



Chief Rally Steward Guidance

Contents

1. Why have a Chief Rally Steward?	3
2. What do they do?	3
3. Who can do it?	3
4. How Chief Rally Stewards can deal with problems?.....	4
5. Examples of emergencies & what to do with non-prescribed issues	4
5.1 Dog Bites	5
5.2 Medical /Veterinary Emergencies	5
5.3 Issues with the General Public	5
5.4 Adverse Weather before or during the show	6
5.5 Judge unable to complete a judging appointment.....	6
5.6 Multiple dogs handled by the same person drawn in a class.....	7
5.7 Scoring Queries	7
5.8 Courses received prior to the competition	7
5.9 Social Media.....	7
7. The Incident Book	8
8. What equipment does a Chief Rally Steward need?	8
9. KC regulations specifically identifying Chief Rally Steward	8

1. Why have a Chief Rally Steward?

The role of Chief Rally Steward (CRS) is to act as a point of contact for judges & competitors at the event, to hold the role of decision maker for issues that arise at the event and ensuring consistency across KC licenced events.

2. What do they do?

Prior to the show, the CRS liaises with the Show Secretary & Judges to confirm submitted course plans both meet regulations and any health & safety guidance given by the show management.

Annex D of the KC S Regulations gives an overview of their responsibilities on the day.

The primary responsibility at the show is to ensure competitors & Judges abide by the KC Rules & S Regulations for the duration of the event.

They assist in the smooth running for organisers, judges and competitors.

The most common issues that the CRS deal with –

- (a) Running order issues / multiple dogs with same handler (see note on procedure below)
- (b) Resolving potential or actual breaches of regulations
- (c) Dog bite(s) – dog to dog or dog to person
- (d) Missing entries /eligibility for classes
- (e) Scoring queries
- (f) Unsporting behaviour, aggressive or unreasonable behaviour by competitors or judges.
Harassment of judges and/or officials.

It is not recommended that the CRS carries out any additional function at the event, e.g., act as scorer, scribe, etc to ensure their sole focus in on their CRS role.

3. Who can do it?

Annex D of the KC S Regulations clearly outlines the qualifications a CRS needs prior to appointment. These requirements have been formalised in 2022, to bring them into line with similar roles in other disciplines – with the criteria moving from advisory to mandatory.

This formalising of eligibility fits in with the importance of the role, bearing in mind that the CRS has the authority to advise Judges of a potential regulation breach, negotiate compliance, or if the Judge insists on their original course of action that this is recorded in the Incident Book for KC consideration.

In addition to the requirements in Annex D, personal attributes should also be considered before accepting an invitation to undertake the role:

- (a) Good listening skills
- (b) Good interpersonal skills
- (c) Not easily intimidated or influenced
- (d) High levels of patience when dealing with difficult situations and agitated people
- (e) Excellent communication skills

- (f) Confidence in personal abilities to make impartial decisions based on the information to hand and the requirements of the KC Rules & Regulations
- (g) Confidence in personal abilities to record accurate notes of the events and circumstances

4. How Chief Rally Stewards can deal with problems?

At the show, have a framework established to assist in meeting all obligations :

- (a) Listen to the individual(s) raising of a potential or actual issue.
- (b) Establish the facts – what the issue is, and does it breach KC Regulations?
- (c) If regulations have been breached – who is involved/responsible.
- (d) Does it fall within the remit of the CRS to deal with it?
- (e) Decide on the best course of action to resolve on the day if possible.
- (f) Accurately record details of the incident/breach, actions taken, & rationale in the KC Incident Book

Most incidents will be straightforward and easily resolved on the day. By preparing for the unexpected and having a framework to follow can assist in reaching a sensible resolution.

5. Examples of emergencies & what to do with non-prescribed issues

Dog Bites

Medical /veterinary emergencies

Issues with the general public

Adverse weather – before the event /during the event

Judge unable to complete their judging appointment

Multiple dogs handled by same person drawn in a class

Scoring queries

Courses received prior to the competition

Social Media

There is always a need for a practical, common sense approach.

5.1 Dog Bites

Irrespective of dog/dog or dog/person the Kennel Club takes any such incidents very seriously due to the potential ramifications of legal liability claims and/or reputational damage to Kennel Club licenced events.

As soon as the CRS is aware of an incident, it is essential that the injured party /parties receive appropriate and proportionate veterinary and/or medical treatment as first priority.

Next ensure that the offending dog(s) are sufficiently /proportionately restrained with a view to them being removed from the show in accordance with KC Regulation S 24. Note that this is an extreme event and consultation with the Show Management should be carried out.

Then establish the facts (what, who, when, where) and record these in good detail in the event Incident Book. Irrespective of what those involved want, the details must be recorded as soon as possible due to the possibility of subsequent legal claims/insurers becoming involved.

5.2 Medical /Veterinary Emergencies

The priority is that proportionate & timely response is made to either or both of these situations. This does not mean the CRS has to deal with the emergency, it means knowing what the available support is, how to access it and ensuring that this information is provided to those involved.

The Show management should have appointed a First Aider and have a Veterinary Practice on call – with details on display and easily accessible to all. If appropriate use NHS resources – on a triage basis – NHS Direct, Ambulance Services, or other (e.g., off duty personal on site who volunteer).

Veterinary Incidents may well include those relating to Welfare of Dogs – particularly in warm / hot weather - dogs in vehicles. The Kennel Club has clear guidance on this in the Regulations, and all competitors should be aware.

IF there are concerns at the show, the welfare of the dog(s) is paramount. Attempt to establish ownership of the vehicle promptly, using whatever means available (PA, word of mouth, etc). Warn of the situation, and that action will be taken if no response. If veterinary /police are already on site, then involve them in decision making on welfare assessments.

If a vehicle needs to be broken into, aim to ensure credible witnesses, minimize damage to the vehicle, minimize further distress to the dogs involved.

Common sense advice is to call 999 or 111 for minor issues. CRS does not take on any legal responsibility. The show management should have printed out directions to vets & A&E available, and a designated person to take/lead people to these if required.

Record all details in the shows Kennel Club Incident Book.

5.3 Issues with the General Public

Matters arising with the general public and incidents at shows can sometimes be quite delicate, particularly if the venue is a public space.

When an incident is reported, investigate in calm & thorough manner, and if a member of the public is an offender, the whole incident needs to be dealt with in a sensitive and proportionate manner.

There should be no attempt to “man-handle” anyone, as this could be interpreted as a possible cause for a breach of the peace. Calmly try to de-escalate the situation. If your opinion is that any animal or person is at risk of danger, then inform the relevant authorities immediately. It does not matter if the offender is an exhibitor or member of the public, everyone should be treated with the same consideration.

In all cases, ensure the incident is recorded in the shows Kennel Club Incident book.

5.4 Adverse Weather before or during the show

In all instances of adverse weather, the first consideration must be given to the safety of all persons and dogs attending the event.

Prior to the show - If the show ground conditions are such, then in conjunction with the Show management the cancellation of the show should be discussed on health and safety grounds.

During the show – KC regulation S (D)2. b. “in the event of extreme adverse conditions at a show a judge may alter exercises as deemed appropriate at the time and must always obtain full agreement of the chief steward unless in an emergency situation. The chief steward must be advised of the change and the reasons for it at the earliest opportunity. Any alteration to exercises must be reported by the show management to the KC within 14 days of the date of the show.”

Thus, knowledge of the KC cancellation protocols is needed. The CRS should review all changes to exercises at the time a decision is needed, e.g. poor ground conditions meaning exercises changed from submitted course plans.

5.5 Judge unable to complete a judging appointment

Kennel Club regulation S (D) 2.c. “should a judge be prevented from completing a class which has commenced, the CRS shall decide what action is to be taken.

This is an awkward situation and several options are available:

- (a) Cancel the class; subsequently entry fees for the class would be refunded on request,
- (b) Suspend the class & restart later, allowing those who competed under the original judge to work again,
- (c) Suspend the class and cancel later during the event, subsequently entry fees would be refunded on request,
- (d) Provide a substitute judge – restart the class on basis of those who have competed as having worked in part 1, issue awards, teams who have not worked now compete in part 2, with separate awards. This could be a suitable solution IF the balance between those who have worked /not worked are similar.

Things to consider before arriving at the decision:

- a. Is the decision practicable & equitable?

- b. How many teams have competed?
- c. How many teams remain to compete?
- d. Can a substitute judge be appointed?
- e. What are the financial & logistical ramifications of cancelling/suspending the class?
- f. Is there enough time to complete the class?

5.6 Multiple dogs handled by the same person drawn in a class

Liaise with the judge & show management to ensure that handlers have sufficient time between their dogs to physically change dogs. This will mean that if drawn consecutively the running order will need to be changed with the agreement of all concerned. This may be done prior to the event or on the day.

5.7 Scoring Queries

If an error comes to light on the day, after the class, liaise with the show management, Judge & competitor to resolve. Common sense and seminar advice to Judges is to check scores prior to signing certificates, and this should be the first point to clarify. People do make mistakes, and the sooner these are identified and resolved the better.

Once the certificate has been signed and passed to the competitor, then this score takes precedence over the scribesheet or scoreboard.

5.8 Courses received prior to the competition

Draw Judges attention to any perceived breaches of regulations in their courses so that these may be resolved before the event or at the course check prior to competitors walking it.

5.9 Social Media

Remind all that the Kennel Club Code of Contact regarding social media applies before, during & after the event. Think twice before posting, and refer to the Code of Conduct.

Remind anyone involved in an incident that they should not discuss it with others via social or other media.

6. Understanding the Kennel Club Objections System

An understanding of the Objection System, how & when to proceed is advisable.

An objection fee (currently £35) is necessary where a competitor alleged a breach of regulations had occurred, such as another competitor competing at an incorrect level, or harsh handling. This is to avoid frivolous or vexatious objections being lodged. If upheld the fee would be refunded.

If the objection is made by the society, official, or judge, the fee is not applicable.

If the allegation relates to a dog being out of control, no objection fee is applicable regardless of who lodged the objection.

Any objection fees required are requested by the Kennel Club Office prior to any investigation.

7. The Incident Book

The show organisers must have an Incident Book available at the competition.

This should be used to record any occurrence at the competition which was out of the ordinary, even if resolved on the day. This would include matters such as a judge failing to arrive or judging incorrectly. Reporting such matters allows the office to maintain a record of such incidents should it be required for later use, and to identify repeat offenders.

8. What equipment does a Chief Rally Steward need?

There is no specific requirement for the CRS to provide any equipment, however common useful items include:

Blank paper

Clipboard

Measuring tape

Charged up mobile phone

9. KC regulations specifically identifying Chief Rally Steward

9.1 KC regulation S 19(k):

Judges must submit course plans to the Secretary and/or Chief Steward no later than 10 days prior to the competition date.

9.2 KC regulation S 35 Instructions as to the Duties of Chief Stewards.

The instructions as to the duties of Chief Stewards are given in Annex D

9.3 Annex D to S Regulations

INSTRUCTIONS AS TO THE DUTIES OF RALLY CHIEF STEWARDS

Authority/responsibilities.

- a. A chief steward should have appropriate competitive Rally experience, a sound knowledge of the Kennel Club Rules and S Regulations, and a familiarity with the Kennel Club complaints procedure.

- b. Before agreeing to serve as a Chief Steward at a Kennel Club licensed Rally competition a chief steward must have:
 - (1) attended a Kennel Club Rally Regulations and Judging Procedure Seminar and passed the Regulations and Judging Procedure examination every five years since passing the Regulations and Judging Procedure examination.
 - (2) attended a Kennel Club Practical Judging Seminar.
- c. A chief steward's responsibilities are to ensure that competitors and judges at all times abide by the Kennel Club Rules and S Regulations.
- d. A chief steward acts as decision maker in all matters relating to the Kennel Club Rules and S Regulations for the duration of the show.
- e. A chief steward must fully document all decisions and actions taken in relation to the S Regulations in the Show's Kennel Club Incident Book.
- f. A chief steward supports the show management team in the smooth running of the show.

2. Duties.

- a. The show executive shall appoint a chief steward whose name must be announced in the schedule, and who must not enter for competition a dog which is recorded in their ownership or part ownership or work a dog or act in any other capacity at the show.
- b. In the event of extreme adverse conditions at a show a judge may alter exercises as deemed appropriate at the time and must always obtain full agreement of the chief steward unless in an emergency situation. The chief steward must be advised of the change and the reasons for it at the earliest opportunity. Any alteration to exercises must be reported by the show management to the Kennel Club within 14 days of the date of the show.
- c. Should a judge be prevented from completing a class which has commenced, the chief steward shall decide what action is to be taken.
- d. The chief steward and the show management must act to remove a dog from the show under the conditions of Regulation S24 (Removal of Dogs).
- e. The chief steward alone shall be responsible for the control of any running order, which may be relaxed in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the competitor will be required to work as directed by the chief steward and judge(s) of the relevant class(es) whose joint decision shall be final. All such decisions must be recorded in the show's Kennel Club incident book.