



Australian Canine Scent Work Pty Ltd

(ACSW®)

OFFICIAL AUSTRALIAN RULE BOOK FOR THE SPORT OF

K9 NOSE WORK®

Version 2.3 – June 2024

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1. Acknowledgement

ACSW® (Australian Canine Scent Work) would like to thank Ron Gaunt, Jill Marie O'Brien and Amy Herot, (NACSW™ founders) for developing this wonderful sport of K9 Nose Work® and for allowing us to share their vision, mission and core values with the dogs and people of Australia.

ACSW® would also like to acknowledge and thank its dedicated committee members for their hard work, passion and commitment in helping to make the ACSW® an organisation we can all be proud of.

Thank you

Marion Brand

CNWI Founder ACSW®

2. Preface

2.1 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 the Australian Canine Scent Work® (ACSW®).

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.**

2.2 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 organising body for K9 Nose Work® titles.

ACSW® sanctioned events are open to any participant who is a current ACSW® member in good standing.

2.3 K9 Nose Work® Events – ORT & Trials

Trials may be held for the purpose of competition, titling, or both. Only ACSW® sanctioned events however may award the official nose work titles (ORT, NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW3, L1C, L1C Plus, L2C, L3C, L1E, L1E Plus, L2E, L3E, L1I, L1I Plus, L2I, L3I, L1V, L1V Plus, L2V, L3V, NW3 Elite, NW3-C, NW3-E, NW3-I, NW3-V, ELT1, ELT2, ELT3, ELT-CH, SMT). Additionally, the trials and prerequisite Odour Recognition Testing must be sanctioned by an ACSW® Certifying Official with an ACSW® approved judge.

Note: The use of the word sanctioned event or event in the rules encompasses both ORT and Trials.



3. ACSW® Mission

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.

4. Contact Information

Address: Australian Canine Scent Work Pty Ltd

5 Harris Road, Dural NSW, 2158

Email: admin@acsw.com.au

Website: <https://acsw.com.au>

5. Official Rule Book

The ACSW® Official Rule Book for the Sport of K9 Nose Work® is available @ <https://acsw.com.au>

5.1 Numbering 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 rule book will be issued (i.e., 2.0, 3.0, 4.0).

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., 2.1, 2.2, 2.3).

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.

The ACSW® Rules and Documentation Committee will review and revise (where applicable) the ACSW® Official Rules when the NACSW™ make any revisions to the NACSW™ Official Rules.

The ACSW® welcomes input in the development of this rule book. Please email any questions, comments, or corrections to admin@acsw.com.au with the subject heading, "ACSW® RULE BOOK."

6. Requirements & Eligibility for Odour Recognition Tests & Trials

6.1 Eligibility Requirements – General

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® or a host reserves the right to cancel a sanctioned event if there are not sufficient volunteers to assist with a smooth and safely run event.

Potential Hosts wishing to sponsor an ACSW® sanctioned event should contact the organisation directly to review location parameters and other hosting details for all trials and ORTs. Please visit our website at: <https://acsw.com.au> for more information.

6.2 Eligibility Requirements – 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 with all vaccinations or titre tests. Any questions about medical or health conditions should be cleared by your veterinarian to participate.
- Wolves, wolf-hybrids, coyotes or coyote-hybrids, foxes, fox-hybrids, or dingoes are not eligible for registration or participation in ACSW® events.
- Lactating bitches are not eligible to compete.
- Dogs must be registered with ACSW® to *enter* any ACSW® sanctioned ORT, trial or specialty events. Each dog will receive a unique registration K9 ID number example K90346. This is a one-off registration valid for the dog's lifetime.
- Dogs that are reactive to humans and/or other dogs may trial. However, if a dog is deemed to have intent to harm, they are not permitted to trial.

6.3 Eligibility Requirements – Bitches in Season

- Bitches in season are eligible to compete in ACSW® sanctioned events. They will run at the end of the run order and will be required to wear nappies/diapers. 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.
- Handlers of bitches in season will keep the dog confined in their car and out of the general crating/parking area until their turn as the location permits. They will also toilet the dog out of the vicinity of the other dogs when the trial location allows for a secondary toileting area.

6.4 Eligibility Requirements – Handlers

- Minimum age requirement for handlers is sixteen (16) years of age.
- Any handler under the age of 18 years of age that wishes to handle a dog must provide documented consent from their legal parent or guardian.
- Handlers that do not meet the requirements above are not eligible to participate as FEO (For Exhibition Only) entries. Refer to Section 6.10 for details.
- Handlers must be current members of ACSW® to compete in an ACSW® sanctioned trial or ORT event. All members agree to abide by the ACSW® rules and event policies. Membership may be suspended or revoked for violation of the rules or policies.

6.5 Eligibility Requirements – Volunteers

- Volunteers must be at least sixteen (16) years of age.
- Volunteers under the age of 18 years of age must provide documented consent from their legal parent or guardian.
- Volunteers are not required to be a member of ACSW®.

6.6 Eligibility Requirements – Spectators

- Spectators must register with the host prior to the event, the host will notify the CO to determine which elements spectators are permitted to observe (if any).
- Minors, whether acting as spectators or on the event grounds, must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

6.7 ACSW® Officials – Requirement

ACSW® Certifying Official (CO)

- The Certifying Official is responsible for ensuring that the event is run to ACSW® rules and standards. They are responsible for all hide placements at the event.
- Hired by the Trial Host from the list of eligible Certifying Officials approved by the ACSW®.



ACSW® 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.
- Hired by the Trial Host from the list of eligible judges approved by the ACSW®.

ACSW® Score Room Lead (SRL)

- Responsible for taking the results from the score cards and entering them into the scoring system. Generates overall results and placements after verifying data. This role is chosen by the host from a list of eligible score room leads who have met the requirements set by ACSW®.
- Hired by the Trial Host from the list of eligible Score Room Leads approved by the ACSW®.

6.8 Eligibility Requirements – ACSW® Officials

A Judge or Certifying Official may be considered to enter and run For Exhibition Only (FEO).

Refer to Section 6.10 - For Exhibition Only for further details.

6.9 Eligibility requirements - Host

A Host may enter and handle a dog at an event whilst hosting.

Refer to Section 6.10 - For Exhibition Only for other options.

6.10 For Exhibition Only (FEO)

FEO allows an opportunity for a handler/dog team to enter a trial for trial environment experience only, or where a handler has a second dog, and the other dog has entered to compete.

Teams can run FEO if they meet ACSW® eligibility to participate in a trial, i.e., age, equipment, etc.

COMPETITOR/HANDLER

Teams that might participate in FEO include:

- The dog has already earned that title level, for example, the dog has earned their NW1 title, and the handler would like to repeat the NW1 level to gain additional experience.
- The dog has not completed the requirements to compete at a higher title level, for example, the dog has earned their ORT title and the handler would like to participate in an NW2 trial.
- If one (1) handler participates with two (2) dogs in the same event, for example two (2) dogs handled by the same handler competing in the same NW2 trial on a single day.
- A handler wants to practice with a dog who is eligible for the event (this is ONLY an option if the host is accepting FEO entries).

CERTIFYING OFFICIAL

- A CO may enter a dog in a trial under FEO that they are officiating, however, may not handle or run the dog in the event.

JUDGE

- A Judge may enter a dog in a trial under FEO that they are officiating, however, are not permitted to handle or run the dog in the event.

HOST

- A Host of an event may enter and handle a dog in a trial under FEO, whilst hosting.

The FEO option may be offered by trial hosts if space remains in their trials once all eligible entries have been accommodated. Availability may be restricted where there is a high demand for full competing entries. A Host may offer FEO entries at any stage throughout the event registration timeframe.

Refer to the event's trial premium for specifics on whether a host is accepting FEO entries. FEO entries may be submitted during the trial entry period listed on the trial premium through the trial entry link.

Dogs participating as FEO are not eligible to receive titles or earn placement ribbons. FEO results will not be included in the posted trial results.

Some trial entries may be given priority entry based on contributions to the organisation and the trial process.

7. ACSW® ORT & Trial Regulations

7.1 Attendees Behaviour

Sportsman-like behaviour is expected from all attendees, towards each other, and towards all the officials, for example CO, judges, host, volunteers, and trial organisers. ACSW® 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. All attendees are expected to follow the officials' instructions and show respect to the official and their decisions. Failure to do so may result in removal from the trial, without refund.

Any questions, concerns, disputes, incidents, or events that happen at an event, **must** be directed to the Certifying Official on trial day. Anyone may ask to speak to the Certifying Official at any time during the event with any concerns relating to the current event.

An incident report may be filed, if applicable, with the ACSW® by an ORT/ Trial Certifying Official or Judge.

7.2 Entry fees

Entry fees will not 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 organisers.
- A handler withdraws or excuses the handler/dog team.
- A dog or handler is disqualified or excused by the Certifying Official or Judge.

7.3 Equipment for Dogs & 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, treat bags, etc.
- Handlers may not wear cameras during ORT or trial searches.

Dogs

- When performing an on-leash search, leashes may only be attached to the following equipment: flat collars, martingale collars, limited slip, and harnesses. Leashes may be of any length and flexi leashes are allowed.
- Electronic or remote training devices are not permitted to 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.
- Nappies/diapers on dogs are only permitted for bitches in season.
- If you have a specific concern or question about a particular piece of equipment, email admin@acsw.com.au at least 14 days prior to the trial date.

7.4 ORT & Trial Entry Process

ACSW® sanctioned events entry process is done through the ACSW® website <https://acsw.com.au>

ACSW® reserves the right to cancel a sanctioned event if there are not sufficient volunteers to assist with a smooth and safely run event.

Payment for ORT and Trial entries are required when registering online for the event. Once entries are closed, a register of entries will be generated. The ACSW® will provide the host with the competitor list. The host will email competitors details regarding the event.

The host is permitted to advertise the event and publish the link to the ACSW® website for online entries.

7.5 Dismissals, Suspensions & Disciplinary Action

At an ACSW® sanctioned event (including, but not limited to, K9 Nose Work® Trial or Odour Recognition Test), the Certifying Official 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®, or for other reasons that may cause a safety hazard.

Just cause for which a dismissal may be issued to a person on the event grounds include, but are not limited to:

- Aggressive acts, including verbal abuse and harassment, by a person towards another person or dog.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct including but not limited to disrespectful treatment of volunteers, officials, or fellow competitors and 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 including pretrial visits to or contact with the location, and excessive/sustained vocalisation in the parking and/or crating areas.
- Not following ACSW® rules or event rules.
- Anyone videoing the element areas during a walkthrough or at any time.

During a trial, if a dog is deemed to have intent to harm, the dog will be dismissed from the trial and suspended from attending any future ACSW® events until their case is reviewed by the relevant ACSW® Committee. If it is determined that the dog showed intent, they will receive a six (6) month suspension from trialling. At the end of this period the owner must provide details to the ACSW® on how they have addressed this matter, for example a behaviour modification program.

Any physical contact made by the offending dog to a dog or human may result in dismissal from all future events.

If a dog or handler is dismissed, the results for that ORT or trial will be recorded as a disqualification.

The ACSW® Trial Committee will respond to appeals in writing within 15 business days. The decision by the ACSW® to uphold, reject, or modify the dismissal or disciplinary action will be final.

If a dog or person is dismissed from the event, the Certifying Official 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® 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® within seven (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®.

All dismissals will automatically result in a ten (10) day suspension, effective the day of the dismissal. The ACSW® Trial Committee will contact the person via an email sent to the email address on record for membership with the ACSW® within ten (10) days of the dismissal to let the person know if there will be any additional disciplinary action beyond the ten (10) day suspension.

Severe or repeated aggression by a 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® sanctioned events. If a dog is suspended or barred, the handler will maintain their membership and may compete with other registered dogs.

7.6 Multiple Dogs - ORT

- A handler is not permitted to handle multiple dogs in the same ORT.
- Owners may enter multiple dogs in the same ORT, provided there is a different handler for each dog. The entry must be submitted under the owner's account.
- ORTs may offer a second dog per handler option only if the second dog is in a different test.

7.7 Multiple Dogs - Trial

- A handler may not handle multiple dogs in the same trial.
- 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.
- Handlers may enter multiple dogs in different Element Specialty Trials held on the same day.
- Owners may enter multiple dogs in the same trial provided there is a different handler for each dog. The entry must be submitted under the owner's account.
- Maximum of two (2) dogs per household may enter the same trial. If the trial goes to ballot, competitors with multiple dogs entered from the same household will have one (1) dog removed from the ballot draw.
- All handlers must be current ACSW® members and all dogs must be registered with the ACSW®.
- Refer to Section 6.10 – For Exhibition Only (FEO).

7.8 Videography & Photography

Videography at ORT and trials is only permitted by ACSW® representatives (volunteers videoing the searches). ACSW® will endeavour to make a video of each search available for purchase.

A host may arrange for photography to be taken at an ORT or trial; however, photography is not permitted within any search area.

Competitors, spectators, and volunteers may not video, photograph or audio record the CO briefing or judges debrief.

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

7.9 Search Area Regulations

- Handlers must be current members in good standing with ACSW®.
- Handlers are not permitted to take photos, videos, or audio recordings during the briefing by the Certifying Official and during a walkthrough, however, are permitted to take handwritten notes.
- The same handler must handle the same dog for all the searches in a single trial (if a handler is injured or incapacitated this rule may be overruled by the Certifying Official on the day of an event). At an ORT, a single handler must handle a dog for a single test. Each odour is an additional test, and you may utilise 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.
- 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 at the handler's briefing.
- The dog must enter the search area by crossing the start line. Failure to enter the search area by crossing the start line or threshold will result in one (1) fault. The time for the element will be time earned.
- The time starts when any part of the dog crosses the start line or threshold. Handlers may have up to ten (10) seconds at the start line to acclimate and collect themselves. You may be prompted by the judge to begin if the time is excessive.
- For most ORT and Trial levels the timer will be instructed to give a 30 second (time remaining) warning. The timer will make every effort to give this warning, but situations may occur where the warning is not given. At Element Specialty Trials, 30 second warnings will only be given when the time limit for the search is longer than one minute. At Summit League trials, 30 second warnings will be given as defined by the Certifying Official for each search.

7.10 Safety & Location Regulations

Odour & Event Location

- Training must not take place on trial grounds for two (2) weeks preceding the trial once the event is approved/announced. This timeframe may extend as more trial locations become available.
- There should be no training or non-official use of odour on trial or ORT grounds during the event within a one (1) km radius.
- It is not appropriate to visit or contact 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 losing the opportunity to use the location in the future. The purpose of a K9 Nose Work® 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. Unauthorised visits to or contact with the location prior to the trial may be subject to disciplinary action.
- All attendees must adhere to safety regulations of the ACSW®, the host and the trial location.

Alcohol, Smoking & Recreational Drugs

- No alcohol or recreational drug use. Public intoxication is not allowed on trial grounds.
- Smoking may be restricted or prohibited based on location restrictions. Please show consideration to other participants if smoking is allowed at a location.

Toileting

- 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.

Leashes

- Handlers should ensure that their dog keeps a safe distance (minimum of eight (8) feet, 2.5 metres) 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' (1.8 metres) 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 (1.8 metres) or shorter. Flexi leashes are not permitted except during ORT or trial searches. This applies to event participants, trial organisers, volunteers, and spectators. Note: If changing leashes or other equipment before starting an on-leash search, you must always keep your dog under physical control. This means keeping a hold of your dog by a leash, harness, or collar while switching gear.

Security & Safety

- No dogs may be left unattended except when properly crated or in a secured well-ventilated vehicle.
- Competitors should expect to keep their dogs confined when not competing. ACSW® trials 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. 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 confined 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. 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 vocalisation in the crating/parking area as it may disturb trial location neighbours, 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®, is not responsible for unforeseen hazards. It is up to the handler to determine if they feel it is safe for their dog.

7.11 Trial Logistics & 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. Element Specialty Trials will typically not include a walk through.
- 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 will be designated at all ORTs and NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW3 and wherever possible at L1, L1 Plus, L2, and L3 Element Specialty Trials (however, not required). There will be one (1) identified hide among three (3) ORT type boxes. One handler/dog team at a time may use this area. Dogs on deck will have priority. The area may only be available to those teams enroute to a search area depending on logistics. This may also serve as a recovery area for dogs' post-search. Elite and Summit level trials may have a single recovery box with an identified hide available to the dogs as they return from their searches.

- The number of hides per area or search will be specified during the handler's briefing or prior to entering a search area in the case of the Element Specialty Trials if applicable for that title level. Exceptions would include those that are competing for higher title levels which may require areas to be finished.
- Handlers will be informed of the time limit for each search area at the handler's briefing or prior to entering a search area in the case of the Element Specialty Trials. For NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, L1, L1 Plus, and L2 Element Specialty Trials, handlers will also be informed of the number of hides per search area.
- A running order will be posted in the handler staging area.

7.12 General ORT & Trial Regulations

- Hide locations will not be known to the handler and will not be readily visible to the handler.
- REWARDING – Food and Toys
 - Handlers may carry the dog's reward with them at all times (food, toys, etc.).
 - Rewarding is permitted whilst on deck.
 - Rewarding is not permitted whilst walking from one on deck location to the next.
 - Rewarding is not permitted at the search start line.
 - The use of noise making toys such as squeaky toys may only be used as a reward, in a search area (this will be at the discretion of the Certifying Official and dependant on the proximity of other search areas at the trial). Squeaky toys are not permitted to be used elsewhere on trial grounds. The way the dog is rewarded must not touch anything or contaminate the search environment, for example food and toys cannot be thrown or appear to be thrown for the dog.
 - Handlers may reward their dog in the search area including food or toy rewards, once the judge responds to the 'alert' call.
 - Handlers are permitted to re-reward at an already found hide.
 - Handlers should take care not to contaminate the search areas with their rewards. At a trial, faults may be given, at the judges' discretion if the handler has compromised the search area.
- Hides will not be in the search boundary markers or start line markers (i.e., boundary cones, flags or tape) and hides will not be outside of search boundaries.
- Our search areas are real life search environments where people work, go to school, etc. The only area we intentionally add distractors is in containers, however all the areas will contain "distractions" according to the real-life environment. We do not "clean up" environments to remove these distractions. You might find things like food in open desks or crumbs on the floor, toys in classrooms, dog crates in offices, animal smells in barns, etc.
- Searches should not be discussed by anyone (competitors, volunteers, spectators) until all dogs have completed a given search.
- Handlers must not touch any 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.



- Handler must call 'Alert' when the dog has communicated that he has found a hide. The dog is not required to exhibit any specific alert behaviour for the alert to be valid. However, the judge will be looking for a change of behaviour in the dog.
- 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 do not make it conducive to hearing the word 'Alert' or if there are other mitigating circumstances. Additionally, the Certifying Official may require an alternate nonverbal way to call the alert such as a hand raise to allow for locations that may have audibility concerns due to search areas in proximity to the parking lot or staging areas.
- If the CO has designated an alternate alert behaviour, the judge must be able to see or hear it to call the Yes or No response.
- The handler may not call 'alert' in reference to a location that the dog is not currently indicating.
- 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 time does not stop between hides when there are multiple hides in a given search area.
- 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.
- Handlers may not observe other participants' runs in the same trial, unless they volunteer to help after they have run their own dog.
- Handlers may opt to stop the search for their dog's wellbeing at any time.

8. Title Designations – Levels of the Working Titles

8.1 General Title Guidelines

Titles may only be achieved at ACSW® sanctioned events. An ACSW® Certifying Official must be present at every trial, and each sanctioned event must be judged by ACSW® approved judges.

The title requirements described in this edition of the rule book are subject to change and will naturally evolve with competition. Competitors should make sure they have the most current version of the rule book before trialling. The rule book is available on the ACSW® website at: <https://acsw.com.au>

Eligibility for each title level is determined by a successfully completed ACSW® ORT, successful completion of the previous title level and other entry requirements.

Those trialling for a title level must meet the title requirements as outlined below. 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 utilise a different handler, however, the handler must be a member of ACSW®.



8.2 Odour Recognition Title - ORT

This title is earned by successfully passing all three (3) odour recognition tests (Birch, Anise and Clove).

There is no requirement to pass all three (3) odours at the same event, but the ORT title will not be earned until all three (3) odour tests have been passed.

Titles will be granted retroactively for all teams previously achieving the requirements for this title.

8.3 NW1, NW2 & NW3 Trial Titles

The NW1, NW2, and NW3 titles *must be achieved in succession*.

These titles are separate and non-contingent on the NW1 Plus titles.

NW1 and NW2 titles are earned by successfully passing all four elements (Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle) at the same trial with a score of 100 and no more than 3 faults.

NW3 titles are earned by either achieving a score of 100 with no more than 3 faults in a trial or by achieving two (2) qualifying scores at two (2) different NW3 trials.

Teams will not be eligible to earn additional NW3 titles after their third NW3 title.

For full details on trial specifications refer to the relevant sections – NW1 Section 11, NW2 Section 13 and NW3 Section 15.

NW1, NW2 & NW3 TRIAL TITLES
NW1
NW2
NW3

8.4 NW1 Plus Trial Titles

The NW1 Plus title *must be achieved in succession*.

These titles are separate and non-contingent on the NW1.

NW1 Plus titles are earned by successfully passing all four elements (Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle) at the same trial with a score of 100 and no more than 3 faults.

For full details on trial specifications refer to the relevant sections – NW1 Plus Section 12.

NW1 PLUS TRIAL TITLES
NW1 Plus

8.5 Element Specialty Trial (EST) Titles – L1, L2 & L3

Element Speciality Trial (EST) titles *must be achieved in succession for each level*. For example, L1C must be achieved before being eligible to compete in a L2C EST. L1C & L2C must be achieved before being eligible to compete in a L3C EST.

Unless the dog has earned an EST title or qualifying score in a specific element, the dog will be required to start at L1, regardless of their NW1/NW2/NW3 title status. For example: if the dog has earned a L2C title and a L2I qualifying score, the dog is eligible for L3C and L2I, but is only eligible for L1V and L1E.

EST titles must be achieved by either achieving a perfect score in one (1) trial, or by achieving two (2) qualifying scores at the same level and element at two (2) different EST's.

These titles are separate and non-contingent on the EST L1 Plus titles.

For full details on trial specifications refer to the relevant section – Section 17, 19, 21.

LEVEL 1		LEVEL 2		LEVEL 3	
L1C	Level 1 Containers	L2C	Level 2 Containers	L3C	Level 3 Containers
L1E	Level 1 Exteriors	L2E	Level 2 Exteriors	L3E	Level 3 Exteriors
L1I	Level 1 Interiors	L2I	Level 2 Interiors	L3I	Level 3 Interiors
L1V	Level 1 Vehicles	L2V	Level 2 Vehicles	L3V	Level 3 Vehicles

8.6 Element Specialty Plus Trial (ESPT) Titles – L1 Plus

Element Specialty Plus Trial (ESPT) titles *must be achieved in succession for each level*. For example, L1C Plus L1C Plus.

Unless the dog has earned an ESPT title or qualifying score in a specific ESPT, the dog will be required to start at L1 Plus, regardless of their NW1 Plus title status.

ESPT title must be achieved by either achieving a perfect score in one (1) ESPT, or by achieving two (2) qualifying scores at the same level and element at two (2) different ESPT's.

These titles are separate and non-contingent on the EST L1 and L2 titles.

For full details on trial specifications refer to the relevant section – Section 18 and 20.

LEVEL 1	
L1C Plus	Level 1 Plus Containers
L1E Plus	Level 1 Plus Exteriors
L1I Plus	Level 1 Plus Interiors
L1V Plus	Level 1 Plus Vehicles

8.7 NW3 Element Titles

These titles are for successfully passing the same qualifying NW3 element at three (3) different trials, i.e., requires three (3) passes of the same qualifying NW3 element.

They are not the equivalent of the NW3 title.

NW3-C, NW3-E, NW3-I and NW3-V require three (3) qualifying performances (a perfect score for all searches of that element at a single trial) for title achievement.

NW3 ELEMENT TITLES	
NW3-C	NW3 Container
NW3-E	NW3 Exterior
NW3-I	NW3 Interior
NW3-V	NW3 Vehicle

NW3 Element titles may be achieved individually and/or before achieving the NW3 title.

If there are multiple searches of an element at a trial, the competitor must successfully pass all searches of that element to earn a pass for that NW3 element title. For example, if there is one (1) interior search at a trial, the competitor must successfully pass that search to earn a pass towards their NW3 Interior Element Title. If there are three (3) exterior searches at a trial, the competitor must successfully pass all three (3) exterior searches to earn a pass towards their NW3 Exterior Element Title.

8.8 NW3 Elite

NW3 Elite is achieved by earning three (3) NW3 titles i.e., competitor has successfully passed the NW3 title level three (3) times and have demonstrating competency in all four (4) elements.

Competency is defined as earning either the NW3 Element title or the L3 Element Specialty title for each element. For example, a team may demonstrate competency in all elements by earning the L3C, L3E, NW3-I and NW3-V titles.

Dogs must have earned the NW3 Elite title to be eligible to enter an Elite Division Trial.

8.9 Elite Division Trial Titles

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. Teams must score a minimum of 43 points at an Elite Division Trial to accumulate points for that trial.

Dogs must have earned an ELT3 or ELT-CH title to be eligible to enter a Summit

ELITE DIVISION TRIAL TITLES	
ELT1	Title is earned by accumulating 150 points at Elite Division Trials
ELT2	Title is earned by accumulating 400 points at Elite Division Trials
ELT3	ELT3 Title is earned by accumulating 650 points at Elite Division Trials
ELT-CH	The ELT-CH Title is earned by accumulating 1000 points at Elite Division Trials

League Trial. Those with an ELT-CH title will be given spaces in the Summit League Trial before teams with an ELT3 title as per the trial details. Please refer to the trial details for other entry limitations.

For full details on trial specifications refer to the Section 22.

8.10 Summit League Trial Titles – SMT

The SMT Title is earned by placing in the top 20% overall of competing teams at a Summit League Trial.

A team may achieve the SMT Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the SMT designation i.e., SMTx2, SMTx3, etc.

In the event of a tie for the last titling placement, both teams would receive a title. For example, if there are 25 competing teams and there was a tie for 5th place, both teams would receive a SMT title for a total of 6 titles given at that trial.

Results will be posted at the completion of the trial.

For full details on trial specifications refer to Section 23.

No. of Competing Teams	No. of Titles to be Awarded
0 to 4	0
5 to 9	1
10 to 14	2
15 to 19	3
20 to 24	4
25 to 29	5

9. Odour Recognition Test (ORT)

9.1 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. To enter a trial, a dog must have passed the ACSW® ORT (Odour Recognition Test) required for that trial and/or title level according to ACSW® specifications. The ACSW® will verify ORT and title completion for each trial entry.

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 2:30 minute time period. The Odour Recognition Test must be conducted by an ACSW® appointed judge and sanctioned by an ACSW® Certifying Official. The test may be conducted indoors or outdoors as approved by the ACSW®.

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

9.2 Trial Readiness

The ORT is not necessarily a measure of trial readiness but rather only recognition of the odour to be used at trial. Though a dog still 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 (1) year. Most handlers and dogs by that time have learned all the elements of competition and have practiced those elements in many locations, under time pressure with the guidance of an instructor. The ACSW® offers this guideline in the hopes that handlers will provide a 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.

9.3 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 (1) or two (2) rows with each box set a minimum distance of 4' foot (approximately 122 cm) apart from box edge to box edge. The ACSW® 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 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 (3), half-swabs scented with the target odour.

The recommended standard box should not exceed 6" inches (approximately 15.5 cm) in height but may otherwise have variation of the dimensions.

The target box shall remain in the same place for all 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 minimise 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® guidelines.

People approved to be in the testing area during an ORT include ACSW® officials, approved ACSW® guests, approved ORT volunteers, approved officials and CNWI/ANWI's for training purposes. Any other spectators must be approved in advance by the Certifying Official.

Participants in an ORT may not be spectators for other participants regardless of relationship. The ORT Certifying Official has the right to limit spectators at their discretion.

The ACSW® 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 ten (10) seconds at the start line before beginning their search.

The time starts when any part of the dog 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 by calling 'Yes', the handler may then reward the dog (next to, not on top of the target box) and the dog will pass the ORT.

If the alert is not correct, the judge will call 'No' and 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® and trial organisers.

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.

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

9.4 ORT – Summary

- The test may be conducted indoors or outdoors.
- 2:30 minute test.
- On leash (any length).
- Twelve (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) (approximately 28.5 cm x 22.3 cm x 10.5 cm).
- Boxes may not be touched by handlers during the test.
- One (1) target odour per test.
- Each additional odour at the test event will be a separate test.
- If offered, handlers with a second dog will have a separate test.
- Dog must enter the search area by crossing the start line.
- Time begins when any part of the dog 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 minimise contamination and should minimise food dropped on the floor or toys disturbing the search area.
- Dog & handler equipment – refer to Section 7.3.

10. NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW2 & NW3 Trial Elements

10.1 Trial Elements for NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2 & NW3

Following are the elements that must be included in any K9 Nose Work® competition for NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2 and NW3 title purposes. There will be a total possible score of 100 points overall. At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each. The time limit for the search cannot be exceeded if full 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 (2) and four (4) minutes.

Elements of the Individual Competition (100-Point Total Score)

- Container Search
- Exterior Area Search
- Interior Building Search
- Vehicle Search

10.2 Container Search

A container search element consists of a group of containers set in any pattern with no minimum spacing distances. The container search may be conducted indoors or outdoors. 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 damaging or disturbing the environment.

NW1 & NW1 Plus

- Containers are defined as either cardboard of any shape or size (or combination thereof). Examples include cardboard boxes, literature mailers, triangular mailers, etc.

NW2 & NW3

- Containers may be cardboard boxes of any shape or size, or alternate containers that are not fabric such as paint cans, plastic bins, shoeboxes, tins, or any similar type of container which may collect the scent. The containers may be set in any arrangement.
- Containers may also include distractor odours, such as but not limited to food and toys.

The Elite Division

- May use any of the containers acceptable at NW2 and NW3 as well as luggage and other fabric containers.
- Container searches at Elite may also include distractor odours of any type including food, toys, and other novel items.

10.3 Exterior Area Search

Each competition includes at least one 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 dog and other animal odours, rubbish, food scraps, 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 for example courtyard, tennis court.

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 or threshold, however, the time will begin once any part of the dog crosses the designated start line or threshold.

The search area and search time limit will be determined on several factors including, size, weather conditions, complexity, distractors, and title level and will change with each trial location.

10.4 Interior Building Search

Each competition includes at least one interior building search. 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 trial requirements.

10.5 Vehicle Search

There may be up to five (5) vehicles in the vehicle search, depending on the title level. Any type of vehicle may be used for example (car, truck, trailer, semi, ride on mower, forklift, excavator etc.). Only the exterior of the vehicle is searched. The search is typically conducted on leash, but any length leash may be used.

Handlers may be given 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 under the car.

The handler will never need to open a vehicle door for their dog to locate the hide.

For NW2 and NW3 vehicle searches more than one (1) hide may be placed on any vehicle.

11. NW1 Trial Specifications

11.1 NW1 Title Requirements

The NW1 title is earned with a perfect score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults. The maximum time for each element, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded.

Times for each NW1 element are typically about three (3) minutes, but generally do not exceed four (4) minutes.

11.2 NW1 Trial Requirements & Parameters

- Must have ORT on file with ACSW® proficient in one (1) odour Birch.
- Only Birch may be used in each element.
- One (1) hide per element at this level.

12. NW1 Plus Trial Specifications

12.1 NW1 Plus Title Requirements

The NW1 Plus title is earned with a perfect score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults. The maximum time for each element, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded.

Times for each NW1 Plus element are typically about three (3) minutes, but generally do not exceed four (4) minutes.

12.2 NW1 Plus Trial Requirements & Parameters

- Must have ORT Title on file with ACSW® proficient in all three (3) odours Birch, Anise and Clove.
- Any of the three (3) odours (or a combination) may be used in each element.
- There will be only one (1) hide per element at this level.



12.3 NW1 & NW1 Plus Element Specifications

Element	Leash	# Hides	Blank Areas	# Search Areas / Vehicles	Hide Height	Accessibility of Hide	Intentional Distractors	Alerts	Finish Call
Container	On	1	No	1	Not > approx. 4 Feet (122 cm)	The source will be accessible to the dog, but may require the handlers help get close to hide in some cases	No	The dog is not required to exhibit any specific alert behaviour for the alert to be valid, however the Judge will be looking for a change in behaviour from the dog	No
Exterior	On or Off	1	No	1	As above	As above	No	As above	No
Interior	On or Off	1	No	1	As above	As above	No	As above	No
Vehicle	On	1	No	Up to 3	As above	As above	No	As above	No

GENERAL INFORMATION - Refer to Section 10 Trial Elements for more details

- The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were three (3) inches (approx. 7.5 cm) taller than the specified guideline, it could 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.
- Boxes set in any arrangement with no distance specifications.
- Time will stop when the handler calls 'Alert'.



13. NW2 Trial Specifications

13.1 NW2 Title Requirements

The NW2 title is earned with a perfect score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults. The maximum time for each search area, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded.

Times for each NW2 area generally do not exceed four (4) minutes.

13.2 NW2 Trial Requirements & Parameters

- Must have NW1 Title.
- Must have ORT on file with ACSW® proficient in two (2) odours Birch and Anise.
- Each search area may contain Birch and/or Anise, two (2) of the same odour (Birch or Anise), or a combination odour of Anise/Birch.
- There may be one (1), two (2) or three (3) hides in each search area.



13.3 NW2 Element Specifications

There will be five (5) searches at each NW2 trial. Note that the 5th or additional search may be in any of the four (4) elements.

Element	Leash	# Hides	Blank Areas	Hide Height	Accessibility of Hide	Intentional Distractors Food/Toy	Alert	Finish Call
Container	On	1 or 2 or 3	No	Not > approx. 4 Feet (122 cm)	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.	At least 1	Yes	Yes
Exterior	On or Off	1 or 2 or 3	No	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not	No	Yes	Yes
Interior	On or Off	1 or 2 or 3	No	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not example in a file cabinet drawer	No	Yes	Yes
Vehicle Up to 4 per search	On	1 or 2 or 3	No	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not	No	Yes	Yes

GENERAL INFORMATION - Refer to Section 10 Trial Elements for more details

- There will be at least one (1) search of each element (Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle). The remaining search may be any of the elements. For example, there may be 2 Container searches, 1 Exterior search, 1 Interior search and 1 Vehicle search.
- Number of hides will be stated on all elements. This information will be communicated to the handlers at the briefing.
- The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were three (3) inches (approx. 7.5 cm) taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location.
- 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 a judge's response to a handler's 'Alert' call is 'No,' then a False Alert is given. The handler will not be given the opportunity to continue searching for additional hides in that search area but will keep the points for hides correctly located in that search area prior to the incorrect call. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. For the element with two searches, if the incorrect call happens in the first search, the competitor will not be allowed to continue searching that search area but will be allowed to perform the remaining search of that element.
- Each search area will have its own time limit including when there are two (2) or more searches of the same element. The time for each search is independent of the times for the other searches. However, any element with two (2) or more searches will have a score that is the total of the combined search area times for all searches

14. NW3 Trial Specifications

14.1 NW3 Title Requirements

NW3 Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults at a trial, they will earn a NW3 title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two "qualifying scores". A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have only one (1) "error" and no more than three (3) faults. Errors include the following: A False Alert, a missed hide, or a time out (i.e., failure to call finish before time expires).

Qualifying scores will accumulate even if a perfect score is earned in between. For example, at the first trial, a team earns a qualifying score, at the second trial, a team earns a perfect score and their first NW3 title, at the third trial, a team earns another qualifying score which would give them their second NW3 title achieved by earning two qualifying scores.

Teams will not be eligible to earn additional NW3 titles after their third NW3 title.

14.2 NW3 Requirements & Parameters

- Must have NW1 & NW2 Titles.
- Must have ORT Title on file with ACSW® proficient in all three (3) odours Birch, Anise and Clove.
- All odours Birch, Anise and Clove will be included for this title.
- Each search area may contain Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove or a combination odour of the three (3) odours or multiples of the same odour.
- Number of hides will not be stated on any of the search areas or elements. There may be zero (0), one (1), two (2) or three (3) hides in any of the search areas. However, there will be no more than one (1) Blank Area (search area with zero (0) hides) per trial, and it is possible a trial may not have a Blank Area. In the event of a Blank Area, the 'Finish' call will be worth one (1) hide.
- In each search the handler must locate all hides and call 'Finish' before the time runs out to achieve full points for that search.
- NW3 scoring will be based on points earned and "errors". Points are earned by correctly finding hides in each search. An error will accrue for each missed hide, each false alert, and each "timed out" (didn't say 'finish' prior to time elapsing). Each false alert and each "timed out" will result in a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points from the score.
- If a Judge's response to a handler's 'Alert' call is 'No,' then a false alert is given. The handler will be allowed to continue searching after the first false alert. A second false alert will end the search and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.



- For any element with more than one (1) search, if a second incorrect call happens, the competitor will not be allowed to continue searching that search area but will be allowed to perform any remaining searches of that element. If a handler times out (i.e., does not call 'Finish' prior to time expiring), the team will accrue an "error" and a deduction of one hide worth of points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- Individual search scores may be negative (-) to ensure that all teams that find the same number of hides and have the same number of false alerts across the whole trial end up with the same overall score. Overall scores will not be negative (-).
- Each search area will have its own time limit including when there are two or more searches of the same element. The time for each search is independent of the times for the other searches. However, any element with two (2) or more searches will have a score that is the total of the combined search area times for all searches.



14.3 NW3 Element Specifications

There will be six (6) searches at each NW3 trial. Note that the 5th & 6th additional searches may be any of the four (4) elements.

Element	Leash	# Hides	Blank Areas	Hide Height	Accessibility of Hide	Intentional Distractors Food/Toy	Alerts	Finish Call
Container	On	0 or 1 or 2 or 3	0 - 1	Not > approx. 6 Feet (183 cm)	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.	Multiple	Yes	Yes
Exterior	On or Off	0 or 1 or 2 or 3	0 - 1	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not	No	Yes	Yes
Interior	On or Off	0 or 1 or 2 or 3	0 - 1	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not example in a file cabinet drawer	No	Yes	Yes
Vehicle Up to 5 per search	On	0 or 1 or 2 or 3	0 - 1	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not	No	Yes	Yes

GENERAL INFORMATION - Refer to Section 10 Trial Elements for more details

- There will be at least one search of each element (Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle). The remaining two (2) searches may be of any of the elements. For example, there may be 2 Container searches, 1 Exterior search, 1 Interior search and 2 Vehicle searches.
- Any one (1) of the six (6) searches may be a Blank Area i.e. no more than one (1) blank area per trial & it is possible a trial may not have a blank area. Handlers must, in this case, call 'Finish' without calling any alerts.
- The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were three (3) inches (approx. 7.5 cm) taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location.
- Time will stop, and the search will end when the handler calls 'Finish'. The 'Finish' call must be made before time expires.

15. Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials

15.1 Trial Elements for Element Specialty & Element Specialty Plus

Element Specialty Trials may be held for each of the individual elements. The elements include Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle. These trials and titles are separate from the NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2 and NW3 titling and trial options. Element Specialty Trials will include L1, L1 Plus, L2 and L3 titling options that will correspond to NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2 and NW3 as far as training skills required to be successful. However, titles are earned separately and are discrete from the NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2 and NW3 titles.

At an Element Specialty Trial, there will be four (4) searches for each trial. 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. For example, for a L1 and L1 Plus Container search you might have container searches in large spaces, small spaces, inside, outside, with elevation, etc.

At each trial, there will be a maximum time limit set for each search. That time limit cannot be exceeded if points are to be awarded. The searches may be presented in any order. The location of all hides will remain in the same spot for all competitors.

Note: for Element Specialty Trials you may see more time pressure, and time limits will typically be between one (1) minute and three (3) minutes. This may vary based on the location and areas available.

15.2 Container Element Specialty Trials

Container Element Specialty Trials require dogs to search a group of containers in a specified area. Container Trials will have four (4) searches of groups of containers set in any pattern.

For L1 or L1 Plus containers shall be cardboard, of any shape or size. Only one (1) box (or container) will contain odour in each L1 container search and may also contain combination odours in L1 Plus Container Search.

Containers at L2 or L3 may be boxes of any shape or size, paint cans, plastic bins, shoeboxes, or any similar type of non-fabric container which may collect the scent. There are no minimum spacing distances at this level. Additionally, the container searches for L2 and L3 may also include distractors, such as food and toys.

L2 and L3 Container Searches may include multiple or combination odours. The odour used will correspond to the title level requirement. The searches may be conducted on or off leash as specified by the Certifying Official at the trial, 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 assess a fault if they feel the dog is damaging or disturbing the search environment. The container search may be conducted indoors or outdoors.

L3 Container Trials may include a Blank Area (area with no odour).

15.3 Exterior Element Specialty Trials

Exterior Element Specialty Trials require dogs to search a variety of exterior areas. Exterior Specialty Trials will have four (4) Exterior Searches of varying environments. 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, 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 searches may be conducted on or off leash and are 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 for example a fenced in tennis court.

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 or threshold, however, the time will begin once any part of the dog crosses the designated start line or threshold.

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.

L3 Exterior Trials may include a Blank Area (area with no odour).

15.4 Interior Element Specialty Trials

Interior Element Specialty Trials require dogs to search a variety of interior areas. Interior Specialty Trials will have four (4) Interior Searches of varying environments.

These are of varying environments and sizes and have included environments such as kitchens, bathrooms, conference rooms, offices, classrooms, hallways, and warehouse spaces. 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 trial environments.

L3 Interior Trials may include a Blank Area (area with no odour).

15.5 Vehicle Element Specialty Trials

Vehicle Element Specialty Trials require dogs to complete a variety of vehicle searches. Vehicle Specialty Trials will have four (4) Vehicle Searches that may offer differing environments.

A search may be of a single vehicle or multiple vehicles. Any type of vehicle may be used for example (car, truck, trailer, semi, ride on mower, forklift, excavator etc.). The search is of the exterior of the vehicles only. The handler will never need to open a vehicle door for their dog to locate the hide.

The search is typically conducted on leash, but any length leash may be used.

Handlers may be given 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.

For L2 and L3 Vehicle Trials more than one (1) hide may be placed on any vehicle.

L3 Vehicle Trials may include a Blank Area (area with no odour).

16. Level 1 Element Specialty Trial Specifications

16.1 L1 Element Specialty Title Requirements

L1 Element Specialty Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults at a trial, they will earn their title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two (2) qualifying scores. A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have a score of 75 and no more than three (3) faults.

LEVEL 1 ELEMENT SPECIALTY TITLES	
L1C	Level 1 Containers Title
L1E	Level 1 Exteriors Title
L1I	Level 1 Interiors Title
L1V	Level 1 Vehicles Title

The maximum time for each search, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded.

Times for each L1 Element Specialty search are typically around one (1) to three (3) minutes.

16.2 L1 Element Specialty Trial Requirements and Parameters

- Must have ORT on file with ACSW® proficient in one (1) odour Birch.
- Only odour #1 Birch will be included for this title.
- One (1) hide per search at this level.



17. Level 1 Plus Element Specialty Trial Specifications

17.1 L1 Plus Element Specialty Title Requirements

L1 Plus Element Specialty Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults at a trial, they will earn their title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two (2) “qualifying scores”. A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have a score of 75 and no more than three (3) faults.

LEVEL 1 PLUS ELEMENT SPECIALTY TITLES	
L1C Plus	Level 1 Plus Containers Title
L1E Plus	Level 1 Plus Exteriors Title
L1I Plus	Level 1 Plus Interiors Title
L1V Plus	Level 1 Plus Vehicles Title

The maximum time for each search, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded.

Times for each L1 Element Specialty search are typically around one (1) to three (3) minutes.

17.2 L1 Plus Element Specialty Trial Requirements & Parameters

- Must have ORT Title on file with ACSW® proficient in all three (3) odours Birch, Anise and Clove.
- Any of the three (3) odours or a combination may be used in each search.
- One (1) hide per search at this level.



17.3 L1 & L1 Plus Element Specialty Specifications

Element	Leash	# Hides	Blank Areas	# Search Areas / Vehicles	Height	Accessibility of Hide	Intentional Distractors	Alerts	Finish Call
Container	On or Off	1	No	1	Not > approx. 4 Feet (122 cm)	The source will be accessible to the dog, but may require handlers help get close to hide in some cases	No	The dog is not required to exhibit any specific alert behaviour for the alert to be valid, however the Judge will be looking for a change in behaviour from the dog	No
Exterior	On or Off	1	No	1	As above	As above	No	As above	No
Interior	On or Off	1	No	1	As above	As above	No	As above	No
Vehicle	On or Off	1	No	1 - 3	As above	As above	No	As above	No

GENERAL INFORMATION - Refer to Section 16 Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials for more details

- The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were three (3) inches (approx. 7.5 cm) taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location if the dog would be able to gain access to it with the handler's help.
- Boxes set in any arrangement with no distance specifications.
- Time will stop when the handler calls 'Alert'.

18. Level 2 Element Specialty Trial Specifications

18.1 L2 Element Specialty Title Requirements

L2 Element Specialty Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults at a trial, they will earn their title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two (2) qualifying scores. A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have only one (1) "error" and no more than three (3) faults. Errors include the following: a false alert or a missed hide.

LEVEL 2 ELEMENT SPECIALTY TITLES	
L2C	Level 2 Containers Title
L2E	Level 2 Exteriors Title
L2I	Level 2 Interiors Title
L2V	Level 2 Vehicles Title

The maximum time for each search, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded.

Times for each L2 Element Specialty search typically do not exceed three (3) minutes.

18.2 L2 Element Specialty Trial Requirements & Parameters

- Must have the relevant L1 Element Title.
- Must have ORT's on file with ACSW® proficient in two (2) odours Birch and Anise.
- Only odours Birch and Anise will be included for this title.
- Each search area may contain Birch and/or Anise, two (2) of the same odour Birch or Anise, or a combination odour of Anise/Birch.
- There may be one (1), two (2) or three (3) hides in each search area.



18.3 Level 2 Element Specialty Specifications

Element	Leash	# Hides	Blank Areas	Height	Accessibility of Hide	Intentional Distractors Food/Toy	Alerts	Finish Call
Container	On or Off	1 or 2 or 3	No	Not > approx. 4 Feet (122 cm)	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.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Exterior	On or Off	1 or 2 or 3	No	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not	No	Yes	Yes
Interior Contiguous Rooms	On or Off	1 or 2 or 3	No	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not example in a file cabinet drawer	No	Yes	Yes
Vehicle Single or Multiple	On or Off	1 or 2 or 3	No	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not	No	Yes	Yes

GENERAL INFORMATION - Refer to Section 16 Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials for more details

- Number of hides will be stated on all elements. This information will be communicated to the handlers at the briefing.
- The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were three (3) inches (approx. 7.5 cm) taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location.
- 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.



- L2 Element Specialty Trial scoring will be based on points earned and errors (missed hide and false alert).
 - Points are earned by correctly finding hides in each search.
 - Each missed hide will accrue an error and points will not be earned for that hide. Note the points for the missed hide will not be deducted from the score.
 - Each false alert will accrue an error and each false alert will result in a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points from the score.
- If a judge's response to a handler's 'Alert' call is 'No,' then a false alert is given. The handler will be allowed to continue searching after the first false alert. A second false alert will end the search and the team will be given the full time allotted for the search.
- Individual search scores may be negative (-) to ensure that all teams that find the same number of hides and have the same number of false alerts across the whole trial end up with the same overall score. Overall scores will not be negative (-).

19. Level 3 Element Specialty Trial Specifications

19.1 L3 Element Specialty Title Requirements

L3 Element Specialty Titles may be earned in two ways.

1. If a team receives a perfect score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults at a trial, they will earn their title in a single trial.
2. Alternatively, a team may earn a title by achieving two (2) “qualifying scores”. A team will earn a qualifying score at a trial if they have only one (1) “error” and no more than three (3) faults. Errors include the following: a false alert, a missed hide, or a time out (i.e., failure to call finish before time expires).

The maximum time for each search, as determined by the specific competition, must not be exceeded.

Times for each L3 Element Specialty search typically do not exceed four (4) minutes.

The titles are as follows:

LEVEL 3 ELEMENT SPECIALTY TITLES	
L3C	Level 3 Containers Title
L3E	Level 3 Exteriors Title
L3I	Level 3 Interiors Title
L3V	Level 3 Vehicles Title

19.2 L3 Element Specialty Trial Requirements & Parameters

- Must have relevant L1 & L2 EST Titles.
- Must have ORT Title on file with ACSW® proficient in all three (3) odours Birch, Anise and Clove.
- All odours Birch and Anise and Clove will be included for this title.
- Each search area may contain odour Birch and/or odour Anise and/or odour Clove or a combination odour of the three (3) odours or multiples of the same odour.
- Each search will have an unknown number of hides, you will be given a range (for example: 1 to 5 hides, or 0 to 3 hides). Any one of the searches may be a blank area with no hides. In the event of a blank area, the ‘finish’ call will be worth one hide.
- In each search the handler must locate all hides and call ‘finish’ before the time runs out to achieve full points for that search.
- L3 Element Specialty Trial scoring will be based on points earned and “errors”. Points are earned by correctly finding hides in each search.



- An error will accrue for each missed hide, each false alert, and each “timed out” (didn’t say ‘Finish’ prior to time elapsing).
- Each false alert and each “timed out” will result in a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points from the score.
- If a judge's response to a handler's ‘alert’ call is ‘No,’ then a false alert is given. The handler will be allowed to continue searching after the first false alert. A second false alert in the same search will end the search and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- If a handler times out (i.e., does not call ‘finish’ prior to time expiring), the team will accrue an “error” and a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- Individual search scores may be negative (-) to ensure that all teams that find the same number of hides and have the same number of false alerts across the whole trial end up with the same overall score. Overall scores will not be negative (-).
- The hide should be no more than approximately six (6) feet (183 cm) high.



19.3 L3 Element Specialty Specifications

Element	Leash	# Hides	Blank Areas	Height	Accessibility of Hide	Intentional Distractors	Alerts	Finish Call
						Food/Toy		
Container	On or off	Unknown Range e.g., 0 - 3, 1 - 5	Yes	Not > approx. 6 Feet (183 cm)	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.	Multiple	Yes	Yes
Exterior	On or Off	As above	Yes	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not	No	Yes	Yes
Interior Contiguous Rooms	On or Off	As above	Yes	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not example in a file cabinet drawer	No	Yes	Yes
Vehicle Single or Multiple	On or Off	As above	Yes	As above	Odour will be accessible to the dog, but the source may not	No	Yes	Yes

GENERAL INFORMATION - Refer to Section 16 Trial Elements for Element Specialty Trials for more details.

- The height parameter is a general guideline provided for training purposes. No trial location will ever be the same. If a kitchen counter were three (3) inches (approx. 7.5 cm) taller than the specified guideline, it could still be used for a hide location.
- Time will stop, and the search will end when the handler calls 'finish'. The 'finish' call must be made before time expires.

20. Elite Division Trial Specifications

20.1 Trial Searches for 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 have an exterior search area that also includes vehicles, or it might consist of all interior searches.

At an Elite Division Trial, there will typically be three (3) – five (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.

20.2 Elite Division Title Requirements

Each title is based on earning the total required points for the given title level at Elite Division Trials. The points earned at a trial are the total score earned for the trial. Teams must score a minimum of 43 points at an Elite Division Trial to accumulate points for that trial.

See the Section 24 for details on how the score is calculated.

ELITE DIVISION TRIAL TITLES	
ELT1	Title is earned by accumulating 150 points at Elite Division Trials
ELT2	Title is earned by accumulating 400 points at Elite Division Trials
ELT3	ELT3 Title is earned by accumulating 650 points at Elite Division Trials
ELT-CH	The ELT-CH Title is earned by accumulating 1000 points at Elite Division Trials

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.

20.3 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 (3) 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 a time limit will be given 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 an 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 area.
- 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.
- A blank area at Elite trials will be scored as two (2) hides worth of points. Scoring will be as follows:
 - Finish correctly called = 2 hides.
 - No points are earned if there is a false alert prior to the finish call.
 - Each false alert will result in a ½ hide deduction. For example, calling two false alerts and then calling 'finish' will result in a score of -1 hide worth of points.
 - Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a ½ hide penalty.
- The score for an individual search may be negative (-). However, the minimum overall score for the trial will be zero and will not be negative (-).
- 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 ½ of a hide.
- If the handler calls a false alert during the search, the team will be allowed to continue searching however there will be a point deduction of ½ hide for each false alert. For example, if there are a total of ten (10) hides and no blank areas at that trial, each hide is worth ten (10) points. The team would lose five (5) points from its score for each false alert call. There will be a limit of three (3) false alert calls in each search area. If you call a 3rd false alert in a single search, the search will end at that time and you will receive full time for that search.
- For each fault that is given, 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 will not be outside of search boundaries.

21. Summit League Trial Specifications

21.1 Trial Searches for Summit League

Summit League 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 have an exterior search area that also includes vehicles, or it might consist of all interior searches.

Summit League Trials will be a two (2) day event. The number of searches will typically be 3-5 searches per day for each trial for a total of 6-10 searches over the complete 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. Searches may be run across multiple days (i.e., half the teams run the search on day 1 of the trial and the other half run the search on day 2). Additional search parameters that may involve strategy decisions by the handler may be included.

21.2 Summit League Title Requirements

A title will be earned by placing in the top 20% of teams overall at a Summit League Trial. A team may achieve the SMT Title multiple times. They may opt to add the number of times the title has been achieved after the SMT designation, i.e., SMTx2, SMTx3, etc.

21.3 Summit League Requirements and 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 (3) odours or multiples of the same odour.
- Teams must have earned their ELT3 or ELT-CH title to be eligible to compete in a Summit League Trial. Teams that have received their ELT-CH titles will receive places in the trial before teams that have received their ELT3 title as per the trial details. Please refer to the trial details for other entry limitations.
- Each search area will be clearly defined, and a time limit will be given for the area. Timers will make their best effort to give a 30 second warning when designated by the Certifying Official.
- 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 (0) hides) in the area.
- The team will accrue five (5) points for each hide found. The total possible points will vary from trial to trial. Points will be deducted for each false alert call and for each timed out (failure to call 'finish' prior to time elapsing). There will also be a one (1) point deduction for each fault.



- A Blank Area at Summit trials will be worth 10 points. Scoring will be as follows:
 - Finish correctly called = 10 points.
 - No points are earned if there is a false alert prior to the finish call.
 - Each false alert will result in a 2.5 points deduction. For example, calling two false alerts and then calling 'finish' will result in a score of -5 points.
 - Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a 2.5 points deduction.

- The score for an individual search may be negative (-). However, the minimum overall score for the trial will be zero (0) and will not be negative (-).

- 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 2.5 points (half of a hide).

- If the handler calls a false alert during the search, the team will be allowed to continue searching however there will be a point deduction of 2.5 points (1/2 hide) for each false alert. There will be a limit of three (3) false alert calls in each search area. If the handler calls a third false alert in a single search, the search will end at that time and full time will be allocated.

- For each fault that is given, there will be a one (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.

22. Trial Scoring

22.1 NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW2 and NW3 trials

- ACSW® trials will be based on several searches combined for a total of 100 points.
- Each hide will be worth an equal number of points. We take the 100 points and divide by the total number of hides from all the searches for that trial, with a blank area counting as one hide to determine the points per hide at that trial. For example, if there are 10 hides total and no blank areas, each hide will be worth 10 points. If there are 8 hides total (or 7 hides and a blank area), each hide (and a correct finish call in the blank area) will be worth 12.5 points.
- Competitors will earn their title if they have a score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults. At NW3 a qualifying score may also be earned by having no more than one (1) “error” and no more than three (3) faults. Two (2) qualifying scores result in a NW3 title.
- All titling events must include at least one (1) search in each of the four (4) elements: container search, interior building search, vehicle search, and exterior area search on the same trial day. All trials will complete all searches on a single day.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved, for individual element placements of the trial (i.e., 1st, 2nd and 3rd place Container, Exterior, Interior and Vehicle) and for overall placements at each trial. Placements will be determined by sorting by score (high to low), then faults (low to high), then time (low to high). For elements with more than one (1) search, placements will consider the combined score, faults, and time for all searches of that element.

22.2 Element Specialty & Element Specialty Plus Trials

- Element Specialty & Element Specialty Plus Trials will be based on four (4) searches of the same element combined for a total of 100 points. All trials will complete all the searches for that trial on a single half day.
- Each hide will be worth an equal number of points. We will take the 100 points and divide by the total number of 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 their title if they have a score of 100 points and no more than three (3) faults. Competitors may earn a qualifying score if they have met the criteria for a qualifying score for that level and no more than three (3) faults. Two (2) qualifying scores at the same level and element will earn a title.
- At L1 and L1 Plus a qualifying score is at least 75 points with no more than three (3) faults.
- At L2 and L3 a qualifying score is earned by having no more than one (1) “error” and no more than three (3) faults.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved.



- Results will be posted on the ACSW® website after the trial for those who wish to know where they placed for each search and overall. Placements will be determined by sorting by points (high to low), then faults (low to high), then time (low to high).

22.3 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 (a blank area will be worth 2 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 will be worth 20 points. If there are 8 hides total plus a blank area, each hide will be worth 10 points and the blank area will be worth 20.
- Competitors will earn titles by accumulating points based on their score at each Elite Division Trial. Teams must score a minimum of 43 points at an Elite Division Trial to accumulate points for that trial.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved, for placements in each search, and for overall placements at each trial. Placements will be determined by sorting by points (high to low), then time (low to high).

22.4 Summit League Trials

- Summit League Trials will be based on several searches combined across multiple days for a varying number of points.
- Each hide will be worth 5 points and a blank area will be worth 10 points.
- Competitors will earn titles by placing in the top 20% of teams overall at the trial.
- Ribbons shall be awarded for titles achieved, for placements in each search, and for overall placements at each trial. Placements will be determined by sorting by points (high to low), then time (low to high).

23. Terminology

23.1 Alert

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. Full points will be awarded.

If the Judge asks, "WHERE?", the handler should identify the location of the source by pointing to the location without touching the location. If correctly identified the team will receive credit for the hide. 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 behaviour.

Note: Once the handler says "alert," if the Judge asks "where," the handler must respond promptly. This is not an opportunity to re-cue your dog, OR to continue searching to clarify the hide location OR to pause silently to see if the dog will "show you again." Failure to respond immediately may result in a fault.

23.2 Blank Area

In the NW3, L3 Element Specialty, Elite Division, and Summit League Trials, handlers may encounter a search area that is blank (not containing any odour). Handlers must, in this case, call 'finish' without calling any alerts in the area. At these levels, any search area may be blank.

L3 Element Specialty, Elite Division and Summit League Trials, may also include multi-part searches where there may be a portion or segment that has no hides. For example, there may be a container search that has three (3) segments where two (2) of the segments have hides and one (1) of the segments is a blank area. In a multi-part search, there will only be one (1) 'finish' call after completing all segments.

23.3 Combination Odour

A hide may be a combination of the odours approved for that level. For example, a single hide may have Birch and/or Anise and/or Clove odours combined.

23.4 Dismissed – From Trial

Competitor will be asked to leave the trial grounds. No points awarded. The competitor will receive zero (0) points for all searches for that trial, four (4) faults per search area, and is not eligible to participate in remaining trials during that event.

The Certifying Official has the right to ask the handler/dog team or any other person to leave the event grounds, due to any of the following:

- Any unprofessional conduct towards officials, volunteers, host, other competitors, or any attendees.
- Any aggressive act by a dog towards a person or another dog.
- Dog is under extreme stress, appears to be in significant pain or experiencing significant discomfort, subject to the Certifying Official and/or judge's discretion.
- 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® events for one (1) year.
- Acting in a manner that could endanger another person or dog, including not having control of their dog(s).
- Acting in a manner that could cause the loss of an event site including excessive or sustained vocalisation in the parking and/or crating areas (after they have already been warned).
- Anyone videoing the element area at any time.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct including intentional disclosure or knowledge of the hide locations.
- Not following ACSW® rules or event rules.

23.5 Elimination (Body Secretions)

This refers to urination, defecation and emesis (vomiting) at any time during a search (either inside or outside of the boundaries defining the search area) or within the boundaries of the search area after completing the element search.

- If a dog cocks a leg or squats this will be classed as elimination.

NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW3, L1, L1 Plus, L2 and L3 Element Specialty Trials

- Any dog that eliminates (urinates, defecates, vomits) during a search or in a search area will lose **all** points for that search.
- Receive four (4) faults.
- The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

Elite Division

- Any dog that eliminates (urinates, defecates, vomits) during a search or in a search area will lose **all** points for hides found in that search.
- Receive a one (1) hide penalty for the search, for example where a hide is worth five (5) points, the score for that search will be -5 points.
- The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

Summit League

- Any dog that eliminates (urinates, defecates, vomits) during a search or in a search area will lose **all** points for hides found in that search.
- Receive a two (2) hide penalty (10 points), for example the score for the search will be -10 points.
- The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

23.6 Errors – L2 Element Specialty

False Alert

- Each false alert call will accrue an error, and a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.
- A maximum of two (2) false alerts may be called in a search area. The search ends at the second false alert and no more points may be accumulated.
- Two (2) false alerts will result in the full time limit for that search, and accrue two (2) errors, but will not accrue a third error for not calling 'finish'.

Missed Hide

- Each missed hide will accrue an error and points will not be earned for that hide. Note the points for the missed hide will not be deducted from the score.

23.7 Errors – L3 Element Specialty & NW3

False Alert

- Each false alert call will accrue an error, and a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.
- A maximum of two (2) false alerts may be called in a search area. The search ends at the second false alert and no more points may be accumulated.
- Two (2) false alerts will result in the full time limit for that search, and accrue two (2) errors, but will not accrue a third error for not calling 'finish'.

Missed Hide

- Each missed hide in a search area will accrue an error and points will not be earned for that hide. Note the points for the missed hide will not be deducted from the score.

Timed Out (failure to call finish before time expires) Missed Finish Call

- If a handler does not say 'finish' prior to the time elapsing, they will accrue an error and a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.
- The time awarded will be the full time limit for that search area.

23.8 Excused – From a Search

Whether a handler excuses themselves from a search or the judge excuses the handler/dog team, this does not prevent the team from continuing to search the remaining searches.

- 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 is deemed to be out of control may be excused.

If a handler opts to stop the search for their dog's wellbeing, the search will be scored as 'Timed Out', however, if the Judge stops the search, then it is scored as 'Excused'

NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW3 and all Levels of Element Specialty trials

- If excused by the Judge this will result in four (4) faults
- If excused by handler classed as a fault however zero (0) fault applied

Elite Division and Summit League

- This will result in a score of zero (0).
- Time awarded will be the full time limit for that search

23.9 False Alert

A false alert may be one of the following two (2) 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.

Example 1: Room A has no odour, but the dog offers an indication, and the handler calls alert.

Example 2: Room A has odour at the door, but the dog indicates at the window, six (6) feet (1.8 metres) 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.

In the case of a false alert:

NW1, NW1 Plus, L1 & L1 Plus Element Specialty Trials

- The search ends and the team are typically given the opportunity to reward the dog at the hide location.
- The team receives zero (0) points for this search.
- The time will be the full time for the search.

NW2

- If a judge's response to a handler's 'Alert' call is 'No,' then a false alert is given. The handler will not be given the opportunity to continue searching for additional hides in that search area but will keep the points for hides correctly located in that search area prior to the incorrect call. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.
- For the element with two (2) searches, if the incorrect call happens in the first search, the competitor will not be allowed to continue searching that search area but will be allowed to perform the remaining search of that element.
- The competitor will earn points for hides found and the time will be the full time for the search.

L2 Element Specialty Trials

- The competitor will earn points for hides found.
- Each false alert results in one (1) "error" and a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.
- If a judge's response to a handler's 'alert'" call is 'No', then a false alert is given. The handler will be allowed to continue searching after the first false alert.
- A second false alert in the same search will end the search and result in full time for the search.
- Individual search scores may be negative (-) to ensure that all teams that find the same number of hides and have the same number of false alerts across the whole trial end up with the same overall score. Overall scores will not be negative (-).

NW3 & L3 Element Specialty Trials

- The competitor will earn points for hides found.
- Each false alert results in one (1) 'error' and a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.
- An error will accrue for each missed hide, each 'false alert', and each 'timed out' (didn't say 'finish' prior to time elapsing). Each 'false alert' and each 'timed out' will result in a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points from the score.
- If a judge's response to a handler's 'alert'" call is 'No', then a false alert is given. The handler will be allowed to continue searching after the first false alert.
- A second false alert in the same search will end the search and result in full time for the search.

Elite Division

- Each false alert will have a point deduction equivalent to one half of a hide. For example, if you are at a trial where each hide is worth 10 points, 5 points will be deducted from that team's score for each false alert.
- Three (3) false alerts in the same search will end the search.

Summit League

- Each false alert will have a point deduction of 2.5 points (equivalent to one half of a hide).
- Three (3) false alerts in the same search will end the search.

23.10 Faults

Faults are given for various infraction and will affect placements in the competition.

You cannot earn more than one (1) fault per search area for each type of fault including: disrespect of the search area, compromising the search area, each type of safety issue, each type of rule violation, and each type of other infraction at the judge's discretion. For example, if the dog excessively paws at 5 boxes in a container search, only one (1) fault may be given. However, if the dog excessively paws at a box and the handler drops food, then two (2) faults may be given.

NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2 NW3 & all Element Specialty Trials

- A handler/dog team may accrue up to three (3) faults and still earn their title if they have a perfect score of 100.

L1 & L1 Plus Element Specialty Trials

- A handler/dog team may earn a qualifying score if they have earned 75 points and have no more than three (3) faults.

NW3, L2 and L3 Element Specialty Trials,

- A handler/dog team may earn a qualifying score if they have no more than one (1) "error" and no more than three (3) faults.

Elite Division and Summit League

- Each fault will result in a one (1) point deduction from the score for that search.

Faults may be given for the following reasons:

Absent from search

NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW3 & all Levels of Element Specialty trials

- This will result in four (4) faults and zero (0) points for that element. This applies when you opt to not participate in an element.
- Time awarded will be the full time limit for that search.

Compromising the search area

Examples include:

Handler dropping food when rewarding dog; handler feeds on top of hide leaving residue; handler tossing toy that causes dog to 'chase' it, or that disturbs the search area; dog urinating or defecating in the search area – this is an immediate elimination for that element; dog jumping up on vehicle multiple times; dog flinging props in the environment so that they need to be reset by the CO; dog pouncing and flattening a box in the container search.

Handler letting a long line drag so that it moves things around in the search area [no fault is incurred for leash simply touching the ground. only if it moves things around, e.g., debris, leaves, trash on the ground]; handler touching and/or moving things in the search area without asking Judge's permission [examples: handler leans over to see where dog is and put hands on a desk or chair to prop themselves up – they just put their scent and scent of whatever they are rewarding with onto that item; handler tries to "fix" whatever their dog disturbed; handler picks up on item on a desk to look inside to see if they can locate the hide their dog is alerting on – they just disturbed hide location]; handler lifting dog and putting them on a surface without asking the Judge if they may – or allowing the dog to jump onto a surface when they were told in the briefing not to, etc.

Note: It should be mentioned that a behaviour such as scratching could be interpreted in several ways, depending on the scenario. For example, a dog scratching at a ground hide that disturbs the hide itself or on a vehicle at the hide location. Similarly, a dog scratching at a vehicle or other part of any search area where there is no hide or far from the hide would be considered a false alert or fault.

Damaging the search area

- Examples: dog scratching a vehicle, dog digging up hide or digging in another part of search area; dog destroying containers; dog opening a food item that happens to be in the search area, dog digging into trash, dog jumping up on counter/table and disturbing the items there [we try to remove breakable items before searches begin]; dog grabbing/mouthing/retrieving hide, etc.

Dismissed

- Refer to section 25.4

Elimination

- Refer to section 25.5

Excused

- Refer to section 25.8

Safety issues, minor rule violations and other infractions at the judge's discretion

- Taking dog off leash in an on-leash search.
- Allowing a dog to go completely under a vehicle in the vehicle search.
- Placing a dog in an unsafe situation.
- Using an alternate alert signal (such as a hand raise) in lieu of 'ALERT' without prior approval or direction by the CO.



- Not responding promptly if a Judge asks 'where'.

23.11 Faults Matrix

Refer to Section 25.10 for full details, matrix below are examples only.

Item	Fault Points	Hide points	Time
Absent from search - this applies when handler opts to not participate in an element	4	0	Full time limit for search area
Alternate signal used in lieu of ALERT without approval	1	Full	Time earned
Damage to search area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pawing or digging ○ Damage to property 	1	Full	Full time limit for search area
Dismissed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Unprofessional conduct towards others ○ Aggressive act by dog towards person or another dog ○ Harsh corrections or undue pressure on the dog by handler ○ Handler confirmed cheating 	4	0	Full time limit for search area
Disturbing or touching any item in the search area (handler)	1	Full	Time earned
Dog off leash in an on-leash search	1	Full	Full time limit for search area
Dog under vehicle	1	Full	Full time limit for search area
Elimination (body fluids) also refer to Section 25.5	4	0	Full time limit for search area
Excused (handler excuses self and dog from search) Scored as timed out	0	0	Full time limit for search area
Excused – Judge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dog under undue stress ○ Dog in obvious pain ○ Extreme disruption of search area ○ Dog deemed out of control Scored as excused	4	0	Full time limit for search area
Food dropped – compromising contaminating the search area	1	Full	Time earned
Start line (dog not crossing designated line or threshold)	1	Full	Time earned
Unsafe situation (handler placing or allowing the dog in an unsafe situation or area)	1	0	Full time limit for search area
Delay in responding to a Judge when asked 'where'	1	Full	Time earned

23.12 Finish

NW2 & L2 Element Specialty Trials – The 'FINISH' call will be used to stop the time

- There will be no points associated with the 'finish' call at NW2 and L2 Element Specialty Trials.
- 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 the team locates all the hides in the area, does not call 'finish', and continues searching and then has a false alert, the team will be given one (1) point penalty in their score.
- 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 allocated to the search.

NW3 & L3 Element Specialty Trials – The 'FINISH' call will be used to stop the time.

- There will be no points associated with the 'finish' call at NW3 and L3 Element Specialty Trials, however, failure to call 'finish' prior to time expiring will be considered one (1) error. In this case the full time limit for the search area will be given and there will be a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points for the score for that search.
- In the event of an area with no hides, the 'finish' call will be worth one (1) hide.

Elite Division and Summit League Levels - 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 the handler does not say 'finish' prior to the time limit for the search, they 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, a correct 'finish' call will be worth two (2) hides.

23.13 Timed Out

The full time for the search element has run out and not all hides have been located (or 'finish' called at the NW3, L3 Element Specialty Trials, Elite Division and Summit League).

NW1, NW1 Plus, L1 & L1 Plus Element Specialty Trials

- Time awarded will be the full time limit allocated for that search.

NW2 & L2 Element Specialty Trials

- The handler/dog team will earn points for hides found.
- Time will be the full time limit for the search.

NW3 & L3 Element Specialty Trials

- The handler/dog team will earn points for hides found.
- Timing out results in one (1) error and a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.
- Time will be the full time limit for the search.

Elite Division Trials

- 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, where each hide is worth ten (10) points, and the time elapses without the competitor saying 'finish', 5 points will be deducted from that team's score.

Summit League

- If the competitor does not say 'finish' prior to the time elapsing, the team will have a point deduction of 2.5 points (equivalent to one (1) half of a hide).

24. Scoring Details

24.1 Points Accrual

Points are accrued by correctly calling alert when the dog finds the hides (and for blank areas at L3 Element Specialty Trials and for NW3/Elite/Summit Blank Areas).

For NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW3 and L1, L1 Plus, L2 Element Specialty and Elite, points per hide are determined by taking 100 points and dividing by the total number of hides. For Summit League, each hide is worth 5 points.

NW, NW1 Plus, L1 & L1 Plus Element Specialty

- Each hide will be worth 25 points.
- There are 4 search areas with one hide each for a total of 4 hides.

NW2 & L2 Element Specialty

- If there are 8 hides total each hide will be worth 12.5 points.
- Note: At a NW2 trial if the team locates all the hides in the area, does not call 'finish', and continues searching and calls a false alert, the team will be given a one (1) point penalty in their score.

NW3 & L3 Element Specialty

- If there are 9 hides, plus a blank area at a NW3 trial, there are 10 hides worth of points to be accrued. Each "hide" (including the 'finish' call in the blank area) will be worth 10 points.
- At the NW3 and L3, 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.

Elite

- If there are 23 hides, plus a blank area at an Elite trial, there are 25 hides worth of points to be accrued. Each "hide" (including the 2 hides worth of points for a correct 'finish' call in the blank area) will be worth 4 points.
- At the Elite 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.

Summit

- Each hide is worth 5 points. If there is a blank area, a correct 'finish' call in the blank area is worth 10 points.

24.2 Scoring Deductions – General

Scores for an individual search may be negative (-) at NW3, L2, L3 Element Specialty, Elite and Summit.

Overall scores will have a minimum score of zero (0) and will not be negative (-). This is to ensure that teams who find the same number of hides and have the same number of deductions end up with the same overall score and not have the scores dependent on which search the hides are found and deductions occurred.

24.3 Scoring Deductions – Absent

NW1, NW1 Plus, L1, L1 Plus, NW2, L2, NW3 & L3

- Zero (0) points for that search and four (4) faults. The time awarded will be the full time limit for that search area.

Elite & Summit

- Zero (0) points for that search. The time awarded will be the full time limit for that search area.

24.4 Scoring Deductions – Dismissed

NW1, NW1 Plus, L1, L1 Plus, NW2, L2, NW3 & L3

- Zero (0) points for the entire trial and four (4) faults per search area.

Elite & Summit

- Zero (0) points for the entire trial.

24.5 Scoring Deductions – Elimination

Elimination (urination, defecation, emesis (vomit) during the search or in the search area)

NW1, NW1 Plus, L1, L1 Plus, NW2, L2, NW3 & L3

- Zero (0) points for that search and four (4) faults. The time awarded will be the full time limit for that search area.

Elite

- The team will receive a score of -1 hide for the search. In the case where a hide is worth five (5) points, the score for that search will be - 5 points. The time awarded will be the full time limit for that search area.

Summit

- The team will receive a score of -10 points (minus 2 hides) for the search. The time awarded will be the full time limit for that search area.

24.6 Scoring Deductions – Excused

NW1, NW1 Plus, L1, L1 Plus, NW2, L2, NW3, & L3

- Zero (0) points for that search and four (4) faults. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

Elite & Summit

- Zero (0) points for that search. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

24.7 Scoring Deductions – False Alert

NW1, NW1 Plus, L1 & L1 Plus

- The competitor will not be allowed to continue searching for the hide in that search area after the first false alert. This means that full points for that search are not possible after a false alert so a title cannot be earned in this situation.
- The judge will typically direct the team to the hide to allow the handler the opportunity to reinforce the dog. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search.

NW2

- The competitor will not be allowed to continue searching for additional hides in that search area after the first false alert. This means that full points for that search are not possible after a false alert so a title cannot be earned in this situation.
- The judge will typically direct the team to a hide to allow the handler the opportunity to reinforce the dog. They will keep the points for hides correctly located in that search prior to their false alert. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

L2, NW3 & L3

- The competitor will be allowed to continue searching for additional hides after the first false alert in a search.
- Each false alert is scored as an “error” and there will be a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.
- The search will end if there is a second false alert in the same search area. In that case, they will keep the points for hides correctly located in the search prior to the second false alert and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

Elite

- If you have a false alert during a search, you will be allowed to continue searching however there will be a point deduction of ½ hide for each false alert. For example, if there are a total of 20 hides at that trial, each hide is worth 5 points. The team would lose 2.5 points from its score for each false alert call.
- The search will end if there is a third false alert in the same search area. In that case, they will keep the points for hides correctly located in the search prior to the third false alert and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

24.8 Scoring Deductions – Faults

Faults are given for various infractions related to respect for the property, safety, and minor rule violations.

Refer to Section 25.10 for more details on faults.

NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW3, L1, L1 Plus, L2, & L3 Element Specialty Trials

- A handler/dog team may accrue up to three (3) faults and still earn their title if they have earned 100 points.
- For L1 & L1 Plus Element Specialty Trials they may earn a qualifying score if they have a score of at least 75 and no more than three (3) faults.
- At NW3, L2 & L3 Trials, they may earn a qualifying score if they have no more than one (1) "error" and no more than three (3) faults. Some faults are given in situations where it is not possible to earn 100 points (such as an elimination, absence, dismissal, or excused).

Elite and Summit Trials

- Faults result in a one (1) point deduction from the score for that search for each fault earned.

24.9 Scoring Deductions – Timed Out

NW1, NW1 Plus, L1 & L1 Plus

- The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

NW2, & L2

- The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

NW3 & L3

- The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. Not saying 'finish' prior to time expiring will result in one (1) "error" and a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.



Elite

- The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. The team will receive a point deduction of ½ hide for not saying 'finish' prior to time expiring.

Summit

- The competitor will keep the points earned for hides located. The time awarded will be the time limit for that search area. The team will receive a point deduction of 2.5 points (½ hide) for not saying 'finish' prior to time expiring.

25. NW1, NW1 Plus, L1, L1 Plus & NW2 Trial Scoring Matrix

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

RANKING ORDER	SCORING CONDITION	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 given (other faults i.e., pawing, contamination etc)
3	Timed Out	Points earned*	Full time limit for search area	0 + any other faults given
4	False Alert	Points earned* prior to false alert	Full time limit for search area	0 + any other faults given
5	Elimination Excused Absent	0 Points	Full time limit for search area	4 + any other faults given
6	Dismissal	0 Points for all searches	Full time limit for each search area	4 faults per search area

* Points earned – refer to Section 26 - Scoring Details.

26. NW3, L2 & L3 Element Specialty Trial Scoring Information

26.1 Points Earned

The competitor will be given points for each hide found in a search area. A blank area also counts as one (1) hide. Points per hide are calculated by dividing 100 by the total number of hides for the trial.

26.2 Errors

Missed Hide

- If a competitor does not find a hide in a search area, they will not earn the points for that hide and will accrue an "error" for each missed hide.

False Alert

- The competitor will be allowed to continue searching for additional hides after the first false alert in a search. Each false alert is scored as an "error" and there will be a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.
- The search will end if there is a second false alert in the same search area. In that case, they will keep the points for hides correctly located in the search prior to the second false alert and the time awarded will be the time limit for that search area.

Missed 'Finish' call

- L2 – If the competitor does not say 'finish' prior to the time elapsing, they will receive full time with no other deductions.
- NW3 & L3 – If the competitor does not say 'finish' prior to the time elapsing, they will accrue an "error" and there will be a deduction of one (1) hide worth of points.

Note: Points may be deducted beyond zero (0). A negative (-) score may occur for one (1) or more searches. However, a negative (-) overall score will not occur.

26.3 Faults

If more than three (3) faults overall are given, then neither the title nor a qualifying score is earned.

You will not earn more than one (1) fault per search for each type of fault including: disrespect of the search area, compromising the search area, each type of safety issue, each type of rule violation, and each type of other infraction at the judge's discretion.

For example, if the dog excessively paws at 5 boxes in a container search, only one fault may be given. However, if the dog excessively paws at a box and the handler drops food, then two faults may be given.

26.4 Blank Searches

The 'finish' call will be worth one (1) hide worth of points in a blank area at NW3 and L3. A team that has one (1) false alert and then calls 'finish' will earn one (1) hide worth of points for calling 'finish' but will lose one (1) hide worth of points and accrue an "error" for the false alert.

26.5 Elimination/Excused/Absent

Zero (0) points earned for that search area. Full time given. Four (4) faults.

26.6 Dismissed

Zero (0) points for all search areas. Full time for each search area. Four (4) faults for each search area.

27. Elite Division Scoring Information

27.1 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 plus two (2) for any blank areas.

27.2 Points Deduction

False Alert

- For each false alert call, there will be a point deduction of ½ hide.
- A maximum of three (3) false alerts may be called in a search.
- The search ends at the third false alert call and no more points may be accumulated. Note: If a competitor has three (3) false alert calls, they will be given full time for the search, but not the ½ hide penalty for not calling 'finish.'

Missed 'Finish' call

- If the competitor does not say 'finish' prior to the time elapsing, there will be a point deduction of ½ hide.

Note: Points may be deducted beyond zero (0). A negative (-) score may occur for one (1) or more searches. However, a negative (-) overall score will not occur.

27.3 Faults

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

27.4 Blank Searches

A blank area at Elite trials will be scored as two (2) hides worth of points.

Scoring will be as follows:

- Finish correctly called = 2 hides.
- No points are earned if there are any false alerts prior to the finish call.
- Each false alert will result in a ½ hide deduction. For example, calling two (2) false alerts and then calling 'finish' will result in a score of -1 hide worth of points.
- Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a ½ hide penalty

27.5 Elimination/Excused/Absent

Zero (0) points earned for that search area. Full time given. Four (4) faults.

27.6 Dismissed

Zero (0) points for all search areas. Full time for each search area.

28. Summit League Scoring Information

28.1 Points Earned

The competitor will be given five (5) points for each hide found in a search.

28.2 Points Deduction

False Alert

- For each false alert call, there will be a point deduction of 2.5 points (½ hide).
- A maximum of three (3) false alerts may be called in a search.
- The search ends at the third false alert call and no more points may be accumulated. Note: If a competitor has three (3) false alert calls, they will be given full time for the search, but not the ½ hide penalty for not calling 'finish.'

Missed 'Finish' call

- If the competitor does not say 'finish' prior to the time elapsing, there will be a point deduction of 2.5 points (½ hide).

Note: Points may be deducted beyond zero (0). A negative (-) score for a single search may occur. A negative (-) overall score will not occur.

28.3 Faults

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

28.4 Blank Searches

A Blank Area at SUMMIT trials will be worth ten (10) points.

Scoring will be as follows:

- Finish correctly called = 10 points.
- No points are earned if there is a false alert prior to the finish call.
- Each false alert will result in a 2.5 points deduction. For example, calling two (2) false alerts and then calling 'finish' will result in a score of -5 points.
- Timing out (i.e., failure to call 'finish' prior to time expiring) will result in a ½ hide penalty.
- Elimination/Excused/Absent.

Zero (0) points earned for that search. Full time given.

28.5 Dismissed

Zero (0) points for all search areas. Full time for each search area.

29. Volunteer Roles - Trial Job Descriptions

29.1 Gate Steward

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

29.2 Box Setter (Container Element Only)

Two (2) box setters are assigned to the Container Search Element, and both will be required to wear rubber gloves.

One volunteer is responsible for resetting or replacing the cold boxes, whilst the other volunteer is responsible for resetting or replacing the hot box after each handler/dog team. Neither is permitted to touch the opposite box. The box setters must confirm with the CO where the spare cold and hot boxes are stored.

29.3 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 correct score card. After the competitor has completed their search, the judge's steward directs the handler/dog team out of the search area and ensures that the score card 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.

29.4 Timer

The timer is responsible for starting and finishing the stopwatch and recording the official time as each handler/dog team complete each search.

29.5 Score Runner

Take 2-3 completed score cards at a time from a search to the score room.

29.6 Videographer

The Videographer will video each competitor's run in 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.

29.7 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.

30. Awards

30.1 High in Trial (HIT)

HIT is awarded to the highest scoring/fastest dog. HIT is not awarded at an Odour Recognition Test (ORT) or for an Element Speciality Trial (EST).

30.2 Partnership

Each judge may recognise a great partnership among handler/dog teams demonstrating exceptional technique and/or teamwork at each NW1, NW1 Plus, NW2, NW3, Elite, and Summit League trial. This is not part of the title, but rather an acknowledgement of exceptional teamwork on that trial day. Note: the overall Partnership Award is only awarded to one (1) team, whereas a Partnership Award may be awarded up to three (3) teams per element.

A judge may consider any of the following in their evaluation of a team to be considered for a partnership:

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

The *Partnership* designation is not automatically awarded due to the score or comments. The nature of ACSW® trials include the participation of several judges, each with their own interpretation and opinion on the teamwork they view in the search they are judging.

Partnership Award – Element

Judges may award up to three (3) partnership ribbons per element for encouragement to teams displaying exceptional quality. Judges will grade each handler/dog team as they complete their search, and the partnership ribbons will be awarded at the end of the day based on the top three (3) graded handler/dog teams for each element.

Partnership Award - Overall

The Judges will confer regarding the teams that are eligible for the overall partnership award. If a handler/dog team has received a partnership award for one (1) or more of the elements, they will be considered for the overall partnership award.

30.3 Bravo

The Bravo Award is given to the most outstanding rescue dog that demonstrates extraordinary ability and spirit in nose work. The Bravo Award is awarded based on feedback from the Judges. Only the dog's performance is judged, not the team's performance as the teams has a separate award.

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 organisation, etc. Rescue designation is taken from the ACSW® dog registration information.

A dog may receive this award only one (1) time per Nose Work Level.

In determining criteria, judges will only take into consideration faults that relate to the dog such as toileting during the search or damaging or compromising search areas. Human incurred faults such as dropping food or allowing the dog to go under the vehicle will not reflect on the dog. When deciding if a dog should be eligible for the Bravo award the Judge will consider the following: speed, efficiency, accuracy, enthusiasm, clarity of alert and odour obedience.

31. Incident Reporting

Any safety event, incident or injury (including incidents that require first aid) involving any person, dog or property must be reported to the CO immediately, an incident report will be completed and submitted to the ACSW® following the trial.

Any questions or concerns regarding anything that happens at a trial, should be directed to the Certifying Official on trial day.

The CO is required to complete an incident report if a dog or person is dismissed from the event.

The CO must notify the ACSW® of all reported incidents within 48 hours of the incident or event.

An incident report must be submitted to the ACSW® within 7 days of the event.

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