider issues of progression and eligibility as a whole with a view to producing a package of measures designed to attract new competitors and to retain existing ones in order to address the decreasing number of entries. Doing so would involve a consultation process in which the views of competitors would be assessed and taken into account.
13. In order to do so the Committee suggested that the Council form one or more Working Parties, or Panels, made up of Council members, with a remit to focus on specific issues and to report back to the Council with proposals and recommendations for further consideration. This would involve members of such Panels in undertaking some work between Council meetings in order to carry out research and consultation, and to obtain any evidence necessary to support any proposals. Liaison between Panel members may take place at trials or via emails or Skype calls.
14. It was noted that the model had proved to be highly effective in Agility, where the use of the Panel system had allowed the Agility Liaison Council to address a number of issues.
15. After discussion, the Council agreed that three Panels should be formed, as follows:

PD Stake Panel
To consider issues facing PD Stakes
Mr M Lewindon
Mrs D Ling
Mrs L Marlow
Mr J Wykes



Progression Panel

To consider progression and eligibility issues, and ways in which new competitors may be attracted

Mrs P Bann
Mr N Hines
Mrs J Holt
Mr G Martin
Mrs S Tannert

[**Afternote:** Mr Musgrave had been appointed to the Panel but had subsequently indicated that he would not be able to fulfil the role.]

Equipment Panel

To consider any issues relating to equipment, with particular reference to jumps

Mrs P Bann
Miss J Carruthers
Mrs J Howells
Mr G Martin
Mr J Wykes

Dogs biting on the right arm

16. At its previous meeting, the Council considered whether there should be any regulation to state that dogs must bite on the right arm. It noted that two proposals had been submitted and were included on the agenda under item 14.

Research project

17. At its previous meeting, the Council noted that, following its request for research based on comparisons of dogs traversing a 5 foot scale versus a 6 foot scale; and an 8 foot long jump versus a 9 foot long jump, a formal proposal was being formulated. An update was provided under item 10.

Proposed review of Regulations for Bloodhound Trials relating to entries/qualifications

18. At its previous meeting, the Council discussed a proposed review of I(D) Regulations relating to Bloodhound Trials in order to address the issue of higher stakes becoming 'top heavy' as a result of reduced entries at trials. The Council had requested that discussion take place between the Bloodhound Club and the Association of Bloodhound Breeders (ABB) with regard to the potential reinstatement of the nomination system, in order to increase the number of competitors competing at lower levels.
19. The Bloodhound Club was in favour of a hound placed second in Intermediate also being qualified to enter the Senior Stake. Neither club was in favour of reintroducing the nomination system.
20. In the absence of a common proposal being agreed by the two clubs, the Council accepted that there should be no change to the existing Regulations under the terms of which only a hound placed first would progress into the next Stake.
21. It was highlighted that the main issue facing Bloodhound Trials was a lack of new competitors coming into the discipline and competing in the lower Stakes. Efforts were being made to attract new competitors, including requesting breeders of Bloodhounds to encourage puppy buyers to take an interest, and numbers in the lower Stakes were beginning to increase slightly. It was accepted however participation in Bloodhound trials required significant time and commitment, and that there were also issues in finding suitable land.



ITEM 9. INSURANCE ISSUES

22. The meeting was joined, via a telephone link, by Mr A Goulbourne, representing Howden UK Group Limited, the insurance broker acting on behalf of the Kennel Club with Hiscox Insurance (the Kennel Club's insurance provider).
23. Mr Goulbourne addressed a number of concerns relating to insurance and liability issues at Working Trials which had been raised by Council representatives.
24. The Council was assured that Hiscox was well aware of the way in which Working Trials were organised and conducted and of the needs of policyholders.

Public Liability Insurance

25. It was noted that the Kennel Club's minimum requirement was for licensed events to have Public Liability Insurance.

Employers Liability Insurance

26. In addition to Public Liability Insurance, it was strongly recommended that event organisers also have Employers Liability Insurance in place, which would provide protection for an organisation against claims brought by employees (including volunteers) who were injured in the course of their employment and where it was believed that their employer was responsible.

Exclusions to cover

27. There were some exclusions to both Public Liability Insurance and Employers Liability Insurance, but these related to matters which were outside the control of organisers, such as acts of terrorism. Other than these, policies did not exclude any liabilities which would require separate cover via another policy.
28. Such policies however were designed to cover the needs of clubs or societies, which had a duty of care to all participants. Cover for the organising clubs/societies would include all exercises at a Working Trial in respect of injury to a third party person (including a spectator or steward). Cover would not be provided under the Hiscox policies for injury to animals or claims brought against individual dog owners.

Age restrictions

29. It was confirmed that there were no age restrictions on liability in respect of Public Liability or Employers Liability insurance.
30. However, Personal Accident cover, which would only cover serious injuries, was only provided to those aged between 18-80 years. Personal Accident cover would be applicable to (for example), directors or partners of a company, committee members of a club, and any other individuals who were covered by a contract of services, such as judges or volunteers.

3rd party insurance for dog owners

31. Public Liability and Employers Liability insurance policies were not designed to cover the needs of individuals such as dog owners or competitors, who may wish to arrange their own cover if necessary. Dog owners wishing to arrange such cover should take care to ensure that the policy included cover for working or competing dogs, as appropriate, and that it included 3rd party liability for injuries to people or to other dogs.
32. It was suggested that advice from the Kennel Club should be sought regarding the provision of 3rd party liability cover for competitors.



Risk assessments

33. It was noted that insurance was not generally conditional upon provision of a risk assessment by competition organisers. However, insurers would expect organisers to ensure that their events were well-managed, and to take reasonable steps to prevent injuries, and it was therefore good practice for a risk assessment to be carried out. Doing so would demonstrate that such reasonable steps had been taken, and would serve to protect the competition organisers against any risk of liability being refused by insurers.
34. In response to a query, the Council was advised that a policy would not specifically require that helpers be given suitable training, but there was an expectation that such training, if necessary, would be provided as part of a well-managed event.
35. The Council agreed that the PD Stake Panel should be requested to consider the provision of a generic risk assessment document for use as a template to assist societies in formulating event-specific assessments and to help them ensure that all reasonable and foreseeable risks had been considered.
36. A query was raised regarding a situation should a competing dog have been involved in a previous incident at a Working Trial. The Council was advised that there was a requirement under the policy to take reasonable steps to prevent accident or avoid injury. If a dog was known to bite indiscriminately and was allowed to compete by the club/society which was aware of this and took no steps to prevent further incidents, it could be argued that the club had failed to take reasonable steps to avoid injury and indemnity could be denied. If the risk had been assessed, however, and there was rationale to allow the dog to enter but it then bit inappropriately, indemnity should be provided although liability would most likely attach to the club/society and it was likely that compensation would be paid.

Notification of incidents

37. It was advisable that any major incidents occurring at an event should be notified to insurers as soon as possible. However it was noted that in some cases what had appeared to be a minor incident may lead to a subsequent claim in the future, and that such claims would generally be supported by insurers even if not previously notified.

Protected Stewards

38. It was noted that a protected steward, in undertaking the role, was voluntarily accepting a certain risk when carrying out that role. However, they were only accepting a risk that was reasonable for the circumstances and if they were injured as a result of the negligence of the organiser/owner/dog handler they may have a claim for compensation. In response to a query from a club which appeared to have been advised otherwise, Mr Goulbourne agreed to investigate further on receipt of details.
39. However Hiscox would defend the insured society against any claim for compensation.

Liability of officers of a society

40. A query was raised as to whether there were circumstances in which officers of a society may be held responsible for payment of compensation, for injuries sustained in connection with a trial. It was confirmed that a claim brought against officers of a society as a result of insured activities would be dealt with by Hiscox under its insurance, and that officers themselves would not be responsible for making any payment. Liability however may be refused in the event of the activity not being insured, which would only occur if the officers had, in some way, breached the terms and conditions of the policy, such as not having taken reasonable steps to prevent injuries, as discussed earlier.



Disclaimers

41. The Council sought clarification as to whether a disclaimer stating that the owner/handler of any dog was legally responsible for any injury or damage that their dog may cause whilst competing or while attending the trial, to be printed on the competition schedule, would be legally binding. It was confirmed that such a disclaimer may have a very limited defensive merit in demonstrating that a protected steward was aware of the risks involved, but it would not remove liability in the event of negligence. Event organisers would not be able to absolve themselves of liability by the use of such a disclaimer.

Insurance of trophies

42. Many clubs had a number of trophies which were in some cases of considerable value. It was confirmed that if necessary these should be insured under a separate policy as they would not be covered under a Society's general insurance.
43. **Note:** Mr Goulbourne's responses were made on behalf of Howden, in reference to the insurance arranged with Hiscox, and clubs were advised to refer any concerns to their own insurers for further clarification, if required.
44. Mr Goulbourne was thanked for his contribution to the meeting, which was greatly appreciated.

ITEM 10. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP

45. The Council noted that filming for the Working Trials film, which would be made available on the Kennel Club Academy website, took place in September 2018. Work was currently in progress to finalise the film and it was anticipated that the film would be available on the Academy later in 2019.
46. The presentation relating to Bloodhound Trials regulations was now available on the Academy along with the examination.

ITEM 11. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP

47. The Council noted a report from Mr Gilbert on the work of the Sub-Group.
48. Following the Council's request for research based on comparisons of dogs traversing a 5 foot scale versus a 6 foot scale; and an 8 foot long jump versus a 9 foot long jump, a formal proposal had been formulated by Dr Boyd, Dr Doyle, and Mr Gilbert, and a request for funding submitted. However as yet no final decision had been made by the Finance Committee, which had requested further information which had been provided by Dr Boyd.

ITEM 12. KENNEL CLUB WORKING TRIAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Ballot for judges for the 2022 Kennel Club Working Trial Championships

49. A ballot was conducted to determine the Council's nomination of judges for the 2022 Kennel Club Working Trials Championships.

Judges

50. The Council noted that judges had been appointed for forthcoming Working Trial Championships, as follows:

2019
TD – Ms J Owens-Poole



PD – Ms L Cottier

2020

TD – Mr L Newman

PD – Mr S Ford

2021

PD – Mr J Wykes

TD – Mr M Williams

Criteria for judges for the Kennel Club Working Trials Championships

51. The Council was advised that subsequent to its 2018 meeting, the Activities Committee noted that the existing criteria for judges for the Kennel Club Working Trial Championships included the requirement for a judge to have attended the relevant Working Trial judges' seminar, but did not explicitly state that he/she must have passed the examination. The Committee had agreed that this requirement should be added to the criteria, for the purposes of clarity and completeness.

ITEM 13. FIVE YEAR STRATEGY

52. The Council was satisfied that issues listed on the Five Year Strategy document would be addressed by the creation of the three Panels as agreed earlier in the meeting.
53. It looked forward to receiving the reports from the Panels at its next meeting.

ITEM 14. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

Proposed amendment to Regulation I27.(c)

54. Surrey Dog Training Society, represented by Mr Lewindon, proposed an amendment to the above Regulation which would require that, immediately before undertaking an exercise, competitors would be told, by the judge or steward on the judge's behalf, which exercise they were being required to attempt. The proposal was seconded by Mrs Marlow.
55. The Society, whilst acknowledging the variety and flexibility in how exercises were set and the order in which they were arranged, was of the view that competitors should clearly understand what they were expected to do to achieve the requisite number of points to qualify, and potentially win competitions. Clarity would also help to ensure the safety of those taking part.
56. It was clarified that the proposal made no reference to trials at which a lockout was in place, and that it was intended to eliminate ambiguity in all cases, whether or not the judge had requested a lockout.
57. A query was raised as to whether it was necessary to amend the regulation, noting that all competitors attended a judge's briefing in which details of the test were provided. However it was suggested that there was anecdotal evidence to suggest that there were numerous examples of competitors being unclear as to what was required of them during an exercise.
58. Under the terms of the proposal, it would be necessary for the judge, or the steward, to provide a further explanation prior to each exercise to ensure absolute clarity. An amendment to the original proposal was agreed whereby the requirement for an explanation to be provided 'immediately' prior to an exercise was removed.



59. A vote took place on the revised proposal which, by a majority, was not supported.
- Proposals for an amendment to Regulation I(C)17
60. Two proposals had been submitted covering the same issue and accordingly, were considered together. The Council agreed to consider the proposal from Mr J Wykes first, as it was more detailed than the proposal submitted by North West Working Trials Society.
61. Mr Wykes, a Council member, wished the Council to consider an amendment to Regulation I(C)17 which was submitted with the objective of ensuring that dogs were only trained to bite on the right arm, in the interests of safety.
62. The proposal was seconded by Mr Martin.
63. Under the terms of the proposal, in any exercise where the dog was required to bite a protected steward (protected consistent with safety), it must be on the right arm between elbow and wrist. Any indiscriminate biting must be severely penalised.
64. There was some discussion regarding a definition of indiscriminate biting. It was clarified that this was intended to include a bite anywhere other than on the right arm.
65. Whilst it was accepted that dogs were trained to bite on the right arm, it was suggested that it was not possible to be too prescriptive due to the number of variables involved in an exercise, including the fact that the Protected Steward could be running in any of the exercises where the dog was required to bite. For this reason it was not desirable to state that a dog may only bite between elbow and wrist, or that it should be penalised for biting elsewhere on the arm. Accordingly, with the agreement of Mr Wykes, it was agreed that the words 'between elbow and wrist' should be removed from the proposal.
66. A query was raised as to whether the proposal related only to the Pursuit and Detention exercise, as stated on the agenda. Mr Wykes clarified that it was intended to apply to all exercises in which dogs were required to bite, and that accordingly the proposed additional wording should appear as a separate paragraph elsewhere in the Regulations and not specifically under Regulation I(C)17.
67. Subject to the above, a vote took place, and by a majority the following amendment to I Regulations was recommended for approval:
- I Regulations (location to be determined by the office)
TO:
In any exercise where the dog is required to bite a protected steward (protected consistent with safety), it must be on the right arm. Any indiscriminate biting must be severely penalised.
(Insertion in bold)
68. In view of the above, the proposal submitted by North West Working Trials Society for an amendment to Regulation I(C)17 was withdrawn, with the full agreement of Mrs Holt.
- Proposal for amendment to Regulation I(D).6.h
69. Ms Mckenzie, represented by Mr Robertson, wished the Council to consider an amendment to Regulation I(D)6., relating to Bloodhound Trials. Under the terms of the proposal, should cattle be present, the Stake Manager must inform line walkers that a diversion should be made to avoid walking through them. If a reasonable diversion was not possible then the line should be aborted and a spare line used.



70. The Council noted that the proposal was not supported by either the Bloodhound Club or the Association of Bloodhound Breeders, and it was not discussed further.

ITEM 15. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Number of meetings

71. Yorkshire Working Trials Society, represented by Mr R Musgrave, wished to suggest that two Liaison Council meetings were scheduled each year.
72. The Council was in agreement that two meetings each year would be desirable, especially following the instigation of the three Panels as agreed earlier in the meeting. It was anticipated that the new arrangements would allow for the Council to hold more meaningful discussions and to progress matters more quickly.
73. It was agreed that the Council would meet again in January 2020, with a subsequent meeting taking place in July 2020. If successful, meetings in following years would follow the same pattern.

Removal of the gun test

74. Mr Musgrave, on behalf of Yorkshire Working Trials Society, requested that the Council discuss the removal of the gun test from Working Trials. It was of the view that use of guns during trials was no longer appropriate.
75. The Council agreed that the matter should be referred to the Equipment Panel for consideration as to whether the gun test should be removed, and if so, whether the marks should be reallocated or a new test introduced to replace it.

Qualification for Championship CD Stake

76. Miss Carruthers, on behalf of Ms F Atkin, requested the Council to review whether CD Open should be a compulsory requirement to progress to CD Championship. Ms Atkin was of the view that doing so would elevate the perceived value of the CD Open Stake and that it would bring CD into line with all the other open stakes as a requirement for progression into championship stakes.
77. The Council agreed that the matter should be referred to the Progression Panel for further consideration.

Refusal of entries

78. Southern Alsatian Training Society, represented by Mrs Marlow, wished to draw the Council's attention to concerns that the procedure to be followed should a club wish to refuse entries from a particular individual, or for a particular dog was unsatisfactory in that it did not require the individual concerned to be advised of the reason for the decision.
79. It was noted that the Kennel Club provided guidance which was applicable to all disciplines, and which ensured that entries may only be refused by a club where there was good reason for it to do so.
80. A copy of the Kennel Club's 'General advice on the exercise of the right of Societies to refuse entries to Kennel Club Licensed Events' document guidance may be found at: https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/media/1110591/annex_c_-_sh106_right_to_refuse_entries_guidance_note.pdf

Introductory Stake



81. Mr Wykes requested the Council to discuss the merits of the Introductory Stake, and to consider ways in which it may be improved. It agreed that the issue should be referred to the Progression Panel for consideration.

Progression issues

82. Mr Wykes wished the Council to discuss progression through the stakes and ways in which it could be improved. It was agreed that this matter would also be referred to the Progression Panel.

ITEM 16. MARKING UP OF CATALOGUES

83. The Council was invited by the office to agree a standard method for marking up Championship Working Trial catalogues to indicate qualification marks.
84. It was agreed that in the interests of clarity and consistency, catalogues would be clearly marked to show dogs which had qualified in the Tracking or Patrol Dog stake, and those dogs which had gained Excellent qualifications in these Stakes.

ITEM 17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

85. No matters were raised under Any Other Business.

ITEM 18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

86. The next meeting of the Council would take place in January 2020. The exact date would be confirmed in September 2019.

The meeting closed at 4.00 pm

MR B GILBERT
Chairman

THE KENNEL CLUB'S MISSION STATEMENT

'The Kennel Club is the national body which exists to promote the general improvement, health and well-being of all dogs through responsible breeding and ownership'