



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WORKING TRIALS
LIAISON COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 13 JANUARY 2022
AT 10.30 AM VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

Note: the meeting had originally been scheduled to take place at Clarges St., London, but in view of Government advice relating to Covid-19, it was held remotely.

PRESENT:

Mrs P Bann	Essex Working Trials Society
Miss J Carruthers	North East Counties Working Trials Society
Miss L Cottier	Scottish Working Trials Society
Mr D Craven	Yorkshire 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
Ms L Marlow	Southern Alsatian Training Society
Mr D Robertson	Association of Bloodhound Breeders
Mr N Sutcliffe	Bloodhound Club
Mr C Taylor	British Association for German Shepherd Dogs
Mr J West	Wessex Working Trials Club
Mr J Wykes	Leamington Dog Training Club

GUESTS

Dr A Carter	School of Animal, Rural & Environmental Sciences, Nottingham Trent University (item 10, paragraphs 19-33 only)
Dr E Williams	Department of Animal Health, Behaviour & Welfare, Harper Adams University (item 10, paragraphs 19-33 only)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Miss D Deuchar	Head of Canine Activities
Miss C McHardy	Manager - Education, Training, and Working Dog Activities Team
Miss R Mansfield	Senior Officer - Working Dog Activities Team
Mrs A Mitchell	Senior Committee Secretary - Working Dog Activities Team



NOTE: any recommendations made by the Working Trials Liaison Council are subject to review by the Activities Committee and The Kennel Club Board, and will not come into effect unless and until Board approval has been confirmed.

ITEM 1. PRESENTATION TO THE COUNCIL ON KENNEL CLUB STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES

1. The Council received a presentation from the office on The Kennel Club and Liaison Council structure and procedures, and the role of Council representatives.
2. The office was thanked for the presentation, which was very informative, and a request was made that copies be circulated to all Council representatives. The office undertook to do so.

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

3. Following an election process carried out by email prior to the meeting, Mr Craven and Mr Taylor were nominated and seconded for the role. A ballot took place and Mr Taylor was elected as Chairman for the term of the Council. Mr Taylor thanked the representatives for their support.

IN THE CHAIR: MR C TAYLOR

ITEM 3. TO ELECT A VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE TERM OF THE COUNCIL

4. Following an election process carried out by email, Mr Gilbert was proposed and seconded for the role of Vice Chairman for the term of the Council, and there being no other candidates nominated and seconded, was duly elected.

ITEM 4. TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE ONTO THE ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE EFFECTIVE FROM JUNE 2022 TO MAY 2025

5. Mr Gilbert was proposed and seconded for the role of representative on the Activities Committee. There were no other nominations, and Mr Gilbert was duly re-elected.

ITEM 5. TO ELECT A REPRESENTATIVE ONTO THE ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP

6. 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 6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

7. Apologies were received from Mr A Laws, Mrs D Ling, and Mrs S Wright.

ITEM 7. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

8. The Council noted the minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2021. Mr Lewindon raised a concern that paragraph 37, which stated that two reports circulated to Council members were based on video analysis rather than research, was inaccurate, in that the authors of the reports had also personally witnessed training and had examined some dogs, in addition to viewing video footage.
9. The Council was in agreement that the reference to the reports being based on video analysis rather than research should be removed, and the wording would therefore read as follows:

'The Council noted that two reports, from a veterinary surgeon and a physiotherapist, on the effects of bitework technique on dogs, had been circulated by Mr Lewindon to Council members prior to the meeting. However, it was noted that the reports had not been independently commissioned, and therefore they were not discussed further.'
10. Subject to the above amendment, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

ITEM 8. MATTERS ARISING/RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

11. The Council noted that the Board, at its meeting on 12 October 2021, approved the following amendments to regulations:

Regulation I(B)1. Method of handling **TO:**

Although implicit obedience is necessary, dogs and handlers must operate in as free and natural a manner as possible; persistent barking, whining, etc. in any exercise other than location of person or speak on command should be penalised. The handler must not have food or a toy on their person whilst being tested. ~~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.~~

(Deletion struck through)

(Effective 1 January 2022)

New Regulation I(B)18. **Health and Safety, Bite Exercises 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 will result in the dog being excluded from the remainder of the test. At no time in any exercise should the sleeve be presented to the dog in an obvious and exaggerated manner, but equally it must not be obscured in such a way as to make it inaccessible to the dog. A protected steward shall, for both their safety and that of the dog, take the energy impact of the bite, landing all of the dog's feet as soon as possible, and without any such movement that causes the dog to be swung or lifted up in a circular motion.

(Insertion in bold)



(Effective 1 January 2022)

Regulation I(B)14. Test of Courage **TO:**

This is a test of courage rather than of control, and the method of testing is at the Judge's discretion. Handlers must be prepared to have the dog tested when off the lead by a protected steward. **The protected arm must be accessible. The dog must be judged on its courage and attitude.** (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 1 January 2022)

Regulation I(B)16. Recall from protected stewards **TO:**

~~The 'protected steward' protected consistent with safety, will be introduced to the handler whose dog will be free at heel. After an unheated conversation the 'protected steward' will run away. At a reasonable distance the handler will be ordered to send his dog. When the dog is approximately half way between handler and the 'protected steward' he will be ordered to be recalled. The recall may be by whistle or voice. The 'protected steward' should continue running until the dog returns or closes. If the dog continues to run alongside the 'protected steward', the 'protected steward' should run a further ten or dozen paces to indicate this.~~

The dog will be off lead beside the handler. The position of the dog and the command given to send the dog must be the same as that for the Pursuit exercise. The 'protected steward' will be challenged and will reply in order to gain the dog's attention before running away as directed by the judge. The handler will be told when to send his dog. When the dog is approximately half way between the handler and the 'protected steward' the judge will signal to recall the dog. The 'protected steward' should continue running until the dog returns to the handler or bites the sleeve. The recall may be by whistle or voice.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2022)

Regulation I(B) 17. Pursuit and detention of protected stewards. **TO:**

~~The 'protected steward' (a different one for choice) and handler should be introduced as above, and the dog sent forward under similar conditions. The 'protected steward' must continue to attempt to escape and, if possible, should do so through an exit or into a vehicle once the dog has had a chance to catch up with him. The dog must be regarded as having succeeded if it clearly prevents the 'protected steward' from continuing to flee by holding him by the protected arm. If the dog fails to make a convincing attempt to detain the 'protected steward', it shall lose any marks that it may have obtained for the recall from 'protected stewards' exercise or alternatively, it shall not be tested on the recall that follows the pursuit and detention of protected stewards exercise. The dog will be off lead beside the handler. The position of the dog and the command given to send the dog must be the same as that for the Recall exercise. The 'protected steward' will be challenged and will reply in order to gain the dog's attention before running away as directed by the judge. The handler will be told when to send his dog.~~

A run-out point may be set by the judge.

The dog must detain the protected steward by holding him by the protected arm until commanded by the handler to release.

If the dog fails to detain the 'protected steward', it shall lose any marks that it may have obtained for the Recall exercise, or it shall not be tested on the Recall.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 1 January 2022)



12. In response to a query, the Council noted that new regulation booklets, which would include the above amendments, would be issued as soon as they had been printed. All Council members would receive a copy. The booklet would also be available for download from The Kennel Club's website.
13. A further query was raised in reference to protective equipment. It was confirmed that on 13 April 2021 the Board had approved a new regulation which stated that 'Sleeves must have a tapered edge, and a jute cover, and must be suitable for all dogs entered.' It was clarified that this would also apply to bite suits.

ITEM 9. REVIEW OF PANEL REMITS AND MEMBERSHIP

14. The Council reviewed the remits and membership of the Panels, as follows:

PD Stake Panel

Remit: To consider issues facing PD stakes

Members: Mr M Lewindon
Mrs D Ling
Mrs L Marlow
Mr J Wykes

15. All four existing members of the Panel confirmed their willingness to continue in the role. The Panel also wished to add three additional members, as follows, noting that their membership would be subject to approval by the Activities Committee:

Miss L Cottier
Mr C Taylor
Mr L Theobald

Progression and Equipment Panel

16. The Council went on to consider the remits and membership of the Progression Panel and the Equipment Panel. It was suggested that the two be combined as there was considerable overlap between their roles. It was agreed that this would be a positive step.
17. Mr Martin had previously been a member of both Panels but was no longer a member of the Council, and it was necessary to replace him. Mr Craven offered to do so. Miss Carruthers and Mr Wykes wished to stand down from their position on the Equipment Panel, but Miss Cottier offered her services. All other members were happy to continue. Subject to approval by the Activities Committee, the revised remit and membership of the combined Panel would therefore be as follows:

Remit: To consider progression and eligibility issues, and ways in which new competitors may be attracted, and to consider any issues relating to equipment, with particular reference to jumps

Members: Mrs P Bann
Mr D Craven
Mr N Hines
Mrs J Holt
Mrs J Howells
Miss L Cottier



ITEM 10. ACTIVITIES HEALTH AND WELFARE SUB-GROUP

18. The Council noted a written report from Mr Gilbert, on the work of the Sub-Group following its meeting on 16 September 2021. No queries were raised.

Working Trials research

19. At this point, the meeting was joined by Dr A Carter and Dr E Williams, who had co-authored the paper on the working trials research into the scale and long jump which was carried out at Nottingham Trent University. The papers had been circulated to Council members prior to the meeting.
20. A number of written queries regarding the research had been forwarded to Dr Carter and Dr Williams prior to the meeting, and written answers had been circulated. A copy of the question-and-answer document is attached at **Annex A to the minutes**.
21. The Council noted that the paper relating to the long jump had now been published and was available within the public domain. Publication of the paper relating to the scale had been slightly delayed due to minor typesetting issues but it was hoped that these would be resolved very shortly.
22. A query was raised as to whether it was possible to draw any conclusions from the research as to the veterinary implications to dogs negotiating the scale and/or the long jump. However it was clarified by Dr Carter that it was not possible to state whether there was any increase to the risk of injury, and that no conclusion could be reached without retrospective research into dogs which had incurred injuries. It was also not possible to draw any conclusion as to whether competitive dogs may be retired earlier than may otherwise have been the case. However, it was possible to conclude from the research that greater impact forces on limbs could potentially increase the risk of injury outcomes.
23. A view was expressed that the experience of some Council members did not indicate that there was evidence to suggest that dogs competing in working trials were subject to injuries, and in fact many dogs went on to have long and happy retirements. However an alternative view was also presented that some dogs were being retired earlier than would otherwise be the case, due to concerns regarding the scale.

It was acknowledged that the experiences of long-term competitors should not be discounted, but when making any decisions it was necessary to take a balanced view in which both components, i.e. experience and research, were taken into account.

24. A further concern was also raised as to whether the sample size used in the research was adequate in order to produce a meaningful result. It was noted that the sample size had been limited by the number of individuals who were able to offer the availability of their dogs at the time. Details of the research had been widely circulated within the working trials community in order to maximise the number of participants, and everyone who volunteered to take part did so. The Council was assured by Dr Carter and Dr Williams that the sample size was comparable if not larger than similar kinetic and kinematic studies in dogs and was deemed suitable for robust analysis.
25. It was also suggested that some of the conditions used within the research did not accurately reflect those in real training sessions or working trials, in particular the surface. Most working trials took place on grass.



26. Addressing this, Dr Carter explained that in order to measure impact forces, it was necessary for dogs to land on a mat, which had to be kept flat. A fibre sand surface had been selected as the researchers considered that this was a forgiving surface and one which would provide a high degree of consistency over the trial period which was essential in order to achieve meaningful results. It was also pointed out that there was likely to be variability between grass surfaces depending upon factors such as soil structure and the level of moisture within the surface. Evaluation of surfaces would be a potential area for further research.
27. In response to concerns about the wide number of variables applying at a working trial and whether these should be taken into consideration, Dr Williams explained that in any research project, it was important to focus on one variable at a time. For example, in the current case, it would not have been possible to examine both scale height and the effects of surfaces in a single project. The objective was to control as many factors as possible, and to extrapolate key points which indicated trends within a population. Results should be noted and taken into account, and where possible, further research undertaken where appropriate.
28. Dr Carter noted that this research was the first to be undertaken on the subject and had provided information which had not previously been available, and should be seen as providing a baseline on which to build further progress, for example, research into the way in which surfaces responded in different environments, as mentioned earlier. Such research, which could be carried out without the involvement of dogs, could help to determine factors such as how spongy a surface was, or how giving, and how it was affected by moisture.
29. A query was raised as to whether comparable research had been carried out in relation to jumping horses. Although it was understood that some research had taken place into jumping styles and surfaces, it was difficult to draw direct comparisons as the presence of a rider added an additional variable.
30. The Council then went on to consider the recommendation that the height of the scale be reduced. A view was expressed that if it was agreed that there was a potential welfare risk to competing dogs, then it was essential to address it. A suggestion was made that there may be other options available, such as by making changes to the scale such as a ramp or a platform on its far side. It was highlighted by Dr Carter that the remit of the research had been to consider the effects of a reduction in height of the scale and the recommendations made had been based on that, but that other options could be considered.
31. It was accepted that the addition of a ramp or a platform to the scale was a potential option which may be considered further, although it was also noted that reducing the height of the scale would be simpler, with no implications for equipment, judging/marketing, or training methods.
32. There being no further questions for the researchers, Dr Carter and Dr Williams were thanked for their attendance at the meeting which had been very helpful and informative. At this point, both left the meeting.
33. The Council considered the main recommendations made in the report, which were:



- From the findings, it is recommended that consideration be made about the scale being lowered from 6ft to 5.5ft. Whilst lowering to 5ft would further reduce the impact on joints and landing force, this in turn encourages the dogs to 'jump' rather than 'scale', changing the nature of the obstacle.
 - There is evidence to suggest that shortening the length of the long jump may be of benefit to the dogs. Whilst not formally measured as part of the study, the capacity of the dogs to avoid overjumping the shorter distances suggests a sudden reduction of the long jump distance does not appear to impact dogs experienced in jumping a 9ft long jump.
34. Some views were expressed suggesting that it was not necessary to consider making such changes, however a show of hands indicated that the majority were in broad support of making changes to the obstacles, subject to feedback from the working trials community which would form an important part of the decision-making process. Options included:
- Lowering the height of the scale OR adding a ramp or platform
 - Reducing the length of the long jump
35. Accordingly, it was agreed that feedback should be sought prior to further discussion, and all members of the working trials community were therefore encouraged to make their views known to their representatives as soon as possible as to whether changes were required.
36. The matter would be considered further at the Council's next meeting in June 2022, either in the form of a discussion item or via formal proposals should any be submitted.

Future research

38. At its previous meeting, the Council had noted that Mr Martin was in the process of formulating a proposal for research into the way in which PD exercises were delivered, and Mr Martin would prepare a finalised proposal for consideration by the AHWSG at its September meeting without further reference to the Council. However, following submission of a proposal for an amendment to I Regulations relating to bite exercises which had been submitted to the Activities Committee (and subsequently approved by the Board), the PD Panel considered that the input of resources which would be required to undertake the research was no longer warranted. Accordingly, the Council noted that no further discussion by the Sub-Group had therefore been necessary.

ITEM 11. ACTIVITIES JUDGES SUB-GROUP

39. The Council noted a written report from Mr Gilbert following the Activities Judges Sub-Group meeting on 18 November 2021. It was particularly highlighted that the Guide for Working Trial Judges and Stewards was being updated and would include guidance relating to new or updated regulations referring to PD stakes.
40. Work was also in hand to develop a Guide for Trials Managers based on the format used within a guide for obedience Chief Stewards.
41. Work was also continuing on development of an online Regulations and Judging Procedure seminar and examination for PD which would be available on The Kennel Club Academy.



ITEM 12. ACCREDITED TRAINERS' ANNUAL SEMINAR

42. The Council noted that the Accredited Trainers Annual Seminar took place on 26 October 2021. Following discussion by the Accredited Trainers for working trials during the seminar, the Council was requested to consider a proposal submitted by Mr Gilbert for an addition to Regulation I(B)1. The proposal was made with the objective of regularising a long-standing and unwritten understanding that competitors should not watch the nosework test in the stake in which they were competing, prior to working their own dog.
43. The proposal was seconded by Mr Craven. A vote took place, and the amendment was **recommended** for approval, as follows:

Regulation I(B)1 Method of Handling **TO:**

1. Method of handling.—Although implicit obedience is necessary, dogs and handlers must operate in as free and natural a manner as possible; persistent barking, whining, etc. in any exercise other than location of person or speak on command should be penalised. The handler must not have food or a toy on their person whilst the dog is being tested. **As far as reasonably practical, competitors must not watch any dog working the nosework in the same stake, prior to competing.** (Insertion in bold)

ITEM 13. REPORT FROM THE PD STAKE PANEL

44. The Council noted the report received from the Panel.
45. In particular it was highlighted that a very successful PD Helpers training weekend organised by Southern Alsatian Training Society had taken place at the end of May 2021. More such weekends were being planned.
46. A list of PD Helpers was being formulated, which would list the exercises in which each helper was competent and happy to perform at a trial. This list would be published and made available to all Trials Managers running PD Working Trials.
47. The Council noted that displays of PD were being planned for the coming year. Any societies with an interest in running PD stakes were encouraged to approach the PD Panel to request such a presentation.

ITEM 14. REPORT FROM THE PROGRESSION PANEL/ EQUIPMENT PANEL

48. The Council noted a written report, which combined issues relating both to progression and equipment as the two matters were closely related.
49. The combined Panel was continuing the poll on whether the CD Open stake should be mandatory, and if the Introductory stake should remain in working trials. The poll had been paused due to Covid-19, but the Panel was keen to ensure all competitors had the opportunity to vote. The poll would remain open until April 2022, and the results would be submitted to the Council's next meeting.



50. The Panel would also be running another poll looking into the standardisation of the build of the long jump and the hurdle, as currently there was no description within the regulations as to how each of the jumps should be constructed. This poll would also close at the end of April 2022, with the results being submitted to the Council at its June meeting.

ITEM 15. KENNEL CLUB WORKING TRIALS CHAMPIONSHIPS

51. The Council noted that following discussion by the Activities Committee, it had been agreed that there was no necessity to appoint a specific individual to attend the Championships as a Kennel Club representative. It was hoped that one or more Board members, or senior members of The Kennel Club, would continue to attend.
52. Following a request by the Activities Committee, the Council reviewed the current process for the selection of judges for the Working Trials Championships, with particular reference as to whether the views of the host society should be given special consideration when selecting judges.
53. Under the terms of the current process, all societies which ran championship working trials may nominate judges for both the TD and PD stake. Societies may nominate a judge for the PD stake regardless of whether they held a championship PD stake themselves. A ballot would then take place in which these societies would vote to determine the Council's nomination of judges for the Championships.
54. The issue causing concern had arisen due to the timing, whereby host societies were requested to commit to host the Championships prior to the announcement of the judges appointed for that year. For any other working trial, host societies would select their own judges, but in the case of the Championships host societies had no input or control over the selection of judges, and as a result there was a potential for issues to arise.
55. The Council accepted that the final selection of judges for the Championships should continue to remain with The Kennel Club, but it was suggested that the issue could be simply resolved by a change in timing whereby potential host societies were not requested to come forward until such time as details of the judges for that particular year had been announced.
56. It was in full agreement that this would be a sensible step, and wished to recommend that this process be adopted in the future.

Judges

57. The Council noted that requests for nominations for judges for the Championships in 2024 would be issued by the office via email to Council representatives.
58. It was highlighted that there was an error in the list for judges for coming years as published on the agenda, and that it should read as follows:

2022	TD Miss J Carruthers	PD Ms L Marlow
2023	TD Mr L Newman	PD Mr S Ford



Host societies

59. In view of the Council's wish to amend the timing of the appointment of host societies as discussed above (paragraphs 51-56 refer), host societies wishing to host the Championships in 2024 would not be sought until judges for that year had been announced.
60. Accordingly a request for host societies would be issued at a later date.
61. Host societies for coming years were as follows:
- | | |
|------|----------------------------------|
| 2022 | Hampshire Working Trials Society |
| 2023 | Surrey Dog Training Society |

ITEM 16. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES/PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS

Proposed amendment to Regulation I24.b. to improve the management of safety at working trials

62. Ms Marlow, on behalf of Southern Alsatian Training Society (SATS) wished to draw the Council's attention to what it perceived as a potential conflict between the responsibilities of a Trials Manager and a judge, which arose due to the wording of regulation I24.b which stated that the Trials Manager 'may not interfere with the judges decisions which shall be final' and that 'he shall decide upon any matter not related to judging'.
63. SATS was of the view that this represented a safety issue as a result of the potential conflict. It proposed a number of amendments to Regulation I24.b. under the terms of which it would be clear that the Trials Manager was responsible for ensuring the trial was organised and conducted safely. Further he would be authorised to suspend or stop any exercise or test considered to be unsafe until it was safe to continue, but he would not be permitted to interfere with the judge's decision in the award of marks.
64. SATS wished to suggest that the proposed amendments would remove any ambiguity and conflict, and clarify individual responsibilities.
65. The proposal was seconded by Mrs Holt.
66. In response to a query, it was clarified that no examples were available of any safety issues having been caused by the perceived conflict although there was potential for them to arise in future.
67. Concerns were raised that some Trials Managers may have insufficient knowledge or experience to carry out the role as defined within the proposal. It was hoped that societies would appoint judges who were able to set suitable tests, and that societies would provide sufficient resources for them to be carried out safely and with appropriate risk management in place. Further, an untrained or inexperienced Trials Manager may not fully understand the nature of a particular test, and in such circumstances the Council was of the view that it would not be appropriate or desirable for him/her to make any changes to it.
68. It was noted that currently, should a Trials Manager offer advice to a judge, the judge was not obliged to accept it. Should the Trials Manager remain dissatisfied, the correct



procedure was to record any concerns in the Incident Book for submission to The Kennel Club.

69. Having discussed the matter, the Council was not in agreement that any conflict currently existed between the roles of the Trials Manager and the judge. A vote took place, and, by a majority, the Council did not support the proposal.

ITEM 17. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Qualification for championship TD and PD stakes

70. Southern Alsatian Training Society, represented by Ms Marlow, wished to seek the Council's views on whether the requirement for competitors to qualify WD Ex twice and TD or PD open twice should be returned to a single qualification in each stake.
71. It was noted that Regulation I(A)6 (Championship Working Trials) currently stated:
- e. Tracking dog (TD) stake—For dogs which have been awarded two Certificates of Merit in Open TD stakes and have qualified WD Ex at two championship trials.
 - f. Patrol dog (PD) stake—For dogs which have been awarded two Certificates of Merit in Open PD stakes, and have qualified WD Ex at two championship trials.
72. The society wished to highlight that the requirement for dogs to have qualified WD Ex twice and TD or PD open twice had originally been implemented to control large numbers of entries. Numbers were now much smaller in the qualifying and championship stakes, and there were fewer trials for people to enter.
73. There was some support for the suggestion that the qualification be returned to a single qualification in each stake, but the majority were in favour of leaving the qualification in its current form, as this would ensure that standards remained high. Further, it was considered that it was important for dogs to have an adequate level of experience prior to competing in higher-level stakes.
74. Accordingly, the Council was not in support of any change being made to the existing regulation.

Judging qualifications

75. Ms Marlow, on behalf of Southern Alsatian Training Society, requested the Council to discuss whether qualifications to judge should be simplified, with particular reference to the requirement for judges for a CD stake at a championship working trial to have judged all groups in at least two working trials, and whether this should be reduced to any combination of one nosework round and one control round at CD open or UD open, plus having qualified CDEx or above.
76. SATS wished to highlight its concern that, if societies had separate judges for nosework and control in open trials, it could be a difficult and lengthy process for a judge to be offered the required appointments and to gain the necessary experience to progress.
77. The Council accepted that the concern was a valid one, and that it was preferable to encourage new judges rather than to place barriers in front of them. A show of hands took place, and the majority were in support of the simplification of qualifications to judge. Ms Marlow undertook to formulate a suitable proposal for submission to the Council at its next meeting.



ITEM 18. FIVE YEAR STRATEGY

78. The Council noted the current Five Year Strategy document.
79. There was some concern that the strategy was rather static in nature, and a suggestion was made by the office that the document be reformatted to include specific and actionable points, with timeframes. This would make the strategy dynamic in nature, allowing for progress to be made.
80. Miss Cottier agreed to undertake the necessary revisions, with assistance from the office. A copy of a similar document used by the Agility Liaison Council would be provided for use as a template.

ITEM 19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Kennel Club website

81. A query was raised as to the Find a Club service on The Kennel Club's website. The Council was assured that work remained ongoing, with the current priority being to address the current backlog of issuing of awards. The next priority would be to reinstate the Find a Show facility, followed by Find a Club.
82. It was highlighted that there had previously been issues with the Find a Club service in that some societies had been shown as having an interest in working trials whereas this was not actually the case. This had been noted on a previous occasion by the office, and had arisen as a result of societies incorrectly indicating an interest in the discipline on their documentation.

Accredited Trainers for working trials

83. The office was requested to provide an update on the recruitment of Accredited Trainers for working trials. A suggestion was made that the matter could be expedited via the introduction of a 'grandparenting' scheme.
84. It was confirmed that the recruitment issue was being addressed by the office but had been delayed due to staff shortages.

Bloodhound working trials

85. Mr Sutcliffe advised the Council of his intention to submit a proposal for consideration at its next meeting in relation to the regulation which required handlers at Bloodhound trials to drop their leashes within 300 yards of the line up on the run in to the end of the line. The requirement for them to do so came into effect on 1 January 2020.

Veterinary cover details

86. A suggestion was made that details of veterinary arrangements should be included in information on report times to competitors, in order to ensure that those arriving early had access to it if required.
87. It was highlighted that this information was already provided to competitors via the schedule, but that societies were free to include it in report times information if they wished to do so.



Issue of licences

88. The office was requested to clarify whether it was possible for licences issued by The Kennel Club to be addressed directly to the Working Trials Secretary of a club rather than to the general secretary. It was confirmed that this facility was under development and would be available in the future.

Entry form

89. A query was raised relating to the entry form included on the specimen schedule. It was confirmed by the office that no changes had been made to the form since its previous issue.

Publication of minutes

90. In response to a query, the office advised that the minutes of the meeting would be issued as soon as possible, but it was reiterated that Council representatives may not discuss any matters arising from the meeting until such time as the minutes had been published. This was necessary to ensure that only accurate and consistent information was issued regarding the Council's discussions and decisions.

ITEM 20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

91. The Council's next meeting would take place on 7 June 2022, and it was likely that it would be held via Microsoft Teams, although this would be confirmed nearer the date of the meeting. Any items for the agenda must be submitted by 9 March 2022.

The meeting closed at 1.30pm.

MR C TAYLOR
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'

Liaison Societies for Non-Championship Working Trials Societies



Working Trials Society

Australian Shepherd Club of the United Kingdom
 Aveley Obedience & Working Trials Society
 Avon Working Trials Training Society
 Aylesbury Canine Training Society
 Banbury & District Dog Training Society
 Billingshurst Dog Training Club
 Birmingham & District German Shepherd Dog Association
 Central Bernese Mountain Dog Club
 Chipping Norton & District Dog Training Club
 Cynllan Lodge Dog Training Club
 Deveron Dog Training Club
 Donyatt Dog Training Club
 East Riding Working Trials Society
 Grampian Gundog Club
 Haslemere & District Dog Training Club
 High Peak Dog Training Society
 Hucknall & District Canine Training Society
 Lochaber & District Canine Society
 Midlands Border Collie Club
 Mid Wales Working Gundog Society
 National Australian Shepherd Association
 Newlands Working Dog Society
 North of England Weimaraner Society
 Northants & Bedfordshire Working Trials Dog Training
 Northern Alsatian & All Breeds Training Society
 Northern Newfoundland Club
 Portland Dog Training Club
 Rough & Smooth Collie Training Association
 Scottish Kennel Club
 Six Counties Working Trials Society
 Slovakian Rough Haired Pointer Club (Provisional)
 South Devon Agility & Dog Training Club
 South Leeds Working Trials Dog Training Club
 Spanish Water Dog Club (Provisional)
 Spey Valley Dog Training Club
 Sporting Irish Water Spaniel Club
 Stonehouse Dog Training Club
 Wakefield Dog Training Club
 Weimaraner Club of Great Britain
 Weimaraner Club of Scotland
 Working Belgian Shepherd Dog Society
 Ynys Mon Dog Training Society

Representative Society

Yorkshire Working Trials Society
 Essex Working Trials Society
 Wessex Working Trials Club
 ASPADS Working Trials Society
 Leamington Dog Training Club
 Southern Alsatian Training Society
 Leamington Dog Training Club
 ASPADS Working Trials Society
 British Association for German Shepherd Dogs
 Welsh Kennel Club
 Scottish Working Trials Society
 Wessex Working Trials Club
 Yorkshire Working Trials Society
 Scottish Working Trials Society
 Surrey Dog Training Society
 North West Working Trials Society
 Midland Counties German Shepherd Dog Association
 Scottish Working Trials Society
 Midland Counties German Shepherd Dog Association
 Welsh Kennel Club
 Icen German Shepherd Dog Club
 Surrey Dog Training Society
 North East Counties Working Trials Society
 ASPADS Working Trials Society
 Yorkshire Working Trials Society
 British Association for German Shepherd Dogs
 Poole & District Dog Training Society
 Leamington Dog Training Club
 Scottish Working Trials Society
 North West Working Trials Society
 Yorkshire Working Trials Society
 Poole & District Dog Training Society
 Yorkshire Working Trials Society
 Lincolnshire German Shepherd Dog & All Breeds
 Scottish Working Trials Society
 North West Working Trials Society
 British Association for German Shepherd Dogs
 Yorkshire Working Trials Society
 Essex Working Trials Society
 Scottish Working Trials Society
 ASPADS Working Trials Society
 Welsh Kennel Club

Annex A to the minutes

Questions for the authors, Dr Anne Carter and Dr Ellen Williams (2021), regarding the study 'Investigating the impact of working dog trials obstacles on kinetics and kinematics of dogs'

1. How did they determine what sample size would be necessary to ensure sufficient data was available to permit reliable statistical analysis?



- Sampling was opportunistic, based on recruitment via the working trials team. Whilst from a scientific perspective, balanced groups of breed, age, experience level etc based on a power analysis, would have been more robust, the study population provided a cross-section of dogs experienced of/competing in working trials. The sample size was comparable if not larger than similar kinetic and kinematic studies in dogs and was deemed suitable for robust analysis.
2. Did the authors consider carrying out the trial on a surface normally encountered during WTs training or competition?
 - Because of the nature of pressure mats, the setup needs to be on a relatively flat surface. It was felt that the fibre sand school would provide a flat but forgiving surface for the dogs to jump on to. The fibre sand provided a consistent surface over the trial period.
 3. To what degree do the authors think peak vertical forces and range of motion of the forelimb joints would differ on a sand fibre mix compared to normal working trials conditions, i.e. grass?
 - There is likely to be some level of similarity, between the surfaces as the fibre sand is quite forgiving as a surface. There is likely to be more variability between grass surfaces depending upon soil structure-clay, sand etc, and the level of moisture within the surface. Evaluation of surfaces is a potential area of further research.
 4. Is there any scientific data available which would allow them to work out adjustments of these figures and hence potentially calculate the outcome to the training/competition field? This might include the coefficient of friction – resistance force to the landing and firmness of the ground surface.
 - It is possible to measure the load responses and surface composition structure and material properties (similar to work undertaken by NTU on equine surfaces) to enable comparison between competition and training surface types.
 - It would not be possible to directly extrapolate findings to a range of different surfaces. However, the data collected provides a robust indication of changes in response to altered height/distance of obstacles on a consistent surface.
 5. How was the mat placed/fixed to avoid slippage? Was slippage of the mat measured during the study?
 - The mat is a relatively rigid platform so slippage was not deemed to be a problem. A thin rubber mat was placed over the pressure mat to provide a more 'grippy' surface for the dogs to land on and protect the mat. No movement of the mat occurred during the trials
 6. In the tables provided in this report and Williams et al (2021), (Kinetics and Kinematics of Working Trials Dogs: The Impact of Long Jump Length on Peak Vertical Landing Force and Joint Angulation, *Animals* 2021, 11, 2804) it appears quite a number of dogs did not complete the 9ft long jump successfully 3 times, as defined within the study criteria. Yet it appears all the data obtained from these dogs was used in the analysis.

Could the authors kindly elaborate or explain the rationale for this?



Is there more detail available on the reasons for the unsuccessful attempts?

Were any of them related to refusals, failure to clear the long jump or over jumping and landing beyond the sensor pad?

- There were a small number of occasions where the dogs did not land on the mat with both front feet to measure peak vertical force. In these instances it was still possible to measure joint angles. The data were included due to the 'fault' being with landing position in comparison to landing squarely on the mat with both front feet rather than a misjump by the dog. Where the dogs misjumped, these results were excluded (this was the case in a very small number of attempts and was not unique to the 9ft jump).
7. What was the justification for not determining the horizontal/deceleration forces involved in addition to the peak vertical force? Did the authors believe that it would have been beneficial to measure the forces and joint range in the stride following landing over the scale?
- The ideal situation would have been to use force plates to measure the landing force in multiple planes, particularly in the case of the long jump. However, the force plates are much less portable and need to be sunk into a static platform (normally in an indoor/controlled area). This means that for dynamic studies such as working trials, they are of limited use. This has led to measures focusing on peak vertical force rather than horizontal/deceleration forces.
 - Whilst it would be interesting to measure the stride following landing, and indeed take-off parameters, our primary aim was to focus on the peak forces on landing in this study. However, there is scope to evaluate the broader jump parameters to include take-off, bascule and complete landing phases of the jump.