



**DOGS VICTORIA**  
**TRACK AND SEARCH DOG TRIALS**  
**JUDGES TRAINING SCHEME**

**This is the Dogs Victoria Training Scheme for 2024/2025 for judges of Track and Search Trials. It is based on the ANKC National minimum standards adopted in March 2018**

## **1. OVERVIEW**

- 1.1. Australian National Kennel Council Ltd (ANKC) Member Bodies will be responsible for the Training, Testing, Assessment and Maintenance of Judging licences. Accordingly, in the State of Victoria, these matters are the responsibility of Dogs Victoria and in this document the term “ANKC Member Body” generally means Dogs Victoria. The Obedience, Tracking and Endurance Committee (OTEC) will normally conduct Training and Assessment on behalf of Dogs Victoria.
- 1.2. Dogs Victoria will assess Judges sequentially or concurrently, in the following order
  1. Track and Search Dog
  2. Track and Search Dog Excellent
  3. Track and Search Champion
  4. Track and Search Grand Champion
- 1.3 Dogs Victoria requires all trainees to pass a written/oral examination prior to attempting a practical assessment for each class. The written/oral examination is based on ANKC Rules pertaining to the class/discipline being aspired to; as well as relevant Dogs Victoria Regulations and general requirements of the Rule Book for the Conduct of Track and Search Dog Trials.
- 1.4 If an ANKC Member Body requires a higher standard than the ANKC Minimum Standards, the ANKC Member Body’s Regulation/s will take precedence over the ANKC Minimum Standard/s.

## **2. APPLICATION**

- 2.1 All applications for Track and Search Dog Judges Courses must be made on the required application form by the date specified by Dogs Victoria. All requirements for specific classes/disciplines must be fulfilled prior to the applicant undertaking Oral or Written Examination and Practical Assessment. Dogs Victoria has the right to seek verification of any information provided by the applicant.  
All applications/expressions of interest by Dogs Victoria members for Track and Search Dog Licences must be made on the required application form prior to 1<sup>st</sup> October each year.  
Completed applications including evidence that the relevant training, judging (where applicable), and stewarding requirements have been fulfilled, must be submitted to Dogs Victoria by 1<sup>st</sup> October of the following year. Where special circumstances occur, the OTEC has the right to allow otherwise eligible trainees to enter the scheme at an alternative date.

A log book will be maintained to record achievement of goals by each trainee, e.g. details of relevant training, including training and assessment forms, signed by the trainers, attendance at lectures, written and practical assessment results.

With the exception of training and handling a dog, all prerequisites must be completed within twelve (12) months prior to the Written Examination.

The prerequisites for training and handling a dog have no specific time limitations.

Requirements used to fulfil a licence application can only be used once.

The onus is upon the applicant to provide evidence of having fulfilled the necessary criteria.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY**

#### **3.1 The Applicant must:**

- 3.1.1 Be a member of an ANKC Member Body for a period of not less than 5 years prior to the application and be a current financial member of Dogs Victoria;
- 3.1.2 Be over eighteen (18) years of age; and
- 3.1.3 Reside in the State of Victoria. unless special permission has been obtained. See 3.4

3.2 Trainees are expected to attend all lectures and practical training sessions unless otherwise approved by Dogs Victoria. Trainees will also be required to educate themselves by studying the Rules for the Conduct of Track and Search Trials.  
Non-attendance at required lectures will preclude application for a licence, unless a written apology acceptable to the Obedience Tracking and Endurance Committee (OTEC) is received within seven (7) days of the relevant lecture. If the apology is accepted, the Judges, Training and Assessment Co-Ordinator will make alternative arrangements for delivery of the lecture.

3.3. Dogs Victoria may approve applications received from members who do not meet the above criteria providing that they are permanent residents of Australia and can effectively demonstrate and produce documentation verifying their experience and qualifications to meet the above standards gained in a previous country of residence.

3.4 Subject to the agreement of both the trainee Judge and ANKC Member Bodies, a person may be approved to enrol in a Track and Search Judges Training Scheme conducted in a geographic location more convenient for that person.

3.5 The OTEC has provision for trainees who cannot attend a lecture, structured training, or written or practical assessment on the appointed date. Where there is a reason acceptable to the OTEC, other arrangements will be made for that trainee.

Alternatively, where a trainee has completed the required training to the satisfaction of their mentor, trainers and the Judges Training Co-ordinator, they may be assessed at an earlier date. This may not always be feasible, but such arrangements may be made where it is practicable.

3.6 To be eligible to apply for a:

3.6.1 TRACK AND SEARCH DOG JUDGING LICENCE

3.6.1.1 The Trainee must have personally trained and trialled a dog to a Track and Search title;

3.6.1.2 The Trainee must have stewarded under at least three Judges, for at least six (6) sanctioned Track and Search trials, over two seasons, only one stewarding appointment may be included from interstate.

3.6.1.3 The Applicant must have laid tracks for TSD, TSDX and TS Champion and TS Grand Ch. levels.

Note: Stewarding includes evidence of setting out tracks, drawing maps and preparing running sheets for those tests.

**4. METHOD OF EDUCATION (SELF EDUCATION)**

4.1 Trainees will be required to educate themselves by being conversant with the Dogs Victoria Rules and Regulations relevant to Track and Search trials and updates to the Rules for the Conduct of Track and Search Dog Trials.

4.2 Trainees are to attend all lectures and practical training sessions as required by Dogs Victoria.

4.3 Trainees will also be required to educate themselves by studying the Rules for the Conduct of Track and Search Dog Trials.

4.4 The trainee will arrange for a Trainer/s to observe their judging at the relevant level to assess their performance. A copy of the completed Judges Sheet is to be forwarded to the Course Co-ordinator prior to the date set by Dogs Victoria.

**5. PRACTICAL TRAINING SESSIONS**

5.1 Trainers will be appointed by the Obedience, Tracking and Endurance Committee (OTEC) to the Judges Training Panel.

5.2 The Trainer/s must;

5.2.1 Supervise the trainee's judging of at least 3 dogs for TSD 3, 3 dogs for TSD 7, and 3 dogs for TSD 10. Each set of three tests should be conducted separately, preferably under the supervision of at least two different trainers.

5.2.2 Advise the trainee of ways in which they feel the trainee's judging could be improved;

5.2.3 Sign the Trainee Judges Practical Training Form after completing details of suggested judging modifications or reinforcement of the trainee's judging.

5.3 These forms are to be retained by the trainee and forwarded to the Judges Training Co-ordinator by 1<sup>st</sup> October. Copies may be retained by the trainee.

## **6. APPLICATION FOR ASSESSMENT**

6.1 Applicants must provide:

### **6.2 Track and Search**

6.2.1 Documentation of at least 3 Practical Judges Training sessions, including a minimum of three dogs in each session.

6.2.2 Details, including Affiliate and date, of 6 Track and Search stewarding appointments at sanctioned Track and Search trials.

6.2.3 Details of tracklaying experience, including Affiliates and dates.

NOTE: To maximise the desired educational experience, training should be done over a period of time. Judging of no more than three dogs shall be documented at any individual training session.

## **7. WRITTEN OR ORAL EXAMINATION**

7.1 Two Training Panel members appointed by the OTEC are to be allocated to invigilate/supervise the written examination (they are not to mark any papers). At least one Panel member shall be in attendance at all times. In the case of an oral examination one invigilator shall be appointed.

7.2 The marking is to be undertaken by judges appointed by the OTEC Judges Training Panel who will mark examination papers independently. When marking any papers, no notations (comments, ticks, crosses etc.) will be made by the marker on the trainee's paper. It is preferable that the person who set the paper be one of the markers of that paper.

7.3 The examination papers must be marked by at least two and if necessary three examiners. A third marker will be required only where there is a divided decision. The trainee must receive a pass mark by the majority of the markers in order to achieve a pass.

7.4 Track and Search examination papers shall comprise of;

7.4.1 Questions as set by Dogs Victoria for the relevant discipline and relevant Dogs Victoria Regulations.

7.5 The pass mark is a minimum of 80%.

7.6 Other than is necessary to answer the questions, examination papers are not to be marked in any way, (comments, ticks, crosses etc.) by the trainee.

7.7 All trainees are to be issued with a number. A list of numbers linking to the trainees is to be kept in a sealed envelope by one of the OTEC members at the Examination Centre until marking of all papers has been completed.

7.8 Trainees who have failed a Written or Oral examination may make a written request within 14 days of the advice of the results for their paper to be reviewed. A different panel of three markers appointed by the Judges Training Panel will, without conferring, separately remark the papers.

7.9 All questions with incorrect answers will be supplied to the trainee with the correct answers.

**Please note that the above regulations may change annually.**

**Dogs Victoria Regulations are available on the Dogs Victoria website; <https://dogsvictoria.org.au> or from the Dogs Victoria office on request. It is the trainees' responsibility to ensure that they are aware of the current Dogs Victoria regulations applicable to the relevant discipline.**

**All judges and trainees MUST be familiar with the regulations in regard to dog incidents.**

## **8. PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT**

8.1 The trainee must pass the Written or Oral examination in order to undertake the Practical Assessment.

8.2 The following are the requirements for a pass in the Practical Assessment:

8.2.1 Trainees are required to judge a minimum of three dogs for Track and Search.

### **Track and Search:**

One will be at Track and Search Test Three (3) level,  
one will be at Track and Search Test Seven (7) level  
and one will be at Track and Search Test Ten (10) level.

8.2.2 At the assessor's discretion, the trainee may be asked to judge additional dog/s;

8.2.3 Three assessors must assess each trainee;

8.2.4 Each assessor will independently make a recommendation as to whether the trainee has passed or failed;

8.2.5 A majority of assessor's recommendations is required to pass.

8.3 Assessment sheets will be completed and submitted to Dogs Victoria for written notification to the trainee of their results.

## **9. RE – ASSESSMENT**

9.1 Trainees who fail the Practical Assessment may apply for re-assessment. Dogs Victoria is not obligated to automatically agree to a re-assessment and each case should be reviewed on its merits. Any reassessment should be held at a mutually agreed time not earlier than three months or later than six months following the original assessment. The Judges Training Panel must take into account the need for further practical training of the trainee and the availability of suitable handlers/dogs and facilities.

## **10. DRESS CODE**

10.1 While trainees need not comply strictly with a Dress Code at all their Practical Training Sessions leading up to their assessment, they should meet generally acceptable standards (i.e. neat, sensible clothes, appropriate footwear) when judging at 'non-sanctioned trials'. However, the Practical Assessment is a formal occasion and must be treated in the same manner as a sanctioned Track and Search Trial. As such, the trainees must display an appropriate form of dress befitting an official at such an event and they will be marked accordingly.

## **11. FITNESS TO JUDGE**

11.1 ANKC Regulations Part 2, Point 1.3 states;

11.1.1 All Judges Application Forms, both new and renewal, shall contain the following declaration to be signed by the applicant:

"I declare that I am physically fit and capable of judging in accordance with the Rules and in the normal accepted manner, and if required I am prepared to undergo a medical fitness test and/or vision test at the discretion of the Control. I further accept that Dogs Victoria may refuse to grant any renewal of licence and may cancel or suspend for any

period or vary in any way any licence already granted. Or may grant, in part only, an application for renewal of licence”

- 11.2 Should Dogs Victoria consider that either an applicant or a licensed judge is unable to meet 11.1.1, Dogs Victoria has the right to;
  - 11.2.1 Refuse the application;
  - 11.2.2 Refuse to grant any renewal of the licence to any person and may cancel or suspend for any period or vary in any way any licence already granted; or
  - 11.2.3 Direct any judge to undergo a medical “Fitness to Judge” examination by a nominated medical officer.
  - 11.2.4 Grant in part only an application for renewal of the licence.

## **12. MAINTENANCE OF SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

- 12.1 All judges are expected to actively maintain their knowledge and understanding of the Rules and their interpretations as deemed by the ANKC and Dogs Victoria.
- 12.2 In the event that a Judge fails to fulfil this responsibility or
- 12.3 To follow directions issued by Dogs Victoria:
  - 12.3.1 Dogs Victoria may refuse to grant any renewal of licence or may cancel or suspend for any period or vary in any way, any licence already granted.
  - 12.3.2 Dogs Victoria may direct any Judge within its jurisdiction to undergo additional training or counselling by the Judges Training Panel.



1. A Judge shall act with professional decorum at all times.
2. A Judge shall give every exhibit and exhibitor fair and equal opportunity in each and every class.
3. A Judge shall act in a polite manner whilst carrying out each judging assignment.
4. A Judge shall present himself/herself in attire that is acceptable, appropriate and comfortable for each judging assignment. Footwear appropriate to the discipline shall be worn. (10/18)
5. A Judge is required to be punctual in availability to fulfil their judging assignment.
6. If in the judging procedures an exhibit displays an obvious physical impediment or is unable to be handled or can be regarded as savage or vicious the exhibit should be excused from the competition, in accordance with the ANKC Ltd Member Body rules/regulations.
7. A Judge shall not enter or exhibit any dog at any Conformation Show at which he or she is appointed to judge.
8. Should an exhibitor offer information to the Judge that may be regarded as designed to influence the Judge, the Judge shall excuse the exhibitor and their exhibit from competition and report the incident in accordance with the ANKC Ltd Member Body rules/regulations.
9. Should a Judge be approached to favour or disfavour a particular exhibit the matter is to be reported to the Administrator of the ANKC Ltd Member Body.
10. Should a Judge be approached with an inducement and/or bribe to advantage or disadvantage an exhibit the Judge is to report the matter in writing to the Administrator of the ANKC Ltd Member Body.
11. A Judge shall not solicit a judging appointment.
12. A Judge shall not solicit or seek entry of any particular dog or dogs.
13. A Judge shall not allow entries for a Conformation Show at which that person is judging to be received at the Judge's address.
14. A Judge shall complete all the requirements of the judging contract promptly. Any verbal acceptance of an assignment by a Judge shall be subject to the receipt of the contract within fourteen (14) days.
15. At the time of completing a contract the Judge shall inform the inviting body of any disability or limitation that could restrict carrying out in full the reasonable handling of all exhibits to be judged.
16. A Judge must not duplicate assignments in the same breeds and or group within a minimum of 3 months of each other and within a minimum of 200 kilometers at Championship Shows. (10/97), (02/15), (10/15)
17. A Judge shall honour each contract and will not be free to accept an alternative contract that will effect his or her availability to fulfil the original contract except with the written dispensation of the contracting Club. (05/98)
18. Accommodation provided to the Judge to fulfil an assignment is for the Judge only except where prior mutual agreement has been reached with the sponsoring body for variation.
19. A Judge shall be responsible for the cost of all personal telephone calls, alcoholic beverages and any personal laundering except where mutual agreement has been reached with the sponsoring body at the time the contract is accepted.
20. A Judge who withdraws from any contracted appointment for any reason shall not be permitted to judge at any other canine event wherever held on any date that would prevent him/her from attending the originally contracted event, unless dispensation has been granted in accordance with Clause 17. (05/98)
21. Judges must not smoke nor drink alcohol in the ring.
22. Judges shall not criticise by act or word the work of other judges, nor offer criticism of any previously judged dog(s) to anyone including other officiating judges during the course of the show. Except for authorised ringside mentoring.
23. All judges must judge exhibits in accordance with their relevant ANKC Ltd breed standard. (10/16)

## **JUDGES LECTURES**

Judges Lectures are delivered on an annual basis for each discipline and are a compulsory part of the Judges Training Scheme.

**Track and Search & Endurance:** will be offered on request.

**Lecturers** are nominated by the Obedience, Tracking and Endurance Committee (OTEC) of Dogs Victoria on the basis of experience in judging and general involvement in the discipline concerned.

Lectures are designed to cover:

- Dogs Victoria Regulations relevant to the discipline
- Requirements of the Judges Training Scheme
- ANKC Rules
- Judges responsibilities
- Planning and setting out of tracks
- Instructions to stewards and other relevant people
- Practical judging procedures

Lecturers are requested to prepare notes or handouts or refer to references to guide the trainee judges. The Dogs Victoria office is able to provide copying facilities.

## **CRITERIA FOR DISTANCE LECTURES**

1. Applicants must apply, in writing, prior to the scheduled lecture date for approval to have a lecture held away from the metropolitan area.
2. The Applicant must reside in excess of 100 kilometres from the lecture centre.
3. Approvals will be subject to the availability of the lecturer.
4. If the OTEC grants this approval, the applicant(s) will be responsible for organising a suitable venue for the dates offered. Alternatively, arrangements may be made to hold the lectures electronically, by phone link or a mixture of both. All costs will be the responsibility of the trainee. Most lectures are currently held via Zoom.
- 5.

## **CRITERIA FOR DISTANCE WRITTEN EXAMINATION**

1. Applicant(s) are to indicate a preference for distance written examination on judges applications/expression of interest form, submitted on **1<sup>st</sup> October**.
2. Applicant(s) must reside in excess of 100 kilometres from the examination centre.
3. The examination must be administered at an approved supervisory centre e.g. local TAFE College, to be organised and funded by the candidate.
4. Dogs Victoria must receive confirmation in writing and on letterhead, from the supervisory centre prior to examination papers being forwarded.
5. Examination papers are to be sent by the Judges Training Co-ordinator to the supervisory centre. Once the examination papers are completed, they are to be scanned/photographed and sent back to the designated markers, so that all papers are marked at a similar time. The Judges Training Co-ordinator will collate and send to the DV office asap.
6. Any distance examination is to be conducted concurrently with written examinations being conducted in Melbourne. unless special permission is granted from the OTEC.
7. Papers will be marked, and results collated and disseminated in a similar manner to central system.

## PROCEDURE FOR PRACTICAL TRACK AND SEARCH JUDGES TRAINING

### Training and assessment panel appointment and tenure

Training and assessment panel members will be invited by the OTEC. The invitees will be licensed and experienced Track and Search Judges who are both current and active in regard to judging at trials.

The tenure of a training and assessment panel member will be a minimum of three (3) years. Please note that a current serving member of the training and assessment panel will be eligible to be reinvited by the OTEC for a future tenure period. Panel members and the role they fulfil are integral to the success of the OTEC Judges training scheme.

Panel members should be available to all trainees for advice and training. By negotiation they may agree to mentor an individual trainee.

They should be available to attend structured workshops and if required the practical assessment. Where training and assessment panel members are involved in an assessment panel where a review is required, they must make themselves available for that review, at a mutually agreed venue and time.

For the structured training workshops, each panel is to be comprised of at least two training and assessment panel members, one of which is from the OTEC.

*Training panel members may act as stewards and have involvement in group discussions.*

Assessment sheets will be available to each applicant, and it is their responsibility to supply the assessment sheets for use at the unstructured workshops.

The OTEC has instituted a **Mentor system** supported by **Class leaders** to assist in the training of judges for Track and Search.

Each trainee will have a mentor from the training panel chosen by mutual agreement. That mentor will be expected to take a special interest in that trainee, and take a major role in developing their skills.

Mentors should be available for their trainees to offer advice and training. It is suggested that mentors provide trainees with a list of dates where they are contracted to judge and a list of dates where they will be available for training sessions. Trainees are in turn encouraged to make every attempt to attend trials where their mentor is judging so they can observe and ask questions as required. The mentor and the class leader should be the main source for advice. There has been some confusion at times when trainees have asked many different opinions and received different answers. There is always more than one interpretation to a problem and too many options can cause confusion especially with less experienced trainees.

**Leaders** have been appointed to take a lead role in each of the disciplines, i.e. Track and Search. The Leaders will be asked to prepare written notes and to lead the group at the two lectures, which would be held at the beginning and at the end of the training period each year. They are also encouraged to liaise with the mentors to provide continuity of advice and to assist in general training. One approach that worked well in recent years was an email question and answer exchange.

There will be one general lecture at a time to be advised, for all applicants. This lecture will advise on the training requirements for that year plus the glossary, rules and regulations

The second lecture will have a general component where the requirements for training will be reviewed, and will include a final revision prior to the assessments. The second lecture is optional but is strongly recommended, as a final revision is very useful especially in regard to questions and answers in the group situation.

## **PROCEDURE FOR TRACK AND SEARCH JUDGES PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT**

The following instructions are provided for the information of Trainees, Stewards and Assessment Panel members. It is intended that all officials and trainees be provided with a copy of these instructions prior to the day of the Assessment. The successful conduct and outcome of this Assessment is largely dependent on compliance with the following:

- It will be the responsibility of the appointed convenor to arrange the venue, dogs, handlers and stationery. Suitably qualified dogs are necessary to enable all candidates to be properly and fairly assessed.
- The assessment panel will comprise at least one member of the OTEC and licensed judges from the current Judges Training and Assessment panel appointed by the OTEC.
- The members of each panel, together with the stewards will be arranged by the convenor.
- The same panel will assess all trainees aspiring for a particular licence.
- Assessment times will be staggered if considered necessary.
- The stewards must be experienced for the class in which they will be required to assist, apart from their nominated duties; stewards must not become involved in the assessment proceedings.
- The assessors must not move around unnecessarily and shall position themselves so they can independently assess each dog and remain behind the dog and handler.
- While the necessity of brief discussion between the panel members for the purpose of clarification is understood, there must be no collaboration or unnecessary discussion between the panel members prior to their scores being recorded.
- Each assessor's score must be entered on an Assessment Sheet immediately the track is completed, prior to interviewing the trainee. Should an alteration to the assessor's score be necessary because of circumstances unknown at the time of its recording, the amended score is to be initialled and the reasons for the alteration stated in the comments column.
- The trainee will record his/her points on a Track and Search running sheet, which must be signed.
- Two dogs are usually sufficient to assess each candidate. This does not preclude additional dog/s being given to a candidate to judge should circumstances warrant.
- At the completion of the assessments, the assessors shall not confer. Each assessor will individually make a recommendation as to whether the trainee has passed or failed. The Assessment Sheet is then completed and handed to the convenor.
- Alterations to assessment sheets must include time, date and signature.
- Trainees will not be advised of the outcome of the assessment on the day.
- The convenor is responsible to notify the Controlling Body of the results.
- The Controlling Body will promptly advise the trainees and all results must remain confidential until such time as all trainees have been notified.
- The necessity to question trainees with regard to the awarded gradings is appreciated.
- However, panel members must understand that prolonged and intimidatory questioning and particularly "what if" situations are inappropriate and must not be carried out under any circumstances. Stress on the trainee must be minimised, and the dog and handler should be able to complete the track without unnecessary delay.

Unsuccessful candidates may request a review of their Practical Assessment, subject to meeting the published criteria. Panel Members should be available to attend review interviews on an "as required" basis. Outside of the interview process, the assessments and their results must not be discussed by the Panel Members.



**Mentors must be chosen from the OTEC Training and Assessment Panel in consultation with both the mentors and the trainees.**

**The OTEC Tracking and Track and Search Training and Assessment Panel for 2023/24**

* Denise Chrystal T/TSD	0415 733 753
* Dawn Howard O/R/T/TSD	0412 088 055
* Kim Houlden O/R/T/TSD	0418 525 118
* Lynn Klecka O/R/T/TSD	0418 333 312
*Wendy McLean T/TSD	0429 002 309
* Peter Miller T/TSD	0407 170 258
*Judy Pillinger T/TSD	0427 323 667

\* Assessor

Training Panel members may be utilised as mentors, trainers at structured and unstructured workshops when available, to the level to which they hold an OTEC licence. They will not be eligible to assess until such time as they are appointed to the Assessment Panel.

**Class Leaders**

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Track and Search	TBA
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The Judges Training Co-ordinator is Dawn Howard 0412 088 055  
email [killarakennels@gmail.com](mailto:killarakennels@gmail.com)