**DOGS Victoria Submission of Proposed Rule Changes for 1.01.2026**

**RALLY**

**GLOSSARY**

**Glossary Inclusion into the Exhibitors and Handlers section**.

**How a station is performed**.

The text description given for a station shall be the definitive way in which a station is to be performed. The image shown is a visual guide only as to how a station will be performed.

***Rationale***

*Inclusion of the item in the glossary clarifies how a station is to be performed when inconsistency between the image shown and the text description exists, without having to regenerate all existing signs with new images or changed text description.*

*Eg: Station 51 image text reads Leave Dog 5 Metres, About Turn, Return to Dog. However the image shows an about turn right, but the station text description states that the handler is to “about turn” and there is no specific about turn required. The intent of the image is to show that the handler has to return back to the dog, not that the turn must be a right about turn.*

Rule change,

Suggest Novice signs are preceded by a N, Advanced by A then Excellent E and Masters M ie N.1, N.2, etc.

***Rationale*** *– so that stations can be added/removed from each level without renumbering all the stations*

**Numbering of Stations**

Set each Class level station numbering starting at 1 – the highest number and then any new signs added at that given class level receive the next available number.

Ie currently this would make the stations at Class Level:

Novice N1 – N32

Advanced A1 - A21

Excellent X1 – X12

Master M1 – M11

***Rationale:***

*New signs are going to continue to be suggested at subsequent rule changes. There should be no reason why signs have to be inserted into class levels eg Novice and cause every level above to have to be reprinted. Making the change now as part of the 2025 rule change means that new signs added to any level in this rule change go at the end of the existing signs for the given level and so forth in future year changes.*

*There is no need to have to put N, A, X on a sign to denote that a station can be used at a lower level because that should be treated as a given that a higher class level can use a station from a lower level.*

**Exhibitors and Handlers**

**PAGE 9**

Currently reads:

Entering and Leaving the Ring: On the Steward's call of the dog's catalogue number, the Handler will enter the Ring and take up position at the "Start Station”. All dogs must enter and leave the ring on lead. In Exercises that require a dog to be off lead, the lead will be taken off upon instruction from the judge, and handed to the Steward.

**Change to:**

Entering and Leaving the Ring: On the Steward's call of the dog's catalogue number, the Handler will enter the Ring and take up position at the "Start Station”. All dogs must enter and leave the ring on lead. **On direction from the Judge, the Handler shall remove the lead, where required. The lead will be retained by the Handler. It can be placed in a pocket or around their body, so it does not impede the dog’s performance.**

***Rationale:*** *To retain the change taken up during COVID and continues on until the next rule review. This now needs to be including in the rule book.*

**RALLY NOVICE**

**Novice class: Allocating other stations to Novice from Advanced**

Move station #47 (double right about turn) from Advanced to Novice (page 23)

Move station #48 (double left about turn) from Advanced to Novice (page 23)

Move station #49 (double left U turn) from Advanced to Novice (page 24)

***Rationale:*** *Moving these stations to Novice will assist handlers to develop heeling position and enable more moving stations. By having more of these moving stations, courses can be more engaging between handler and dog which will improve the connectivity in the team and motivation for a brisk moving course.*

Introduction of new **NOVICE** station

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **FIGURE 8 - NO DISTRACTIONS** –This exercise requires two pylons or posts placed about 2.45 – 3.00 metres apart which the team will perform a completed Figure 8, crossing the centre line three times.Entry must between the pylons or posts, The exercise sign may be placed on or near the cone where entry is made into the Figure 8 (Moving exercise)   | AKC Sign  |

***Rationale:*** *New moving station for Novice.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | The handler will approach the sign toward the right hand corner to enable the 3600 left turn to the to be completed in front of the sign and pass the sign on the right to enable a right diagonal forward motion. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | The handler will approach the sign toward the left hand corner to enable the 3600 right turn to the to be completed in front of the sign and pass the sign on the left to enable a left diagonal forward motion |

*Rationale – to give more flow to courses when a diagonal change of direction is required*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | The handler will complete a u turn to the left at a diagonal |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | The handler will complete a u turn to the left at a diagonal |

*Rationale: to introduce a new turn that allows for a diagonal exit,*

**Suggested New Novice Rally Signs**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **CALL FRONT – RETURN TO HEEL**While heeling, the Handler stops forward motion and commands/signals the dog to front. The Handler may take several steps backward. The dog must come and sit in front. The dog must stay sitting while the handler walks around the dog back behind the dog to RETURN to the heel position. The HANDLER MUST PAUSE before heeling forward (Stationary exercise) | AKC Sign 35 |

**RALLY ADVANCED**

Currently reads: Station 50

**50. Call front, Handler Reverses Three Steps - Finish** The Handler calls the dog to the front, reverses three steps, with the dog moving with Handler. The dog returns to heel and continues heeling forward without stopping. The dog does not sit during this exercise. The team must maintain continuous motion throughout the turn without partially sitting or stopping

Change to read:

**50. Call front, Handler Reverses Three Steps - Finish** The *dog will be called to front position after which the Handler reverses at least three steps with the dog moving with them*. The dog returns to heel and continues heeling forward without stopping. The dog does not sit during this exercise. The team must maintain continuous motion throughout the turn without partially sitting or stopping

***Rationale -*** *The correction will allow large dogs to get into a correct front position before the backward steps are taken giving a more collected performance, ensuring the station is performed as was intended. Deductions are made if the dog sits crooked in the ‘front’ position with the ‘call front and recall stations, if the dog is not straight in front in this station then deductions should be made, this would greatly penalise the larger dogs that require more than three steps from the handler to become straight. \**

*\*note – there was a lot of investigation when introducing this station initially in the action of giant breeds and toy breeds, this is why the change should reflect the intention of the original submission*

**Sign 46 Halt - Leave Dog - Recall  (page 23)**
**The current wording on the actual sign is** :
Leave Dog 3 metres
About turn
Recall Dog
Handler Return

**Proposed wording on the actual sign:**
Leave Dog 3 metres
About turn
Call Dog to Front
Return to Dog

***Rationale:****The exercises performed at station 46 (Adv) and station 57 (Exc) are identical apart from the distance you have to leave the dog (3m vs 5 m). Therefore the wording on the signs should be identical (apart from the distance)*

New Sign for Rally Advanced - Down walk around dog

**Down**

**Walk Around Dog**

***Rationale:*** *Currently we have a down, and a sit, down walk around dog. There is no alternative for judges to use without a sit which in advanced leads to a lot of sits. In masters we have a moving down but no progression through from a down in the heel position to the moving down without a sit. Adding a down walk around dog allows from natural progression though exercises and gives judges more options that do not involve a sit*.

 New Sign for Rally Advanced -Stand walk around dog.

**Stand**

**Walk Around Dog**

***Rationale****: In novice there is a stand in the heel position and there are various signs incorporating a stand but until dogs hit excellent there is no stand walk around dog, and the excellent sign is a moving stand. Adding a stationary stand walk around dog provides a natural progression through the grades for dog and handler teams and allows judges more options without sits.*

**RALLY EXCELLENT**

1. **Excellent class: Allocating other stations to Excellent from Masters**

Move station #69 (Moving Down, Walk around dog) from Masters to Excellent (page 28)

Move station #70 (Moving Sit, Walk around dog) from Masters to Excellent (page 28)

***Rationale:*** *There is already the Moving stand, walk around dog (Station 56) in excellent. These two stations are the same principle where you leave a dog in a position and immediately move around them. With the introduction of new Masters stations that build upon these stations, it is necessary to move these back to Excellent so the teams can build up to them.*

**Alteration to jump requirement**

Page 7

Current wording: **Jumps must not be used consecutively on the course.**

**Change to read :**: Jumps **may** be used consecutively on the course.

***Rationale:*** *Maintaining control throughout the course is important. Being able to use the two jumps consecutively enable courses to be engaging, and fast moving whilst also demonstrating control over the dog.*

New station sign for Excellent - **AKC station sign**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CLOVER LEAF TURN**This exercise requires three posts or cones placed about 2.5 – 3.00 metres apart, around which the team will perform one right U turn and two left U turns, crossing the centre line four times to form a “clover” pattern. The dog and handler do not stop moving. This station changes course direction. |  |

**New Station for Rally Excellent - Stand, leave dog 3 metres down, return to dog.**
*Rationale: In Masters we have a variety of signs with various changes of position at a distance; in advanced we have position changes in the heel position. There’s currently no progression. Adding a single position from a short distance provides a natural progression for dog and handler teams.*

**Stand Dog**

**Leave Dog 3 mtr**

**Distance Down**

**Return to Dog**

**New Station for Rally Excellent - Stand, leave dog 3 metres sit, return to dog.**
*Rationale: In Masters we have a variety of signs with various changes of position at a distance; in advanced we have position changes in the heel position. There’s currently no progression. Adding a single position from a short distance provides a natural progression for dog and handler teams.*

**Stand Dog**

**Leave Dog 3 mtr**

**Distance Sit**

**Return to Dog**

**RALLY MASTER**

Introduce new **MASTER** stations

**Stand – Leave Dog - Call To Heel** – The Handler halts and the dog stands. The Handler leaves the dog and moves forward 3 metres to the marker, and without becoming stationary, calls the dog to heel. The dog is expected to catch up into heel position as the Handler moves forward and before the Handler reaches the next station. The dog must not anticipate the recall and must not forge significantly ahead of the Handler when coming into heel position. (Stationary exercise)

**Down – Leave Dog - Call To Heel** – The Handler halts and the dog drops. The Handler leaves the dog and moves forward 3 metres to the marker, and without becoming stationary, calls the dog to heel. The dog is expected to catch up into heel position as the Handler moves forward and before the Handler reaches the next station. The dog must not anticipate the recall and must not forge significantly ahead of the Handler when coming into heel position. (Stationary exercise)

***Rationale:*** *These two additional stations follow on from station 71 where the dog is left in a sit position. The stations are identical except for the starting position. They add additional challenges for the dogs to remain in position and allow for more flexibility in training.*

Introduce new **MASTER** stations

**Moving Stand – Leave Dog 3mtrs – About Turn – Walk Past dog 3 metres – Return to heel** – Whilst heeling and without pausing, the Handler commands and/or signals the dog to stand and stay and moves forward 3 metres to the marker, performs an about turn and returns past the left hand side of the dog another 3 metres. The handler then returns to the dog and without pausing, continues on with the dog in the heel position. The Handler must not become stationary during this station. The dog must not move from the stand position and must not change position.

 **Moving Down – Leave Dog 3mtrs – About Turn – Walk Past dog 3 metres – Return to heel** – Whilst heeling and without pausing, the Handler commands and/or signals the dog to down and stay and moves forward 3 metres to the marker, performs an about turn and returns past the left hand side of the dog another 3 metres. The handler then returns to the dog and without pausing, continues on with the dog in the heel position. The Handler must not become stationary during this station. The dog must not move from the down position and must not change position.

 **Moving Sit – Leave Dog 3mtrs – About Turn – Walk Past dog 3 metres – Return to heel** – Whilst heeling and without pausing, the Handler commands and/or signals the dog to sit and stay and moves forward 3 metres to the marker, performs an about turn and returns past the left hand side of the dog another 3 metres. The handler then returns to the dog and without pausing, continues on with the dog in the heel position. The Handler must not become stationary during this station. The dog must not move from the sit position and must not change position.

 ***Rationale:*** *These three additional stations follow on from station 68 where the dog is left in a stand position and upon return the team move forward without a pause and extend stations 69, 70 and 56. The stations are identical except for the starting position. They add additional challenges for the dogs to remain in position and allow for more flexibility in training. Being non stationary they do not take up a lot of time and keep the flow of the course moving.*