



**Australian Canine Scent Work Pty Ltd<sup>®</sup>**  
**(ACSW<sup>™</sup>)**  
**OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN RULE BOOK**  
**FOR THE SPORT OF**  
**K9 NOSE WORK<sup>®</sup>**

Version 1.1 - 7<sup>th</sup> August 2017

ACSW<sup>®</sup> (Australian Canine Scent Work) would like to thank Jill Marie O'Brien, Ron Gaunt and Amy Herot, (NACSW founders) for developing this wonderful sport of K9 Nose Work<sup>®</sup> and for allowing us to share their vision, mission and core values with the dogs and people of Australia.  
ACSW<sup>®</sup> would also like to acknowledge and thank the following people for their hard work, passion and commitment in helping to make the ACSW an organisation we can all be proud of:-

Sue Town  
Robyn Smiles  
Trinny Teigan  
Kim Dowding

Thank you

Marion Brand, CNWI  
Founder ACSW<sup>®</sup>

**ACSW®**  
**K9 NOSE WORK® RULE BOOK**

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# ACSW® K9 NOSE WORK® RULE BOOK

## PREFACE

### **What is K9 Nose Work®?**

The sport of K9 Nose Work®, created by the founders of NACSW™, was inspired by detection style training for working K9s and has elements that are founded in that type of training and work. *K9 Nose Work®* is the term that specifically defines this detection-inspired sport that is governed and sanctioned by Australian Canine Scent Work®.

One of the many challenges faced by working K9s and their handlers is encountering new environments and scenarios daily. This challenge will be reflected in the sport through differing search environments and requirements of each location. Additionally, the environment may change throughout the day due to uncontrollable factors such as weather. **Therefore the general rules and guidelines will apply, but handlers and dogs may encounter variations at each trial.**

### **K9 Nose Work® Trials:**

Trials may be held for the purpose of competition, titling, or both. Only ACSW™ sanctioned trials however may award the official nose work titles (NW1™, NW2™, NW3™, L1C, L2C, L3C, L1E, L2E, L3E, L1I, L2I, L3I, L1V, L2V, L3V, NW3 Elite, NW3-C, NW3-I, NW3-V, NW3-E, ELT1, ELT2). Additionally, the trials and prerequisite Odour Recognition Testing must be sanctioned by an ACSW™ Certifying Official with an ACSW™ approved judge.

### **Australian Canine Scent Work Pty Ltd (ACSW™)**

Australian Canine Scent Work® (ACSW™) sets the standards governing the sport of K9 Nose Work® in Australia. ACSW™ is the only official organizing body for K9 Nose Work® titles. ACSW™ sanctioned events are open to any participant who is a current ACSW™ member in good standing.

### **Mission of ACSW™:**

The mission of the ACSW™ Trial Division is to make the sport of K9 Nose Work® safe, fun and fair for dogs and dog lovers through the sanctioning of all K9 Nose Work® Odour Recognition Tests and K9 Nose Work® Trials.

### **Contact Information:**

Australian Canine Scent Work Pty Ltd  
5 Harris Road, Dural, NSW, 2158  
Email: info@acsw.com.au

For general information please visit the website [www.acsw.com.au](http://www.acsw.com.au)

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## **Score Books & Rule Books:**

Official score books and rule books for the sport of K9 Nose Work® are maintained and made available through ACSW™. Please contact us for details at [info@acsw.com.au](mailto:info@acsw.com.au). Score books are not required for official documentation of records, but are available as a personal record of competition events.

## **ACSW™ Rule Book Version Number System**

The numbering system for identifying the edition of the ACSW™ rule book is as follows:

If there are significant changes to trial structure, scoring, or title definitions, then a new numbered edition of the rulebook will be issued (i.e. 1.0, 2.0, 3.0).

If there are only small language changes, typos, changes to the guidelines, wording clarifications, or other changes that do not affect titling or training the version number will be added under the existing version (i.e. 1.0).

Major revisions to the rule book especially those that affect training will be announced with consideration for the time allotment for training adjustments. Other revisions will be published no later than the trial entry open date.

ACSW™ welcomes input in the development of this rulebook. Please email any questions, comments or corrections to [info@acsw.com.au](mailto:info@acsw.com.au) with the subject heading, "ACSW™ RULE BOOK."

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## **REQUIREMENTS & ELIGIBILITY**

### **For Odour Recognition Tests (ORTS) and Trials**

#### **Age & Health Requirements of Dogs**

Dogs participating in an Odour Recognition Test (ORT) must be at least six months of age. Dogs participating in a trial must be at least one year of age. All dogs must appear to be healthy on the event day and should be current on all vaccinations/titre tests required by law. Lactating bitches are not eligible to compete. Bitches in season are not eligible to compete. Participants should contact the event host at least 72 hours prior to the event if they anticipate that their dog may be in season at the event. Any questions about medical or health conditions should be cleared by your veterinarian in order to participate.

#### **Age & Physical Requirements of Handlers, Volunteers and Spectators:**

Minimum age requirement for handlers is sixteen (16) years of age. An adult must accompany all handlers under the age of 16 at all times at official events. This adult may not be participating in the trial with another dog.

For minors who are not handling a dog, but will be attending an event, either as volunteers or spectators, the following policy applies.

Volunteers must be at least 16 years of age.

Anyone under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

All minors must have a waiver signed by their legal parent or guardian. Adults supervising minors at the trial are responsible for the actions of the minor.

Anyone aged 16-18 is not required to be supervised by an adult, however must have a waiver signed by their legal parent or guardian.

The fundamental nature of the sport is to expose the team to real-life search scenarios with varying terrains and environments. Every team must navigate the same conditions, entrances, exits, start lines, etc. Trials frequently require covering extensive distances to get to and from the parking area to each of the search areas and movements are frequently done across natural, uneven surfaces depending on the trial location. Handlers and dogs therefore should be prepared for the physical demands and must be able to navigate the terrain accordingly. Participants should expect to spend most of the day outside or in their vehicles as there are rarely indoor crating options at ORTs or trials.

#### **ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Membership:**

Handlers must be current members of ACSW<sup>TM</sup> in order to compete in an ACSW<sup>TM</sup> sanctioned trial or ORT event and must have registered their dogs with ACSW<sup>TM</sup>. All members agree to abide by the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> rules and event policies. Membership may be suspended or revoked for violation of the rules or policies.

*Note: Potential Hosts wishing to sponsor an ACSW<sup>TM</sup> sanctioned event should contact the organization directly to review location parameters, testing requirements and Certifying Officials for all trials and ORTs. Please visit our website at [acsw.com.au](http://acsw.com.au) for more information.*

#### **ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Officials:**

**ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Certifying Official** –The ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Certifying Official is responsible for ensuring that the event is run to ACSW<sup>TM</sup> rules and standards. They are also responsible for all hide placements at the event. Certifying Officials are assigned to each event by the ACSW<sup>TM</sup>.

**ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Judge** – The judge is responsible for determining if the team has correctly called the 'Alert' and for making decisions relating to faults and conduct during the actual competition search.

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ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Judges are assigned to each event by the ACSW<sup>®</sup>

**ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Trial Representative** – The Trial Rep is responsible for helping the Certifying Official to ensure that the event is run to ACSW<sup>TM</sup> rules and standards. This is an optional position and is assigned to an event by the ACSW<sup>TM</sup>.

## **Entry Eligibility:**

As of January 1, 2017, Competitors are not eligible to participate in an ACSW<sup>TM</sup> event if they are an immediate family member, or member of the household of a listed judge or if the dog belongs to an immediate family member or lives in the household of a listed judge. Immediate family member is defined as spouse, partner, child, grandchild, or in-laws.

In the event that there is a judge replacement after the trial entry open date, then the above eligibility requirements are waived for the replacement judge.

## **ACSW<sup>TM</sup> ORT & TRIAL REGULATIONS**

**Prior to participating in a ACSW<sup>TM</sup> event, it is the responsibility of each competitor to read and understand the current ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Rule book.**

Sportsman-like behavior is expected from all attendees, towards each other, and towards the judges, volunteers, and trial organizers. ACSW<sup>TM</sup> rules are in effect during the entire trial or ORT from the time you arrive until the time you leave the trial grounds at the end of the trial day.

Minor rule additions or adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances may apply on the day of the event. Handlers will be notified of any day-of changes at the handler's briefing before the start of each trial

Any questions or concerns regarding anything that happens at a trial, such as dismissal or disciplinary action, should be directed to the Certifying Official on trial day. An incident report may be filed, if applicable, with the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> by the Certifying Official.

Details of the event must be clearly stated - date, location, extenuating circumstances, necessary contact information, etc.

The decision by the ACSW to uphold, reject, or modify the dismissal or disciplinary action will be final

No entry fees will be refunded if the trial or ORT cannot open or be completed by reason of riots, civil disturbances, fire, Act of God, public emergency, act of a public enemy, strike or any other cause beyond the control of the organizers.

Entry fees shall not be refunded in the event that a dog is disqualified or excused by the official or judge.

## **Search Area Regulations:**

Handlers must be current members in good standing with ACSW<sup>TM</sup>.

The same handler must handle the same dog for all the searches in a single trial. At an ORT, a single handler must handle a dog for a single test. Each odour is an additional test and you may utilize a different handler for another test.

Double handling is not permissible. i.e. someone other than the designated handler giving the handler or the dog instructions or assistance during the searches.

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Each handler/dog team should be on deck before their turn for each search.

Handlers may talk to and/or communicate with their dog throughout the competition or test.

Any questions for the judge or Certifying Official or concerns about the search should be addressed in the handler's briefing

The time starts when the dog's nose or any part of the team crosses the start line or threshold. Handlers may have a moment at the start line to acclimate and collect themselves. You may be prompted by the judge to begin if the time is excessive. The dog must enter the search area by crossing the start line or through the threshold. If a dog does not cross the start line or enter the search area through the threshold then the team will be given the full time limit for their search.

The timer may be instructed to give a 30 second (time remaining) warning for all trial levels. The timer will make every effort to give this warning, but situations may occur where the warning is not given.

Handlers may carry the dog's reward with them at all times (food, toys, etc). Handlers should take care not to contaminate the search areas with their rewards. At a trial, faults may be assessed at the judges' discretion if the handler has compromised the search area. See the Scoring Section for more details.

## **Equipment for Dogs and Handlers:**

**Handlers:** Handlers should wear comfortable clothing with safety in mind. Athletic footwear appropriate for navigating uneven terrain is highly recommended. Handlers may also wear special training clothing and equipment, i.e. vests, hats, bait bags, etc.

**Dogs:** Flat collars, martingale collars, limited slip, harnesses and leashes (any length as well as Flexi) are the only permitted equipment during the search. No electronic or remote training devices may be used at any time. Dogs may not wear cameras during ORT or trial searches.

Accessories for dogs are allowed if they are deemed to be for the wellbeing, comfort, or safety of the dog – for example boots, jackets, sweaters, hair pins. If the Certifying Official or Judge deems that the equipment interferes with the search, is a safety concern, or exhibits inappropriate advertising, you may be asked to remove the accessory from the dog before the search begins. Accessories that emit an odour (for example DAP collars) are not permitted in the search area. Muzzles are not permitted to be worn on trial grounds. Calming caps and other accessories that block the dog's vision are not permitted outside of the vehicle or crate. If you have a specific concern or question about a particular piece of equipment, email [info@acsw.com.au](mailto:info@acsw.com.au) at least 14 days prior to the trial date.

Bitches in season are NOT allowed to trial or participate in ORT's. Participants should contact the event host at least 72 hours prior to the event if they anticipate that their dog may be in season at the event.

## **ORT and Trial Entry Process:**

Entries for ACSW<sup>TM</sup> events are done via the ACSW web site [acsw.com.au](http://acsw.com.au). The host may advertise the event on their web site and publish the link to the ACSW web site for on line entries. Once entries are closed, the ACSW will check current membership status and any titles or ORT passes held. Competitor lists for the event will then be emailed to the HOST club – payment is required at the time of entering on line and the HOST club must provide the ACSW the relevant payment details.



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It can take up to 14 days to process ORT and trial results. Trial entry requires that you have earned your ORT and any titles required for entry at least 14 days prior to the trial entry close date to be considered for the primary draw.

## **Dismissals and Disciplinary Action:**

At an ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Sanctioned event (including, but, not limited to, K9 Nose Work<sup>®</sup> Trial or Odour Recognition Test), the Certifying Official, Trial Representative, or Event Host has the right to ask any person, whether they are entered in the event or not, to leave the event grounds, without any expectation of refund of any fees associated with the event (Dismissal). Such Dismissal can be for any just cause, such as where the handler and/or dog is behaving in a manner that is against the rules of the Host or ACSW<sup>TM</sup>, or for other reasons that may cause a safety hazard.

The just causes for which a Dismissal may be issued to a person on the trial grounds include, but are not limited to:

Abuse towards another person or dog

Unsportsmanlike conduct including intentional disclosure/knowledge of the hide locations prior to the competitor completing the search.

Acting in a manner that could endanger another person or dog, including not having control of their dog(s)

Dog(s) acting in a manner that could endanger another person or dog

Acting in a manner that could cause the loss of an event site or hotel including excessive/sustained vocalization in the parking and/or crating areas.

Anyone videoing the element areas during the walk through

Not following ACSW<sup>TM</sup> rules or event rules set forth in the premium

Any aggressive act by a dog towards a person or another dog may result in the offending dog being dismissed from the event at the Certifying Official's or Trial Representative's discretion. Any physical contact made by the offending dog to a dog or human may result in dismissal from all future events.

Aggressive acts, including verbal abuse and harassment, by a person towards dogs or other people may result in the offending person being dismissed from the event at the Certifying Official's or Trial Representative's discretion. Any physical contact made by the offending person to a dog or person may result in dismissal from all future events.

If a dog or person is dismissed from the event, the Certifying Official or Trial Representative will fill out an "Incident Report Form" and the handler or dismissed person will receive a copy of the form. The Certifying Official will notify the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> of the incident within 48 hours of the report of the incident and a copy of the incident report form will also be submitted to the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> within 7 days of the incident. If the person leaves prior to receiving a copy of the form, the form will be sent via email to the email address on record for membership with the ACSW<sup>TM</sup>. All dismissals will automatically result in a 10 day suspension, effective the day of the dismissal. The ACSW Disciplinary Action Trial Committee will contact the person via an email sent to the email address on record for membership with the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> within 10 days of the dismissal to let the person know if there will be any additional disciplinary action beyond the 10 day suspension.

Severe or repeated aggression by a dog or any dog or handler with multiple incidents on record may result in the dog or handler being suspended or permanently barred from entering any future ACSW<sup>TM</sup> sanctioned events. If a dog is suspended or barred, the handler will maintain their membership and may compete with other registered dogs.

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## **Safety & Location Regulations:**

There should be no training or non-official use of odour on trial or ORT grounds within a 1km radius during the event. Nor should training take place on trial grounds preceding the trial once the event is approved/announced.

It is not appropriate to visit the trial location prior to the trial date. Our locations are real life search environments where people work, go to school, etc. Pre-trial visits risk the host having the opportunity to use the location in the future.

Alcohol is not permitted on trial grounds. Public intoxication is not allowed on trial grounds.

All attendees must adhere to safety regulations of the ACSW<sup>TM</sup>, the host and the trial location.

Searches should not be discussed by anyone (competitors, volunteers, spectators) until all dogs have completed a given search.

Smoking may be restricted or prohibited based on location restrictions. Please show consideration to other participants if smoking is allowed at a location.

Dogs should use the designated toilet area only so as not to interfere with any search areas and respect the requirements of the trial location.

Handlers are responsible for cleaning up after their dog and may be dismissed if they do not.

Handlers should ensure that their dog keeps a safe distance (minimum of eight feet) from any other dog.

Dogs must be on leash at all times unless they are conducting an official off leash search as part of the event. Dogs must be on a 6' or shorter leash when not in the competition search area. Handlers on their way to the competition search area may have their dogs on a longer leash, but must maintain a leash length of 6 feet or shorter. Flexi leashes are not permitted except during ORT or trial searches. This applies to event participants, trial organizers, volunteers, and spectators. Note: If changing leashes or other equipment before starting an on leash search, you must keep your dog under physical control at all times. This means keeping a hold of your dog by a leash or collar while switching gear.

No dogs may be left unattended except when properly kenneled or in secured vehicles.

In the event of extreme weather conditions, participants should be prepared to keep their dog adequately warm or cool in their vehicles or in crates adjacent to their vehicles. In the case of high air temperatures, dogs must be crated with adequate shade, ventilation and access to water. Dogs may not be loose in vehicles with open windows, or tied to a vehicle or other stationary object. Competitors should expect to keep their dogs confined when not competing. The logistics of a trial typically do not allow for dogs to hang out on leash in between searches. Competitors should plan to provide their own shade using canopies or shade cloths. Please show consideration of others if running your car for heat or air conditioning as the exhaust may be disturbing and dangerous to those around you.

Dogs may be dismissed from ORTs or trials for excessive/sustained vocalization in the crating/parking area as it may disturb trial location neighbors, as well as the trial participants.

It is the handler's responsibility to ensure the safety of their dogs working in the search areas.

There will be no deliberately dangerous obstacles, but ACSW<sup>TM</sup> is not responsible for unforeseen hazards. It is up to the handler to determine if they feel it is safe for their dog. No refunds will be offered if a handler chooses to withdraw from a trial or ORT.

Bitches in season are NOT allowed to compete in ACSW<sup>TM</sup> trials or ORT's.

## **Multiple Dogs:**

A handler may not handle multiple dogs in the same trial. Only one dog per household may enter the trial draw. Handlers may be permitted to enter multiple dogs on different trial days of a multiple day event if the trial host is offering that option or

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in different Element Specialty Trials held on the same day **All handlers must be current ACSW<sup>TM</sup> members and all dogs must be registered with the ACSW<sup>TM</sup>.**

ORTs may offer a second dog per handler option as long as the second dog is in a different test. depending on location and time constraints.

## **Videoing and Photography:**

Taking of photos at trials is only allowed by photographers who have been contracted by the Trial Host and approved by the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> per the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> rules on hosting a trial. ACSW<sup>TM</sup> must have use of a select number of images to use for promotional and educational purposes free of charge. These images will include up to 20 event/action shots and also photos of the winners at the awards ceremony. Photographer credit will be given when these images are used. Photographers may sell copies of their work to event participants as long as the event host and ACSW has granted them permission to do so and location restrictions permit on site photography. Photos may not be used commercially without written authorization from the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> as detailed on the contract which the photographer will need to sign before the event. Competitors, spectators, and volunteers may not video or photograph any part of the trial, trial walk-through, search areas, CO briefing, and judges' debrief.

As a condition of entering a trial or ORT, handlers agree to allow ACSW<sup>TM</sup>, or their agents, to video both the handler and their dog, during the entirety of the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> event. These videos are the property of ACSW<sup>TM</sup>. All competitors, through entry at any ACSW<sup>TM</sup> event, waive any and all rights relative to video broadcast or photography of such event.

After the trial, the ACSW will make each competitors videos available for sale, to the competitor.

## **Trial Logistics and Guidelines: (Preceding the start of competition)**

Handlers must check in with the check in/registration desk to confirm their entry and running order as applicable before the handler walk-through begins.

There will be a handler's briefing to review rule updates for the trial location and search areas.

There may be a walk through (without the dog) which provides the handler an opportunity to assess the search area for start lines and search boundaries. Competition search areas are meant to mimic real life situations. We will remove gross hazards that we are aware of (for example: rat poison); however the environment may not be pristine and there may be unidentified hazards. It is the handler's responsibility to determine how to safely navigate each environment with their dog. No refunds will be offered if a handler chooses to withdraw from a trial.

A warm-up area may be designated with at least one identified hide. One handler/dog team at a time may use this area. Dogs on deck will have priority.

The number of hides per area or search will be specified during the handler's briefing. Exceptions would include those that are competing for higher title levels which may require areas to be finished.

Handlers will be informed of the total time for each search area element and point allotment at the handler's briefing.

A running order will be posted in the handler staging area.

## **General ORT & Trial Regulations:**

Hide locations will not be known to the handler and will not be readily visible to the handler.

Handlers must receive permission from the judge to move items/objects/furniture in the search area.

Handlers may not touch items/objects/furniture/vehicles in the search area without the judge's permission or unless other circumstances are specified by the CO at the handler's briefing.

Most searches will be conducted on leash. The Interior search is the element most likely to offer an off leash option. If other elements include an off leash search, the location will dictate the circumstances for the dog's safety.

At NW1<sup>TM</sup> Trials the time will stop when the handler calls the alert by saying 'Alert'. At NW2<sup>TM</sup> Trials the time will stop and the search will end when the handler calls 'Finish'. For NW3 Trials, and the Elite

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Division the time will stop and the search will end when the handler calls 'Finish'. The 'Finish' call must be made before time expires.

The time does not stop between hides when there are multiple hides in a given search area.

For NW2<sup>TM</sup> and NW3<sup>TM</sup>, each interior search area will have its own time limit. The time for each area is independent of the times for the other areas. The time does not continue running as you move from one interior search area to another. The interior score will be a total of the multiple search area times.

If the dog alerts (by offering an indication) it is not valid until the handler calls alert.

An alternate way to call the alert may be defined by the Certifying Official on trial day if the conditions or do not make it conducive to hearing the word 'Alert' or if there are other mitigating circumstances.

The official time will be based on the time displayed on the timing device and not based on the timer verbally indicating that time has expired.

The handler may not call 'alert' in reference to a location that the dog is not currently indicating.

Search Area etiquette: Faults may be given at the judges' discretion if the team has compromised the search area. Compromising the search area includes, but is not limited to: contaminating or damaging/destroying boxes or other items in the environment, dropping/leaving food/toy rewards in search areas, moving or touching objects without permission, etc.

The ACSW<sup>TM</sup> does not support visits to official trial locations prior to the trial date. Most trials are held on private property and we need to show respect to the property owners. Even when a location is public property, the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> does not condone practice at the trial location within 6 months of the trial date. The purpose of a K9 Nose Work<sup>®</sup> trial is for a dog to walk into a novel situation and search. Additionally, practice at the trial site will result in contamination that may adversely affect the competition.

Handlers may not observe other participants' runs in the same trial.

■ Dogs may be excused from a search if any of the following apply:

- Dog is under undue stress during a search, subject to the judge's discretion
- Dog is in obvious pain during a search, subject to the judge's discretion
- Extreme disruption of a search area
- Any dog that leaves the search area or is deemed to be out of control may be excused.

Note: Handlers may opt to stop the search for their dog's wellbeing at any time.

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**TITLE DESIGNATIONS**  
**LEVELS OF THE WORKING TITLES**

**Pre-qualifier for Title Trial Entry:**

ORT #1 (Birch) for NW1<sup>TM</sup>  
ORT #2 (Anise) for NW2<sup>TM</sup>  
ORT #3 (Clove) for NW3<sup>TM</sup>

**NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, NW3<sup>TM</sup> Trial Titles:**

**NW1<sup>TM</sup>**

**NW2<sup>TM</sup>**

**NW3<sup>TM</sup>**

*For the NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, and NW3<sup>TM</sup> titles, the team must qualify in all four elements (Container, Interior, Exterior and Vehicle) at the same trial*

**NW3 ELITE**

*This title is awarded for achieving the NW3<sup>TM</sup> title at three different trials.*

**\*PARTNERSHIP**

*(not a title, but see designation explanation on page 10)*

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**Elite Division Trial Titles:**

**ELT1**

**ELT2**

**ELT3**

**ELT-CH**

*The ELT1 Title is earned by accumulating 150 points at Elite Division Trials.*

*The ELT2 Title is earned by accumulating 400 points at Elite Division Trials.*

*The ELT3 Title is earned by accumulating 650 points at Elite Division Trials.*

*The ELT-CH Title is earned by accumulating 1000 points at Elite Division Trials.*

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# ACSW<sup>TM</sup> K9 NOSE WORK<sup>®</sup> RULE BOOK

## ACSW<sup>TM</sup> TITLE GUIDELINES

Titles may only be achieved at ACSW<sup>TM</sup> sanctioned events. A ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Certifying Official must be present at every trial and sanctioned events must be judged by ACSW<sup>TM</sup> appointed judges. The title requirements described in this edition of the rulebook are subject to change and will naturally evolve with competition. Competitors should make sure they have the most current version of the rulebook before trialing. The rule book is available on the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> website at [acsw.com.au](http://acsw.com.au)

Eligibility for each title level is determined by a successfully completed ACSW<sup>TM</sup> ORT and successful completion of the previous title level and other entry requirements. Those trialing for a title level must achieve full points for each element, must not exceed the time limit of the element, and not earn more than 3 faults overall in order to earn the title.

NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup> and NW3<sup>TM</sup> titles are granted by successfully passing (receiving a score of 100 points) each element at the same trial. The NW3 Elite, and NW3-V, NW3-E, NW3-I, NW3-C all require three qualifying performances (a perfect score for that element or in the case of NW3 Elite three qualifying performances in all four elements in the same trial for three trials) for title achievement. Only one title level, (NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, NW3<sup>TM</sup>), may be granted at any given trial and these titles must be achieved in succession.

Dogs must have earned the NW3 Elite title to be eligible to enter an Elite Division Trial. The ELT1 title is earned by accumulating 150 points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT2 title is earned by accumulating 400 total points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT3 title is earned by accumulating 650 total points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT-CH title is earned by accumulating 1000 total points at Elite Division Trials.

Scorebooks are not required for official records and are optional for the participant. Trial participants' scores may be posted in their individual score book by the score room or signed by the Certifying Official and a judge for NW1, NW2, NW3, and Elite Division Trials.

The titles are awarded to the dog, but the handler/dog team is judged overall in the competition. Each level of ORT and title may include a different handler as long as the handler is a member of ACSW<sup>TM</sup>. Trial organizers however may require waivers for handling dogs not owned by the handler.

Competitors must wait a minimum of 14 days after earning a title or passing a required ORT before being eligible to register in another trial for the next title level.

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## **PARTNERSHIP**

The judges may recognize a great partnership among handler/dog teams demonstrating exceptional technique and/or teamwork at each NW1, NW2, NW3, and Elite trial. This is not part of the title, but rather an acknowledgement of exceptional teamwork on that particular trial day.

The judges will evaluate the following elements in the teamwork:

Professionalism, handler and dog safety, observational skills, leash handling technique, off leash control, speed and efficiency, accuracy, stamina, enthusiasm, clarity of alert, odour obedience. Partnership recognition will be solely at the discretion of the judge(s) for that trial.

The '*partnership*' term is not automatically awarded due to the score or comments. The nature of ACSW<sup>TM</sup> trials include the participation of several judges, each with their own interpretation and opinion on the teamwork they view in the element they are judging. Judges will note a "p" on the competitor score sheets when they wish to recognize the technique and/or teamwork for that team, so that handlers may receive feedback and have understanding about areas of their searches that were most notable to that judge. At the trial end, all of the score sheets will be reviewed. Any team with a "p" noted will get a ribbon to acknowledge their teamwork. Any handler/dog receiving 2, 3 or more "p's" in that trial will be considered for the "Partnership Award". The 'P' is not considered part of a title. \*\*The score book will indicate a 'partnership' designation with a 'p' but if a title is earned, the title will be NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, or NW3<sup>TM</sup>, etc.

## **ODOUR RECOGNITION TEST (ORT)**

### **Purpose of the ORT:**

The ORT verifies the dog's recognition of the odour used in trial and the handler's ability to correctly call the location of the source of odour. In order to enter a trial, a dog must have passed the ACSW<sup>TM</sup> ORT (Odour Recognition Test) required for that particular trial and/or title level according to ACSW<sup>TM</sup> specifications. The ACSW<sup>TM</sup> will verify ORT and title completion for each trial entry.

Please note that the ORT is not a measurement of trial readiness but rather only recognition of the odour to be used at trial. Successfully passing an ORT requires a dog to identify the location of the target odour and the handler to correctly call an alert (or equivalent) within a three-minute time period. The Odour Recognition Test must be conducted by an ACSW<sup>TM</sup> appointed judge and sanctioned by an ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Certifying Official. The test may be conducted indoors or outdoors as approved by the ACSW<sup>TM</sup>.

The ORT is a pass or miss test within the time limit. No scoring, faults, placements or times are recorded as they are for trials.

**Note: It can take 14 days to process ORT results. Trial entry requires that you have earned your ORT and any pre-requisite titles at least 14 days prior to the trial entry open date to be considered for the primary draw.**

### **Trial Readiness:**

The ORT is not necessarily a measure of trial readiness. Though a dog still fairly new to training may pass the odour recognition test, they may not be ready for the rigors of a trial. The trial takes place over the course of a full day and may present many environmental challenges to the team. The average time frame for training to trial readiness is about one year. Most handlers and dogs by that time have learned all of the elements of competition and have practiced those elements in many locations, under time pressure with the guidance of an instructor. The ACSW<sup>TM</sup> offers this guideline in the hopes that handlers will provide a

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long enough training period for the dog. This will allow for both dog and handler to have a more enjoyable and successful experience at trial.

## **ORT – Test Specifications:**

The Odour Recognition Test is a type of container search exercise. The ORT requires 12 closed cardboard boxes set up in a pattern of one or two rows with each box set a minimum distance of 48” apart from box edge to box edge. The ACSW<sup>TM</sup> official may approve adjustments depending on space and location limitations. The ORT is to be conducted on leash and no deliberate distractors should be included. One of the boxes will be the ‘target box’, which will contain the target odour being tested. If multiple odours are being tested at an event, each odour will be tested individually. All of the other boxes should be reasonably new, and uncontaminated by odour, food, or other distracting smells. The target box should contain scented cotton swabs that are not visible to the handler and are secured to the inside of the box. Handlers should prepare for variation in strength and quantity of cotton swabs. The test uses three, half-swabs scented with the target odour. The recommended standard box should not exceed 6” in height, but may otherwise have variation of the dimensions.

The target box shall remain in the same place for all of the dogs participating in the ORT for that particular odour, except for handlers running a second dog where allowed, or ORT events where multiple odours are being tested. The ORT shall be conducted out of sight of all entered dogs and handlers who have not yet tested. Once all handlers/dogs have completed the ORT, handlers may run a second dog on the ORT if a second test of the same odour is being offered by the host. The same applies to ORTs for the second and third odours to be tested. There may be lingering odour in the case of multi-dog or multi-odour tests depending on space limitations. The Certifying Official will make the best effort to eliminate or minimize these conditions, but handlers should be aware that the possibility exists. The number of dogs per handler per odour is set by the ORT host in consultation with the ACSW based on location and time restrictions, within ACSW<sup>TM</sup> guidelines.

People approved to be in the testing area during an ORT include ACSW<sup>TM</sup> officials, approved ACSW<sup>TM</sup> guests, approved ORT staff, adults accompanying a minor, approved CNWI/ANWI for training purposes, or immediate family members/friends of the dog/handler team being tested. Participants in an ORT may not be spectators for other participants regardless of relationship. Any other spectators must be approved in advance by the ACSW<sup>TM</sup>. The ORT Certifying Official has the right to limit spectators at their discretion.

The ACSW<sup>TM</sup> Certifying Official will provide a ‘handler’s briefing’ to review the test and location parameters. A start line (threshold) will be indicated, and the handler may take up to 10 seconds at the start line before beginning their search. The time starts when the dog’s nose or any part of the team crosses the start line. The dog must enter the search area by crossing the start line. The handler and dog may pass up and down the rows in any pattern as many times as they choose. Handlers may direct the dog to the boxes, but may not touch the boxes. When the dog indicates the target box the handler should signal the judge by saying “ALERT” loudly and clearly. Once the judge has confirmed that the alert is correct, the handler may then reward the dog and the dog will pass the ORT. If the alert is not correct, the judge will direct the handler to the correct box\* for the dog’s success. In this case the dog will not pass the ORT for that target odour. Dogs that do not pass must wait until the following day to retest. ORTs are scheduled as needed by ACSW<sup>TM</sup> and trial organizers.

The test may be stopped at the discretion of the judge or Certifying Official if at any time the judge deems the dog to be under undue stress.

*\*The goal of directing the dog to the correct box quickly is to avoid any possible stress for any dog due to prolonged searching in the event they either don’t know the odour, or are having difficulty that day and to help maintain the integrity of the search area.*



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**ORT – Summary**

- The test may be conducted indoors or outdoors 3-minute test
- On leash (any length leash)
- Equipment: flat collar or harness
- No chokes, pinch collars, electronic collars, muzzles, or head halters during the actual search*
- 12 closed cardboard boxes in a line-type pattern (*minimal variation may be necessary due to location specs*)
  - (11-1/8" x 8-3/4" x 4 is a typical size)
- Boxes may not be touched by handlers during the test
- 1 target odour per test
- Each additional odour at the test event will be a separate test
- Handlers with a second dog will have a separate test
- Time begins when the dog's nose crosses the start line
- No formal, final response is required, only the handler's ability to read the dog's indication.
  - The time will stop when the Handler calls 'Alert', indicating their dog has located the box with the target odour.
  - Handler may reward the dog when the judge has confirmed the correct target box. Handler should reward next to the box to minimize contamination, and should minimize food dropped on the floor or toys disturbing the search area.

**ORT – Required odour for trial entry**

The ORTs may be achieved in any order and may also be done on the same testing day in separate tests if so organized by the host. If, however, a handler wishes to compete for a title, they must achieve the ORT for the first title level, NW1<sup>TM</sup>, which is Birch, since the titles must be achieved in succession. The results may be recorded in the dog's score book for the handler's records and a record of their test will be kept on file with ACSW<sup>TM</sup>.

- ORT (Birch):** Must pass the ORT for Odour #1; required for NW1<sup>TM</sup>
- ORT (Anise):** Must pass the ORT for Odour #2; required for NW2<sup>TM</sup>
- ORT (Clove):** Must pass the ORT for Odour #3; required for NW3<sup>TM</sup>

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**NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, and NW3<sup>TM</sup> TRIAL GUIDELINES**

**TRIAL ELEMENTS for NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, and NW3<sup>TM</sup>**

Following are the elements that must be included in any K9 Nose Work<sup>®</sup> competition for NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, and NW3<sup>TM</sup> title purposes. Each of the elements will be worth 25 points for a total possible 100 points overall. At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each element. That time limit for the search cannot be exceeded if points are to be awarded. The elements may be presented in any order. The location of all hides will remain in the same spot for all competitors to allow for no total time differences in the search.

Note: for most trials, the time limit for each search area is typically between two and five minutes.

**ELEMENTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION**

(100-point total score)

**CONTAINER SEARCH**

**EXTERIOR AREA SEARCH**

**INTERIOR BUILDING SEARCH**

**VEHICLE SEARCH**

**CONTAINER SEARCH**

The Container Search element of the competition is similar to the ORT that is required for trial entry. The NW1<sup>TM</sup> level typically includes a group of boxes set in any pattern. The container search may however include any shape or size box (or combination thereof) at the NW1<sup>TM</sup> level. Containers and/or luggage (or combination thereof) may be included at the NW2<sup>TM</sup> and NW3<sup>TM</sup> level and may be set in any arrangement with no minimum spacing distances. Additionally, the container search for NW2<sup>TM</sup> and NW3<sup>TM</sup> may also include distractor odours, such as but not limited to food, toys, animal smells, and other novel odours. Only one box (or container) will contain odour at the NW1<sup>TM</sup> level. NW2<sup>TM</sup> and NW3<sup>TM</sup> may include multiple or combination odours. The odour used will correspond to the title level requirement. Additional 'pre-cooked' and blank containers will be on stand-by for replacement should any of the containers be damaged. The search is typically conducted on leash, but any length leash may be used. Handlers are not permitted to touch the containers. Dogs may walk on the containers; however the judge may award a fault if they feel the dog is compromising the environment. The container search may be conducted indoors or outdoors. For NW1<sup>TM</sup>, containers will be cardboard boxes of any shape or size. Containers at NW2<sup>TM</sup> and NW3<sup>TM</sup> may be cardboard boxes of any shape or size, luggage, paint cans, plastic bins, shoeboxes, or any similar type of actual container which may collect the scent.

**EXTERIOR SEARCH**

Each competition includes an outdoor search area. Examples of areas previously used include the exterior of a building, a parking lot, grassy field, courtyard, etc. Dogs may have to search while coming across doggie odours, other animal smells (cats, gophers, rodents and other critters), litter, food trash, and simply the smells of the great outdoors. Additionally the dogs will have to search under all weather and wind conditions on trial day. The search may be conducted on or off leash and is set by the Certifying Official based on safety. The off leash option is rarely offered and would only occur if the search took place in a secured area (Like a fenced in tennis court for example). The exterior search area will be clearly identified by flags, cones, tape or other identifiers marking the perimeter of the search area. The hides will only be within the designated search area. However, dogs and handlers may move outside of those areas as part of their search pattern. Handlers may choose to enter the search area from any angle after the dog has crossed the designated start line, but the clock will begin once they cross the designated start. The search area and search time limit will be determined on a number of factors including, size, weather conditions, complexity, distractors and title level and will change with each trial location.

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## **INTERIOR SEARCH**

Each competition includes an interior building search that may include from one to three search areas depending on the title level. These are typically room-sized environments such as a kitchen, bathroom, conference room, office, or warehouse space. A single search area may include contiguous 'rooms' (For example: a master bedroom with adjoining bathroom). Often this portion of the competition is not open to spectators because the search areas may be small such as bathrooms and kitchens. The building could be any type of building such as a warehouse, school, church, restaurant, house, etc. The search may have on and off leash areas, depending on the particular trial requirements. The only searches at trials that may contain a blank area (a search area without odour) are the Interior Search at the NW3<sup>TM</sup> level, and any search at Elite Division Trials.

## **VEHICLE SEARCH**

There may be up to five vehicles in the vehicle search, depending on the title level. Any type of vehicle may be used (car, motorcycle, truck, trailer, semi, etc). Only the exterior of the vehicle is searched. Handlers may be assessed a fault if their dog excessively paws or damages the vehicle at the judge's discretion or if the safety of the dog is compromised. (for example if the dog disappears from view under the car). The handler will never need to open a vehicle door for their dog to locate the hide.

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## **NW1<sup>TM</sup> Title Requirements**

Each title is based on a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults. The maximum time for each element, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded. Times for each NW1<sup>TM</sup> element are typically about three minutes, but generally do not exceed 5 minutes.

**NW1<sup>TM</sup> (Nose Work 1):** *Requires one qualifying trial of 100 points score with no more than 3 faults. All hides must be located.*

## **NW1<sup>TM</sup> Requirements & Parameters:**

Proficient in one odour: (*Birch*); must have ORT on file with ACSW<sup>TM</sup>. Only odour #1, Birch, will be included for this title.

One hide per element at this level. Only Birch may be used in each element.

### Element Specifications:

- **Container Search:**
  - On leash
  - No intentional distractors
  - Container search will be boxes set in any arrangement with no distance specifications
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail
- **Interior Building Search:**
  - May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official
  - No blank areas. (Search areas without odour that must be searched and deemed clear of odour.)
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail
- **Exterior Area Search:**
  - On leash; may be off leash option but only if area is secure
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail
- **Vehicle Search:**
  - On leash
  - Up to three vehicles
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail

Alerts: Handler must correctly call the alert, The dog is not required to exhibit any specific alert behavior for the alert to be valid. The judge however will be looking for a change in behavior from the dog.

Height and accessibility of hides: Should be no more than approximately four (4) feet high. The source will be accessible to the dog (but may require the handler's help to get close to the hide in some cases).

*A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it would still be used for a hide location as long as the dog would be able to gain access to it with the handler's help.*

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## **NW2<sup>TM</sup> TITLE REQUIREMENTS**

Each title is based on a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults. The maximum time for each element, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded. Times for each NW2<sup>TM</sup> area generally do not exceed 5 minutes.

***NW2<sup>TM</sup> (Nose Work 2) Requires one qualifying trial of 100 points score with no more than 3 faults. All hides must be located.***

## **NW2<sup>TM</sup> Requirements & Parameters:**

Proficient in two odours: (*Birch, Anise*); must have ORT on file with ACSW<sup>TM</sup>. Only odours #1, Birch, and #2, Anise, will be included for this title. Each search area may contain odour #1 (Birch) and/or odour #2 (Anise), two of the same odour (Birch or Anise), or a combination odour of Anise/Birch.

Number of hides will be stated on all elements. This information will be communicated to the handlers at the briefing. There will be one, two or three hides in each search area.

In each area the time will stop and the search will end when the handler calls 'Finish'. The handler should not say 'Finish' until all the hides in an area have been located and called ('Alert'). In the event the handler has correctly located all the hides and has not said 'Finish', the handler will still pass the element, but will be given the full time allotted to the search.

If at any time a handler makes an incorrect call ('Alert'), they will not be given the opportunity to continue searching for additional hides in that element. NOTE: In the interior search, the competitor will not be allowed to continue searching the current interior search area, but they will be allowed to move on to any remaining interior search areas). They will keep the points for hides correctly located in that element prior to the incorrect call. The time awarded will be the time limit for that element or interior search area.

### Elements specifications:

- **Container Search:**
  - Always on leash
  - At least one distractor (i.e. food, toys). Distractors will be within the containers used for the container search.
  - Containers may be boxes, luggage, or containers set in any arrangement.
  - Any combination of boxes, luggage and containers may be used.
  - The handler is required to identify the container containing the hide, they are not required to identify the specific location of the hide in the container.
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on container search areas
- **Interior Building Search:**
  - May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official
  - Two search areas
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on interior search areas
  - No blank areas. (Areas without odour that must be searched and deemed clear of odour.)
- **Exterior Area Search:**
  - On leash; may be off leash option but only if area is secure
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on exterior search areas
- **Vehicle Search:**
  - On leash
  - Up to four vehicles. There may be multiple odours on vehicles.
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on vehicle search areas

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Alerts: Handler must call 'Alert' when the dog has communicated that he has found a hide. The judge however will be looking for a change in behavior in the dog. The judge may opt to consider the dog's final response behavior when considering a team for the 'Partnership' designation.

Height & Accessibility of hides: Should be no more than approximately four (4) feet high. The odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not be. For example, the hide may be located in a file cabinet drawer.

*A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it would still be used for a hide location.*

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## **NW3<sup>TM</sup> TITLE REQUIREMENTS**

Each title is based on a perfect score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults. The maximum time for each element, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded.

***NW3<sup>TM</sup> (Nose Work 3) Requires one qualifying trial of 100 points score and no more than 3 faults. All hides must be located, and all calls must be made.***

## **NW3<sup>TM</sup> Requirements & Parameters:**

Proficient in three odours: (Birch, Anise, Clove); must have ORT on file with ACSW<sup>TM</sup>. All odours #1, Birch, and #2, Anise, and #3, Clove will be included for this title. Each search area may contain odour #1 (Birch) and/or odour #2 (Anise) and/or odour #3 (Clove) or a combination odour of any of the three odours or multiples of the same odour.

Number of hides will not be stated on any of the elements. There may be one, two or three hides in the Container search, Vehicle, or Exterior. On the Interior, there may be zero, one, two or three hides in each interior area, but only one interior area has the possibility of zero hides (also known as the blank area).

In each area the handler must locate all hides and then correctly call 'Finish' before the time runs out to achieve full points for that area. If at any time a handler makes an incorrect call ('Alert' or 'Finish'), they will not be given the opportunity to continue searching for additional hides in that element. NOTE: In the interior search, the competitor will not be allowed to continue searching the current interior search area, but they will be allowed to move on to any remaining interior search areas). They will keep the points for hides correctly located in that element prior to the incorrect call. In the case of a False Alert, the time awarded will be the time limit for that element or interior search area. In the case of an incorrect 'Finish' call, the time awarded will be the time at which 'Finish' was called.

### Elements specifications:

- **Container Search:**
  - Always on leash
  - There may be multiple distractors (i.e. food, toy, etc). Distractors will be within the containers used for the container search.
  - Any type of containers may be used (different types of boxes, luggage, etc). The spacing or height of the containers may vary.
  - The handler is required to identify the container containing the hide, they are not required to identify the specific location of the hide in the container.
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on container search areas
- **Interior Building Search:**
  - May be on or off leash as designated by the Certifying Official
    - Three interior areas. One of the interior areas may be a blank area.
    - Blank Areas: Handlers may encounter a room or area that is blank (not containing any odour). Handlers must, in this case, call 'Finish' without calling any alerts.
    - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on interior search areas
- **Exterior Area Search:** (on leash; may be off leash option)
  - If an off leash option is available, it is up to the competitor to determine if the area is secure and the situation is appropriate for their particular dog to be off leash.
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on exterior search areas
- **Vehicle Search:**
  - Typically On leash
  - Up to five vehicles
  - There may be multiple odours on vehicles and a variety of vehicles may be included.
  - Please see "Trial Elements" for more detail on vehicle search areas

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The NW3<sup>TM</sup> score will be calculated by the number of **calls** that must be made, not just the number of hides. Each search will require the handler to state: 'alert' for each hide and 'finish' when all hides are located. In the case of a blank area the handler must state 'finish' without calling any alerts. The dog must locate every hide and the handler must make every call to receive the full number of points. "Finish called correctly" means that the handler must have correctly located all hides in the area prior to calling 'finish' to receive full points for the hides plus the finish call.

Alerts: Handler must call 'Alert' when the dog has communicated that he has found a hide. The judge however will be looking for a change in behavior in the dog. The judge may opt to consider the dog's final response behavior when considering a team for the 'Partnership' designation.

Height & Accessibility of hides: Should be no more than approximately six (6) feet high. The odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not be. For example, the hide may be located in a file cabinet drawer.

*A note about height: The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were 3 inches taller than the specified guideline, it would still be used for a hide location.*

## **NW3 ELITE**

The NW3 Elite title is awarded to competitors who have successfully passed the NW3<sup>TM</sup> title level three times.

***Requires three qualifying trials of 100 points score and no more than 3 faults per qualifying trial.***



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## **ELITE DIVISION TRIAL GUIDELINES**

### **TRIAL ELEMENTS for the Elite Division**

Elite Division Trials will not be broken out by element. Trials may contain any combination of interior, exterior, vehicle, and/or container searches. For example, a trial may consist of all interior searches, or just vehicle and exterior searches. Additionally, searches may not be broken out by a specific element. For example, there may be vehicles in an interior search.

At an Elite Division Trial, the number of searches will typically be 3-5 searches for each trial. This number may vary however to allow for more locations to be obtained for trials. Difficulty will be adjusted by the Certifying Official through selection of areas, hide placement, etc. Search areas will tend to be varied in environment for each trial. At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each search. The location of all hides will remain in the same spot for all competitors.

### **Elite Division Title Requirements**

Each title is based on earning the total required points for given title level at Elite Division Trials. The points earned at a trial are the total score earned for the trial. See the scoring section for details on how the score is calculated. The ELT1 title will be earned when a dog has earned 150 points at Elite Division Trials. The ELT2 title will be earned when a dog has earned 400 points at Elite Division Trials. For example, if a dog competes at one Elite Division Trial and earns a score of 80 points and then competes at a second Elite Division Trial and earns a score of 70 points, then the dog will have earned the ELT1 title.

### **Elite Division Requirements & Parameters:**

Each search area may contain odour #1 (Birch) and/or odour #2 (Anise) and/or odour #3 (Clove) or a combination odour of any of the three odours or multiples of the same odour.

Teams must have earned their NW3 Elite title to be eligible to compete in an Elite Division Trial

Each search area will be clearly defined and there will be given a time limit for the area. Timers will make their best effort to give a 30 second warning unless otherwise defined prior to the search.

Searches may have unknown or known number of hides for the area. This will be information given to the handler prior to starting the search. For unknown number, you may be given a range – for example: 0 to 5 hides. If no range is given and it is an unknown number, then there may be any number of hides (or zero hides) in the areas.

The team will accrue points for each hide found (or call made in the case of an area with no hides). The total possible points will be 100. The points for each hide/call will be equal to 100 divided by the total number of hides/calls. For example if there are 10 total hides/calls then each hide will be worth 10 points. If there are 14 total hides/calls then each hide will be worth 7.14 points.

Time will stop when the handler says 'Finish'. This is the case even if there are a known number of hides in the search area. If the handler does not say 'Finish' prior to the time limit for the search, the team will be given the full time limit for the search area and be given a deduction of half of a hide. In the event of an area with no hides, the 'Finish' call will be worth one hide.

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If the handler calls a False Alert or Fringe during the search, the team will be allowed to continue searching however there will be point deduction of ½ hide for each False Alert/Fringe. For example, if there are a total of 10 hides at that trial, each hide is worth 10 points. The team would lose 5 points from its score for each False Alert or Fringe call. See below in the scoring section for details. There will be a limit of 3 False Alert/Fringe calls in each search area. If you call a 3<sup>rd</sup> False Alert/Fringe in a single search, the search will end at that time.

For each fault that is earned, there will be a 1 point deduction from the score for that search.

NW1, NW2, and NW3 hide parameters do not apply. Anywhere in the search area is fair game for hide locations. Hides will not be in the search boundary markers (i.e. boundary cones, flags or tape) and hides won't be outside of search boundaries.

Alerts: Handler must correctly call the alert. The dog is not required to exhibit any specific alert behavior for the alert to be valid. The judge however will be looking for a change in behavior from the dog.

## TRIAL SCORING

### NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, NW3<sup>TM</sup> Trials

K9 Nose Work<sup>®</sup> trials will be based on several elements combined for a total of 100 points. Each element will be worth 25 points. Competitors will earn their title if they have a score of 100 points and no more than 3 faults. All titling events must include the four elements: container search, interior building search, vehicle search, and exterior area search on the same trial day. All trials will complete all four elements on a single day. The titles will be awarded based on achieving the minimum scoring criteria for that title within the allotted time. Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved and for individual element placements of the trial (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle).

### Elite Division Trials

Elite Division Trials will be based on several searches combined for a total of 100 points. Each hide/call will be worth an equal number of points. We will take the 100 points and divide by the total number of hides, or call made in the case of an area with no hides, from all the searches for that trial to determine the points per hide at that trial. For example, if there are 5 hides total, each hide would be worth 20 points. If there are 8 hides total, each hide would be worth 12.5 points. Competitors will earn titles by accumulating points based on their score at each Elite Division Trial. Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved, for placements in each search, and for overall placements at each trial.

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## TERMINOLOGY:

### ■ **Alert : FULL POINTS AWARDED**

The dog has correctly indicated the source of the odour, the handler has called the alert and without question the judge can easily confirm both are correct.

*In the event the judge asks "WHERE?" the handler should identify the location of the source by pointing to the location without touching the location. ('top drawer of the file cabinet,' 'right desk drawer,' 'kitchen sink,' etc') If correctly identified FULL POINTS AND TIME WILL BE AWARDED. This scenario is most likely with a dog that has a subtle final response that is not as easily identifiable or if the judge wants confirmation that the handler knows the location based on the dogs change of behavior. NOTE: Once you say "Alert", if the judge asks "Where", you must respond promptly. This is not an opportunity to re-cue your dog to continue searching to clarify the hide location.*

**Blank Area/Clear Area** – In the NW3<sup>TM</sup> interior search element, Level 3 Element Specialty Trials and in the Elite Division handlers may encounter a room or area that is blank (not containing any odour). Handlers must, in this case, call 'Finish' without calling any alerts in the area. The Elite Division may include multi-part searches of any element or combination of elements where there may be a portion or segment that has no hides. For example, there may be a container search that has 3 segments where 2 of the segments have hides and 1 of the segments is a blank area.

### ■ **False Alert/Fringe:**

A false alert or fringe may be one of the following two situations:

1. The dog offers an indication, but does not correctly identify the location of the source and the handler calls the alert. The dog may be offering a false response or the handler may have inadvertently cued the dog.

Ex. #1: Room A has no odour, but the dog offers an indication and the handler calls Alert.

Ex. #2: Room A has odour at the door, but the dog indicates at the window, six feet away from the source and the handler calls Alert.

**Note:** If the dog indicates but handler does not call it, it is not considered a false, and there is no deduction of points.

2. The dog does not offer an indication but the handler misreads the dog and calls an alert.

### ■ **Faults:** Faults are given for various infractions and incorrect calls. At NW1, NW2, NW3, and the Element Specialty Trials a handler/dog team may accrue up to 3 faults and still earn their title **if they have a score of 100**. They may also earn a qualifying score at the Element Specialty Trials if they have earned the minimum passing score and have no more than 3 faults. Faults will affect placements in the competition. In the Elite Division, each fault will result in a 1 point deduction from the score for that search.

#### **Faults may be given for the following reasons:**

- **Damage to the search area** – such as excessive pawing or digging.
- **Compromising the search area** – A fault may be issued if the judge deems that your reward delivery may have jeopardized the integrity of the search area by damage or possible contamination.
- **Safety issues, minor rule violations and other infractions at the judge's discretion.**  
For example: taking your dog off leash in an on leash search, allowing your dog to go completely under a vehicle in the vehicle search, placing your dog in an unsafe situation, etc.

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Faults are also used in other situations to ensure that the overall scoring ranks competitors in the appropriate order. These include False Alerts (at NW1/NW2/NW3 and Element Specialty Trials, excusals, eliminating, etc). See the scoring section for more information.

## Finish

- At the NW2 level, the 'Finish' call will be used to stop the time. There will be no points associated with the 'Finish' call at the NW2 level.
  - If the handler calls 'Finish' prior to locating all the hides, the search is over and the team will receive the points for hides found to that point, but will not have the opportunity to locate any remaining hides.
  - In the event that the team locates all the hides in the area, does not call 'Finish', and continues searching and then has a False Alert/Fringe, the team will be given a one point penalty in their score and the designated 2 faults for a False Alert/Fringe.
  - In the event the handler has correctly located all the hides and does not say 'Finish', the handler will still pass the element, but will be given the full time allotted to the search.
- At the NW3<sup>TM</sup> level, the Handler must say 'Finish' at the end of every search when they think their dog has found all of the hides. It is not just the word that counts as the call, but the correct finish call pertains to the handler/dog finding all of the hides, and then assessing they have covered the area thoroughly by calling finish. Thus, points for the 'Finish' call will only be given if all hides in the area were correctly located prior to the 'Finish' call.
- At the Elite Division level, the 'Finish' call is used to stop the time. There will be no points associated with the 'Finish' call except in the case where there is a Blank Area. If you do not say 'Finish' prior to the time limit for the search, you will be given the full time limit for the search area and be given a deduction of half of a hide found. In the event of an area with no hides, the 'Finish' call will be worth one hide.

## Timed Out:

The total time for the search element has run out and not all hides have been located (or 'Finish' called at the NW3<sup>TM</sup> level and the Elite Division level).

- NW2/NW3/: The competitor will not earn the points for hides not yet found and their time will be the full time of the element.
- Elite Division: If the competitor does not say 'Finish' prior to the time elapsing, the team will have a point deduction equivalent to one half of a hide. For example, if you are at a trial where a hide is worth 10 points, and the time elapses without the competitor saying 'Finish', 5 points will be deducted from that team's score.

## Elimination: NO POINTS AWARDED

Any dog that eliminates (urinates or defecates) during a search will lose all points for that search and be given 3 faults

## Excused from an element: all points towards that element are lost and 3 faults are given.

- Dog is under undue stress during a search, subject to the judge's discretion
- Dog is in obvious pain during a search, subject to the judge's discretion
- Extreme disruption of a search area
- Any dog that leaves the search area or is deemed to be out of control may be excused.

Note: If a handler opts to stop the search for their dog's wellbeing, the search will be scored as 'Timed Out'. If the judge stops the search, then it is scored as "Excused".

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■ **Dismissed: Dismissed from trial. Competitor will be asked to leave the trial grounds. No points awarded. The competitor will receive a DQ for that trial and is not eligible to participate in remaining trials during that event.**

- Any unprofessional conduct towards the judge, trial organizer, or other competitors.
- Any aggressive act by a dog towards a person or another dog.
- Any harsh corrections or undue pressure put upon the dog by the handler, subject to the judge's discretion.
- Any handler confirmed to be cheating will be dismissed and suspended from ACSW<sup>TM</sup> events for one year.

### **SCORING DETAILS**

#### **NW1<sup>TM</sup>, NW2<sup>TM</sup>, NW3<sup>TM</sup> Titling**

**100 points total for all combined elements if each element has a perfect score. Faults may be given. A handler/dog team may accrue up to 3 faults and still earn their title if they have earned 100 points.**

25 Points	CONTAINER SEARCH
25 Points	EXTERIOR AREA SEARCH
25 Points	INTERIOR BUILDING SEARCH
25 Points	VEHICLE SEARCH

**Points:** Points are accrued by correctly calling alert when the dog finds the hides and making correct finish calls at the NW3 level where appropriate in each search area. Points are assigned by taking the total number of hides and finish calls (NW3 only) in a given search element and dividing by the total number of points for that element.

- **NW1:** Each hide will be worth 25 points. Since there is only one hide in each area and there is no requirement to make a finish call.
- **NW2:** If there is one hide in the element, the hide will be worth 25 points. If there are two hides, each hide will be worth 12.5 points. In the case of the interior search element, the points per hide will be 25 divided by the combined total number of hides.  
Note: In the event that the team locates all the hides in the area, does not call 'Finish', and continues searching and then has a False Alert/Fringe, the team will be given a one point penalty in their score and the designated 2 faults for a False Alert/Fringe.
- **NW3:** If there is one hide in the element, the hide will be worth 12.5 points and the 'Finish' call will be worth 12.5 points. In the case of the interior search element, the points per hide/call will be 25 divided by the total number of hides and calls in all 3 search areas. For example: The first interior search area had 2 hides plus the finish call, the second area was a blank room and had only the 'Finish' call, the third area had 3 hides plus the finish call. There are 8 total alerts and 'Finish' calls to be made. Each alert/finish call would be worth 3.125 points. Note: the points for the finish call are only given if all hides in the area are correctly located prior to calling finish.

**Note:** At the NW3<sup>TM</sup> level, competitors will not know how many points each hide is worth as they do not know the number of hides in advance. This information is provided to help them understand the score assigned to them after they complete the competition.

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## **Elite Division Titling**

**Faults:** Faults are given for various infractions related to respect for the property, safety, and minor rule violations. Faults result in a 1 point deduction from the score for that search for each fault earned. Please see previous section for more details on faults.

Faults may be given for the following reasons:

### **Damage to the search area**

Compromising the search area - A fault may be issued if the judge deems that your reward delivery may have jeopardized the integrity of the search area by damage or possible contamination.

**Safety issues, rules violations and other infractions at the judge's discretion.** For example: taking your dog off leash in an on leash search, allowing your dog to go completely under a vehicle in the vehicle search, placing your dog in an unsafe situation, etc.

**False Alert/Fringe:** If you have a False Alert or Fringe during a search, you will be allowed to continue searching however there will be point deduction of  $\frac{1}{2}$  hide for each False Alert/Fringe. For example, if there are a total of 10 hides at that trial, each hide is worth 10 points. The team would lose 5 points from its score for each False Alert or Fringe call. There will be a limit of 3 False Alert/Fringe calls in each search area. If you call a 3<sup>rd</sup> False Alert/Fringe in a single search, your search will end at that time.

**Timed Out:** The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

**Elimination:** 0 points for that search. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. (Note: this refers to urination or defecation during the search)

**Excused:** 0 points for that search. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

**Dismissed:** 0 points for entire trial.

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## NW1/NW2/NW3 Trial Scoring Matrix

This matrix is provided as a guide to show you how rankings are determined and how placements are affected by various conditions.

Ranking Order	Scoring Conditions	Points	Time	Faults applied
1	All hides with no faults	Points earned*	Time earned	0
2	All hides with faults	Points earned*	Time earned	Faults earned (other faults, i.e. Pawing, contamination, etc)
3	Timed Out	Points earned*	Total time limit for search area for NW2/NW3	0 Faults + any other Faults earned
4	False Alert/Fringe	Points earned* prior to false alert or fringe	Total time limit for search area for NW2/NW3	2 Faults + any other Faults earned
5	Elimination/Excused	0 points	Total time limit for element	3 + any other Faults earned
6	Absent	0 points	Total time limit for element	4 faults
7	Dismissal	DQ for the whole trial	-	-

\*Points earned:

At NW1<sup>TM</sup> the points earned can only be 25 or 0 because there is only one hide.

NW2<sup>TM</sup> and NW3<sup>TM</sup> – Refer to the “Points” in “Scoring details” for more information.

At NW2<sup>TM</sup> or NW3<sup>TM</sup>, where there are multiple hides, points are earned for the hides found up to the point of a time out or false alert/fringe.

If more than 3 faults overall are earned, then the title is not earned.

You will not earn more than one fault per element for each type of fault including: damage to the search area, compromising the search area, each type of safety issue, each type of rule violation, and each type of other infractions at the judge’s discretion. For example, if the dog damages 5 boxes in the container search, only one fault may be given. However if the dog damages a box and the handler drops food, then two faults may be given.

False Alert/Fringe – only one false alert or fringe per search area may be earned. Once a team false alerts or fringes, they are generally not allowed to continue to search for additional hides, except in the interior search for NW2<sup>TM</sup> and NW3<sup>TM</sup> where there may be a false alert/fault per room.

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**Elite Division Scoring Information**

**Points Earned:** The competitor will be given points for each hide found in a search. The points per hide are calculated by dividing 100 by the total number of hides for the trial.

**Point Deductions:**

**Missed 'Finish' Call:** If the competitor does not say 'Finish' prior to the time elapsing, there will be a point deduction of ½ hide.

**False Alert/Fringe:** For each False Alert/Fringe call, there will be a point deduction of ½ hide. There is a maximum of 3 False Alert/Fringe calls in a search. The search ends at the 3<sup>rd</sup> False Alert/Fringe call and no more points may be accumulated. Note: If a competitor has 3 False Alert/Fringe calls, they will be given full time for the search, but not the ½ hide penalty for not calling 'Finish'.

**Please note that points will not be deducted beyond 0. A negative score for a single search will not occur.**

**Faults:** Faults result in a 1 point deduction from the score for that search for each fault earned. Faults may be given for safety concerns, respect for property, minor rule violations, and contaminating the search area

**Elimination** – 0 points earned for that search. Full time earned.

**Excused** – 0 points earned for that search. Full time earned.

**Absent** – 0 points earned for that search. Full time earned.

**Dismissed** – DQ for the trial



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## **BRAVO AWARD**

The Bravo award is given to the most outstanding rescue dog that demonstrates extraordinary ability and spirit in nose work. A rescue dog may be defined as a dog that was not purchased from a breeder, private party or store. The dog may have been adopted from a shelter, rescued from the street, fostered with a rescue organization, etc.

The five highest scoring rescue dogs at each trial will be considered by the judges for the Bravo Award when available. A dog may receive this award multiple times. Rescue designation is taken from your ACSW<sup>TM</sup> dog registration information. If you are unclear if your dog is a rescue, please email: [info@acsw.com.au](mailto:info@acsw.com.au).

## **TRIAL JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

The following are descriptions of the roles for ACSW<sup>TM</sup> volunteers at ACSW<sup>TM</sup> trials.

### **Volunteer Roles**

**Score Room Lead** – Responsible for taking the results from the score cards and entering them into the scoring system. Also generates final results and placements after verifying data. This role is approved and assigned by the ACSW<sup>TM</sup>.

**Volunteer Coordinator** – Person responsible for coordinating all the volunteers. Assigns each volunteer to a role. Gives direction to each volunteer as to their duties and where their assignments are physically located. Ensures all required roles are filled and running smoothly.

**Judge's steward** –The steward is responsible for ushering each competitor into the area where the search will take place. They answer any questions from the competitor and ensure that the judge has the proper score sheet. After the competitor has completed their search, the judge's steward directs the handler/dog team out of the search area and also ensures that the score sheet has been completed. The judge's steward also assists in the search area as needed and fields any competitor questions on behalf of the judge.

**Timer** – The timer is responsible for recording the official time as they compete on an element.

**Gate Steward** – Gate stewards help get handler/dog teams on deck prior to their turn at an element. The gate steward also directs traffic from staging areas to each element. Gate stewards are responsible for keeping competitors calm and keeping the flow moving while not adding undue stress to reactive dogs and nervous competitors.

**Score Runner** - Take 2-3 completed score sheets at a time from an element to the score keepers

**Videographer** - Video tape each competitor's run of an element, moving as directed to capture the footage while staying out of the way of the competitor and judge and not distracting the dog.

**Box Setters** (2 for container search): Re-set the boxes and clean up spilled food and saliva as needed during the container search element. Must have 2 people, one to re-set the cold boxes and one to handle the hot box (s).

**Warm-up box re-setter** (1+ for day): An optional position, but especially in the morning before competitors go into their first element, the practice box area will be busy and full of nervous people. Having someone there to move boxes around and make sure the competitor knows which box has the odour in it can help keep things running smoothly and ensure every competitor gets enough warm up time.