



Australian National Kennel Council Ltd ABN 77 151 544 679 trading as Dogs Australia

**Rules for the Conduct of**

**Earthdog Tests for**

**Small Terriers and Dachshunds**

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## CHAPTER 1

### Rules for Earthdog Tests for Small Terriers and Dachshunds

Wherever the word “dog” is used in these Rules it includes both sexes.

#### 1.1 Purpose (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1)

- 1.1.1 The purpose of non-competitive earthdog tests is to offer breeders and owners of small Terriers and Dachshunds a standardised gauge to measure their dogs natural and trained hunting and working abilities when exposed to a hunting situation. The non-competitive program begins with a basic Earthdog Instinct Certificate and progresses through gradual steps to require the dog to demonstrate that it is capable of being trained to follow game to ground and work its quarry.
- 1.1.2 Earthdog tests are a sport, and all participants should be guided by the principles of good sportsmanship both in and outside the test field.

#### 1.2. Earthdog Tests Defined

- 1.2.1 An earthdog test is a test at which qualifications for titles are awarded, given by a club or association, which is a member of the Dogs Australia.

#### 1.3. Dogs Australia Rules Applying to Registration and Discipline (Amended 02/22)

- 1.3.1 All of Dogs Australia Rules applying to Registration and Discipline shall apply to all earthdog tests held under these Rules.

#### 1.4. Eligibility of Dogs (Amended 10/14, 6.9) (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)

- 1.4.1 Dogs six months of age or older and registered with Dogs Australia are eligible to participate in earthdog tests, as are spayed and neutered dogs with Limited Registration provided they are classified as eligible breeds.
- 1.4.2 A dog of an eligible breed with an accepted foreign registration number is eligible to participate subject to Part 6 of Dogs Australia Rules – The Register and Registration.
- 1.4.3 The following breeds are classified as eligible to participate in Dogs Australia earthdog tests:
- Australian Terriers
  - Australian Silky Terriers
  - Bedlington Terriers
  - Border Terriers
  - Cairn Terriers
  - Chinese Crested Dogs
  - Dachshunds (all varieties)
  - English Toy Terriers
  - Fox Terriers (Smooth and Wire)
  - German Hunting Terriers
  - Glen of Imaal Terriers
  - Jack Russell Terriers
  - Lakeland Terriers
  - Manchester Terriers
  - Miniature Pinscher
  - Norfolk Terriers

- Norwich Terriers
- Parson Russell Terrier
- Portuguese Podengo (Small)
- Schipperke
- Schnauzer (Miniature)
- Scottish Terriers
- Sealyham Terriers
- Skye Terriers
- Tenterfield Terriers
- Welsh Terriers
- West Highland White Terriers
- Yorkshire Terriers

1.4.4 Dogs on the Associate Register that are of earthdog type are eligible to participate. These dogs must have successfully qualified in the Earthdog Instinct Test on at least one occasion prior to being eligible to enter the Junior Earthdog Test or Strong Dog Earthdog Test.

1.4.5 In as much as Dachshunds and Terriers are hunting dogs, dogs disfigured as the result of accident or injury but otherwise qualified shall be eligible provided that the disfigurement does not interfere with functional movement. Dogs that are blind and deaf shall not be eligible. Blind means without useful vision, and deaf means without useful hearing.

1.4.6 A dog is not eligible to enter a test if the Judge of that test or any member of that Judge's family owns or co-owns the dog. The word "family" shall include a spouse, a brother or sister, a parent or a child, whether natural or adopted of the Judge in question but shall not extend to other blood or legal relations.

1.4.7 Bitches in season shall not be eligible to enter the test. Entry fees paid for a bitch that comes into season shall not be refunded.

#### **1.5. Eligibility to Hold Earthdog Tests**

1.5.1 Dogs Australia will only grant permission to clubs and associations to hold earthdog tests that are affiliated with Dogs Australia.

#### **1.6. Veterinarian (Amended 02/22)**

1.6.1 Every club holding a test shall arrange to have a veterinarian "on call" but must ensure that veterinary assistance will be available should it be needed. The schedule must state whether the veterinarian will be in attendance or "on call".

#### **1.7. Refusal of Entries**

1.7.1 A Test Committee may decline any entries or may remove any dog from the event for any reason, but in each such instance shall file good and sufficient reasons for doing so.

#### **1.8. Risk (Amended 02/22)**

1.8.1 Owners or handlers entering dogs in a test do so at their own risk and agree to assume responsibility for any damage caused by them or by their dogs. They also agree to abide by all of the Rules of Dogs Australia.

#### **1.9. Closing of Entries, Running Order (Amended 02/22)**

- 1.9.1 The closing time for entries and the location which entries shall be taken shall be printed in the schedule. Entries for a test may close at any time prior to the start of each test level.
- 1.9.2 If entries are to be limited, the numerical limitation(s) must be stated in the schedule and entries will close when the numerical limits have been reached.
- 1.9.3 A club or association holding a test shall not accept any entries received after the closing date and time specified on the schedule.
- 1.9.4 The running order may be established by a random drawing of entries in each class. In either case, multiple entries from the same handler should be separated when possible. The Test Committee or the Judges may modify the running order to expedite the running of the test.
- 1.9.5 Each entry in a test must be made on an official Dogs Australia entry form or completed online as per nominated online provider. Each entry form must be completed in full and must be signed by the owner or his agent duly authorised to make the entry, and the information given on the form must be that which applies to the entered dog.

**1.10 Submission of Records (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 1.10.1 Clubs holding tests must utilise the standard Dogs Australia official judges report sheets which are included in these rules as appendices.

**1.11. Disturbances (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1)**

- 1.11.1 Barking dogs outside the test area are to be removed from the area but should not be disciplined for barking.
- 1.11.2 The Judge must promptly remove from participation any dog which cannot be controlled and may excuse any dog he or she considers unfit to participate.
- 1.11.3 The Judge must also promptly remove any handler who wilfully interferes with another dog or handler or abuses his or her dog in the test area, or in any way displays conduct prejudicial to the sport of dogs.

## CHAPTER 2

### Instructions for Test Committees and Judges

#### 2.1. Approval of Judges

- 2.1.1 Judges officiating at tests must be approved by Dogs Australia. A club or association may submit the name of any approved Judges for approval to have the Judge officiate at the test. Such approved Judges may enter dogs in any classes, which they are not judging and for which they are not advertised as Judges.

#### 2.2. Judges Decisions, Responsibilities (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)

- 2.2.1 The decisions of the Judge shall be final in all matters relating to the performance of the dog. Full discretionary power is given to the Judge to withhold any and all qualification for want of merit.
- 2.2.2 The Judge is responsible for making the test meaningful and challenging, but never out of reach of the dog and handler who, at an Earthdog Instinct Test may never have been presented with an open earth test before. The Judges function is to educate as well as evaluate.
- 2.2.3 The Judge is responsible for ensuring compliance with these Rules throughout a test.

#### 2.3. Judges and Test Committee's Responsibilities (Amended 02/22)

- 2.3.1 The Test Committee and officials of the club holding the test are responsible for providing the quarry, den liners, test material, facilities and equipment which meet the requirements of the Rules.
- 2.3.2 The Judge must check the quarry, test layout and den liners before starting the test. The Judge shall also supervise the scenting and covering of the dens before starting the test. If the Judge deems the facilities, test layout, or den construction inadequate for the event and no corrections or modifications can be made; the Judge shall cancel the event. Entry fees shall be refunded by the Test Committee.

#### 2.4. Stewards and Trainees (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1)

- 2.4.1 Stewards should be appointed to assist in the conduct of the event and be in control of the test area. At the Judge's discretion, a trainee Judge may be in the test area and may score the dogs independently, but the trainee Judge's scores shall not be considered in determining whether a dog passes or fails. They may listen as the Judge explains the results of the test to the participants. Only one trainee Judge may be permitted in the test area at onetime.
- 2.4.2 Trainee Judges score sheets shall not be distributed to participants and must be filed with the Test Secretary at the conclusion of the test.

#### 2.5. Retesting

- 2.5.1 If, in a Judge's opinion, a dog's performance was prejudiced by peculiar and unusual conditions, the dog may be retested either immediately or later in the day at the discretion of the Judge.

#### 2.6. Scoring, Announcement of Score (Amended 02/22)

- 2.6.1 The tests shall be scored on a pass (qualifying) or fail (non-qualifying) basis in accord with the qualifying performance descriptions in Chapter 4 of these Rules.

## CHAPTER 3

### Classes, Qualifying Scores, Awarding of Titles

#### **3.1. Classes (Amended 10/6, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 3.1.1 Clubs may offer any or all classes at events. All classes are open to all eligible dogs (see 1.4) except as specified in 3.4.
- 3.1.2 Classes are run in the order determined by the Test Committee.

#### **3.2. Earthdog Instinct Test Class and Title (EIC) (Amended 02/22))**

- 3.2.1 In order to be recorded as having an Earthdog Instinct Certificate, a dog must be registered in the Dogs Australia Register and must have a record of having qualified in the Earthdog Instinct Test in two (2) Dogs Australia tests under two different judges.
- 3.2.2 Upon completion of these requirements, a Dogs Australia Earthdog Instinct Certificate (EIC) will be issued to the owner and the dog shall be identified with an Earthdog Instinct Certificate in all official Dogs Australia records by the suffix title (EIC).

#### **3.3. Junior Earthdog Class and Title (JE) (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 3.3.1 The Junior Earthdog class is open to all eligible dogs (see 1.4).
- 3.3.2 In order to be recorded as a Junior Earthdog, a dog must be registered in the Dogs Australia Register and must have a record of having qualified in the Junior Earthdog test in two (2) Dogs Australia club tests under two different Judges.
- 3.3.3 Upon completion of these requirements, a Dogs Australia Junior Earthdog (JE) certificate will be issued to the owner and the dog shall be identified as a Junior Earthdog in all official Dogs Australia records by the suffix title (JE), which shall supersede the EIC title. **(Amended 10/12, 6.9)**
- 3.3.4 A dog that has been recorded as a Junior Earthdog may continue to enter the Junior Earthdog test, but no further Junior Earthdog certificates will be issued.

#### **3.4. Senior Earthdog Class and Title (SE) (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1)**

- 3.4.1 The Senior Earthdog class is open only to dogs that have acquired the Junior Earthdog title.
- 3.4.2 In order to be recorded as a Senior Earthdog, a dog must be registered in the Dogs Australia Register and must have a record of having qualified in the Senior Earthdog test at three (3) Dogs Australia club tests under two different Judges.
- 3.4.3 Upon completion of these requirements, a Dogs Australia Senior Earthdog (SE) certificate will be issued to the owner and the dog shall be identified as a Senior Earthdog in all official Dogs Australia records by the suffix title SE, which shall supersede the JE title.
- 3.4.4 Dogs that have qualified in the Senior Earthdog test at a Dogs Australia test are ineligible to enter Junior Earthdog tests.

#### **3.5. Master Earthdog Class and Title (ME) (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1)**

- 3.5.1 The Master Earthdog class is open only to dogs that have acquired the Senior Earthdog title.
- 3.5.2 In order to be recorded as a Master Earthdog, a dog must be registered in the Dogs Australia Register and must have a record of having qualified in the Master Earthdog test at four (4) Dogs Australia club hunting tests under two different Judges.



3.5.3 Upon completion of these requirements, a Dogs Australia Master Earthdog (ME) certificate will be issued to the owner and the dog will be identified as a Master Earthdog in all official Dogs Australia records by the suffix title ME which shall supersede any Dogs Australia earthdog test title that may have been previously earned.

3.5.4 Dogs that have qualified in a Master Earthdog test at a Dogs Australia club test are ineligible to enter Junior Earthdog tests.

**3.6. Earthdog Champion Title ED. CH.  
(Amended 10/13 – 6.8, Amended 03/04 – correct errors, 02/22)**

3.6.1 The Earthdog Champion Title is open only to dogs that have acquired the Master Earthdog title.

3.6.2 In order to be recorded as an Earthdog Champion, a dog must have a record of having qualified in the Master Earthdog Test a further 5 times, and in the Senior Earthdog Test a further 5 times. All of these qualifications must have been received after an application has been lodged for recognition of the Master Earthdog title with the member body in the state or territory in which the registered owner/s reside. The Earthdog Champion qualifications must have been received under at least two different judges.

3.6.3 Upon completion of these requirements, a Dogs Australia Earthdog Champion certificate will be issued to the owner and the dog will be identified as an Earthdog Champion in all official Dogs Australia records by the prefix title ED. CH which shall supersede any Dogs Australia earthdog test title that may have been previously earned. (Note it does not supersede Strong Dog titles).

**3.7 Earthdog Grand Champion Title ED. GR. CH. (Amended 02/22)**

3.7.1 The Earthdog Grand Champion Title is open only to dogs that have acquired the Earthdog Champion Title.

3.7.2 In order to be recorded as an Earthdog Grand Champion, a dog must have a record of having qualified in the Master Earthdog Test a further 7 times, and in the Senior Earthdog Test a further 7 times. These passes must have been achieved at the same *test* (i.e., the ME and SE passes occur during the same event this is called a Double Q). All of these qualifications must have been received after an application has been lodged for recognition of the Earthdog Champion title with the member body in the state or territory in which the registered owner/s reside. The Earthdog Grand Champion qualifications must have been received under at least three different judges.

3.7.2.1 A Double Q qualification is attained when a dog qualifies in both the Master Earthdog Class and the Senior Earthdog Class in the same Earthdog Test. A single qualification certificate will be awarded which shall be noted as Master/Senior Class Double Q.

3.7.2.2 Where multiple tests are conducted on the same day, in order to attain a Double Q, the dog must qualify in the Master and Senior class in the SAME test. If the dog qualifies in either Master or Senior in one test, and then goes on to qualify in the other class in the following test(s) it is not awarded a Double Q.

3.7.3 Upon completion of these requirements, a Dogs Australia Earthdog Grand Champion certificate will be issued to the owner and the dog will be identified as an Earthdog Grand Champion in all official Dogs Australia records by the prefix title ED. GR. CH.

## CHAPTER 4

### Den Specification, Running and Judging, Test and Performance Descriptions

#### 4.1. Test Area Conditions and Dimensions (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)

- 4.1.1 The test area for the Earthdog Instinct Test shall be no less than 12 metres x 12 metres (40 feet by 40 feet). The den shall be situated in the test area in a way that fences do not guide or hinder dogs from finding and entering the den.
- 4.1.2 The test area(s) for all tests shall be of a size sufficient to contain the dens, with no portion of the den including the point of release less than 6 metres (20 feet) from the edge of the test area.
- 4.1.3 Clubs should use a barrier or otherwise demarcate a test area to prevent spectator interference with the work of the dogs.
- 4.1.4 The earth shall be prepared to look as natural as possible. Brush and other natural material may be used to prepare the earth but should not block the entrance to the earth (except in the Master Earthdog test). The entrance should look as inviting to the dog as possible. The test area for all tests shall be clearly marked, shall not contain unsafe conditions and shall be free of dangerous materials.
- 4.1.5 The liners for the dens shall be constructed to ensure a safe and danger free environment for dogs, handlers and Judges. The basic den construction allows for a tunnel approximately 22.8 centimetres x 22.8 centimetres (9 inches by 9 inches), which is a large enough for all dogs of earthdog type.
- 4.1.6 The liners shall be set in the ground or on top of the ground. When the liners are set in the ground, the top surface must be flush with the ground and must be covered in material, so it appears natural. When the liners are placed on top of the ground, they must be fully covered with natural materials so that none of the liner is visible. In both cases the appearance should be as natural as possible to simulate an actual den.
- 4.1.7 The dens shall be located so as to minimise outside distractions. On the day of the test no dog shall be allowed to enter the earth unless competing until the conclusion of the tests. The Judge shall oversee the placement of the liners and scenting of the den on the day of the test. Only the dog currently being tested shall be allowed in the test area. Under no circumstances shall more than one dog be allowed in the test area at any time. Spectators shall be allowed outside the test area provided that they are quiet and do not distract the dogs. The dogs shall be allowed in the area immediately adjacent to the test area. The dogs waiting to be tested shall be kept at least 30 metres (100 feet) approximately from the perimeter of the test area, in a holding area so designated.
- 4.1.8 The dens shall be scented with the quarry's scent. In the Earthdog Instinct Test and Junior Earthdog tests, the entire length of the den must be scented no more than one hour before the start of the test. In the Senior and Master Earthdog tests, the scent line shall be laid only on the primary quarry trail.
- 4.1.9 Extreme care must be taken not to allow false trails to receive any scent, which may unnecessarily confuse the dogs. The Judge shall be responsible for overseeing the correct scenting of the dens.
- 4.1.10 The scent trail shall be laid from the quarry to a point 61 centimetres (2 feet) past the entrance of the den. If, in the opinion of the Judge, the scent trail has weakened due to the number of dogs entering the earth, the scent trail may be re-scented. Care should be taken by those scenting the earth to lay the scent trail in a manner consistent with real life conditions.
- 4.1.11 In Earthdog Instinct Certificate, Junior Earthdog, Senior Earthdog and Master Earthdog, the bars that prevent the dog from accessing the quarry must be made of wooden dowl. Metal is not acceptable.

## **4.2. Quarry Requirements and Care (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 4.2.1 This must satisfy the requirements of the State Government Act pertaining to Animal Welfare that applies at the time. Non-live quarry should appear as natural as possible; examples include carcasses, skins, tails, fake quarry (with or without sound/mechanisation). Food items are not acceptable as quarry (it is not permitted to use mince, chicken or "treats"). All quarry is used at the discretion of the Judge.

## **4.3. Qualifying Performances**

- 4.3.1 The Judge's certification of a qualifying performance for any dog constitutes certification to the Dogs Australia that the dog on this occasion has evidenced abilities at least in accordance with minimum standards and that the abilities demonstrated justify the awarding of the title for the class. A qualifying score must never be awarded to a dog, which has not exhibited abilities that meet the minimum requirements.

## **4.4. Earthdog Instinct Test (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 4.4.1 This test is a simple instinct test requiring no exposure to earthwork. It is not a prerequisite for the Junior Earthdog Test except in the case of Associate Registered dogs (see 1.4 Eligibility of Dogs, Paragraph 4).

- 4.4.2 Young dogs, dogs with no previous working experience and junior handlers are encouraged to enter. In as much as it may be the first den experience for some dogs, the Judge and the handler shall do their utmost to assure that it is a positive experience for the dog. The Judge shall be allowed to use discretion in encouraging the dog by scratching or moving the quarry, or some other method felt necessary to get a true reaction from the dog.

- 4.4.3 The dog shall be brought to the test area entrance on a lead. The Steward shall instruct the handler to remove the collar and lead and the handler shall carry the dog to the starting marker. The judge must make sure that each handler understands the test requirements before starting the dog.

## **4.5. Earthdog Instinct Test – Den Design**

- 4.5.1 The den for the test shall have standard liners approximately 22.8 centimetres x 22.8 centimetres (9 inches), set so as to provide a tunnel approximately 3 metres (10 feet) in length with one 90 degree turn. The handler shall release the dog from a point directly in front of the den, approximately 3 metres (10 feet) from the entrance. The Judge and Steward shall attempt to provide as little distraction as possible.

## **4.6. Earthdog Instinct Test – Qualifying Performance (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/212)**

- 4.6.1 The Judge shall direct the handler to release the dog. The handler shall release the dog from a point no higher than waist level. Placing the dog on the ground before release is permitted. Throwing the dog in the direction of the den entrance shall not be permitted and shall cause the dog to fail. The handler may provide unlimited verbal encouragement and may move around the test area. The handler may not enter the hide, touch the dog or any equipment, or reprimand the dog

- 4.6.2 The Judge or the Steward shall time the test. The dog shall be allowed 2 minutes from the time it is released to when it begins working the quarry. The dog shall not qualify if it requires over 2 minutes to reach the quarry.

- 4.6.3 The dog may exit and re-enter the earth during the time allowed, provided it has not started working the quarry.

- 4.6.4 Once the dog begins working the quarry, the Judge or Steward shall begin timing the working time and shall continue timing until the dog quits or the time limit is reached.

- 4.6.5 Once the dog begins working it must work continuously for 30 seconds. Work is defined as digging, barking, growling, lunging, biting at the quarry or any other action which, in the opinion of the Judge, indicates the dog's interest in the quarry. Any definite break in the dog's work shall stop the time, but a change from one form of work to another shall not stop the time as long as the dog continues working in a natural manner.
- 4.6.6 If, in the Judge's opinion, the dog is not reacting to the presence of the quarry, the Judge may attempt to interest the dog with no penalty to the dog. This may include shaking the quarry; tapping or scratching the den liner or use of a noisemaker.
- 4.6.7 Dogs which reach the quarry within two minutes and work continuously for 30 seconds shall qualify.
- 4.6.8 At the completion of the test, the Judge shall announce the names of those dogs which have qualified. The test-giving Club may award prizes or trophies to the dogs that have qualified.

#### **4.7. Junior Earthdog Test (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1)**

- 4.7.1 The evaluation of a dog's ability can never be precise. However, the primary purpose of the small Terriers and Dachshunds is to pursue quarry to ground, hold the game and alert the hunter where to dig, or to bolt. Whether the dog is successful in its primary purpose is determined by its possession of a unique set of natural abilities. This test is designed to help evaluate these natural abilities.
- 4.7.2 The test shall consist of two parts, (a) the approach to the quarry and (b) working the quarry. In order to qualify, a dog must pass both parts of the test.

#### **4.8. Junior Earthdog Test – Den Design (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1)**

- 4.8.1 The den for the Junior Earthdog Test shall be constructed using the standard liners approximately 22.8 centimetres x 22.8 centimetres (9 inches by 9 inches), set in such a manner as to provide a tunnel approximately 9 metres (30 feet) in length with three 90 degree turns. The tunnel shall have an entrance at one end and a quarry area at the other end, which shall provide the Judge a view of the dog during the working portion of the test. The dogs should be removed from the den by way of the exit provided at the quarry end of the den. The den shall have no additional entrances, exits or dead ends.

#### **4.9. Junior Earthdog Test – Qualifying Performance (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 4.9.1 Each dog shall be brought to the test area entrance by the handler who shall remove all leads, collars, harnesses, etc before entering the test area. The handler shall carry the dog into the test area and stand at the designated starting point, a point directly in front of the den entrance at a distance of approximately 3 metres (10 feet). Upon instructions from the Judge, the handler shall release the dog. The handler may provide unlimited verbal encouragement. The dog should be released no higher than waist level and may be placed on the ground prior to release. Throwing the dog in the direction of the den entrance shall not be permitted and shall cause the dog to fail.
- 4.9.2 The timing of the dog shall start when the dog is released by the handler. The dog has 90 seconds to reach the quarry, provided that it is continuously searching during that time. It may enter and leave the den without penalty, but must reach the quarry within the 90 second time limit. Dogs reaching the quarry within the 90 second time limit shall pass this portion of the test. The handler may provide unlimited verbal encouragement. The handler must not move past the den entrance, may not touch the dog or any equipment, or reprimand the dog.
- 4.9.3 Once the dog has reached the quarry it must remain with the quarry until the test is completed. Should the dog leave the quarry area during the test period it shall fail. The Judge shall allow the dog 30 seconds from the time it reached the quarry to begin working. If the dog fails to begin working within 30 seconds the dog shall fail this portion of the test.

- 4.9.4 The work must begin and for the most part continue at a point within approximately 30 centimetres (1 foot) from the quarry. Once the dog begins working the quarry it must work continuously for 45 seconds. Work shall be defined as barking, growling, digging or any form of activity which, in the Judge's opinion, indicated the dog's interest in the quarry. A change from one form of work to another shall not be considered as a break. Lunging and clearing dirt shall be considered work, as long as the dog stays with the quarry. Intense staring and / or sniffing the quarry should not be considered working. If in the opinion of the judge the dog is not reacting to the presence of the non-live quarry, the judge may attempt to interest the dog with no penalty to the dog. This may include manipulating the non-live quarry or the use of noisemakers or voice encouragement.
- 4.9.5 Dogs, which work the quarry continuously for 45 seconds, shall pass this portion of the test. Upon completion of the test, the Judge should allow the handler to retrieve the dog from the earth. The dog should be removed by way of the top opening at the quarry end of the earth. The dog shall be carried from the test area as soon as possible and not be allowed to investigate the test area.
- 4.9.6 The Judge shall mark the judging form with the time indicating whether the dog passed or failed and may make written comments as provided on the form. The completed judging forms may be held by either the Judge's Steward or the Test Steward and collected only by the Test Secretary.
- 4.9.7 At the completion of the test, the Judge shall announce the names of those dogs which have qualified. The test-giving Club may award prizes or trophies to the dogs that have qualified.

#### **4.10. Senior Earthdog Test**

- 4.10.1 This test is designed to present the experienced hunter with a more realistic den situation. In the wild few natural earths are simple tunnels, they are complex, multiple entrance designs. The dog must be able to not only follow the quarry to ground and mark the game for the handler, but also be able to determine the correct direction taken by the quarry. If the quarry has bolted (removed) the dog must leave the den when called by the hunter.
- 4.10.2 The Senior Test shall consist of three parts:
1. The approach to the quarry
  2. Working the quarry
  3. Leaving the den on command

#### **4.11. Senior Earthdog Test – Den Designs**

- 4.11.1 The den shall be constructed using the standard liners approximately 22.8 centimetres x 22.8 centimetres (9 inches by 9 inches). The liners shall be set in such a manner as to provide a main tunnel approximately 9 metres (30 feet) in length with three 90 degree turns, a false exit and false den. The false exit shall be approximately 2 metres (7 feet) in length with one 90 degree turn and set in such a manner as to not be visible to the dog or handler when standing at the point of release.
- 4.11.2 The false den shall be a side tunnel with no exit, approximately 1.2 metres (4 feet) in length with a 30.5 centimetre x 20.3 centimetre (12 x 8 inch) door located at the top not less than 7.6 centimetres (3 inches) from the end of the tunnel. Directly beneath the door shall be a pile of bedding material, i.e. straw, dry grass, heavily scented to simulate the litter/bedding area found in most natural dens.
- 4.11.3 The false exit and false den shall be set at the second and third 90 degree turns off the main tunnel, the order and placement of which shall be at the club's discretion.
- 4.11.4 The entrance to the main tunnel shall be marked at a mound of dirt at least 10.1 centimetres (4 inches) higher than the top of the liner, thus providing a steep entrance to the den of at least 45 degree incline into the earth. The dirt mound may be camouflaged by natural cover, provided the cover does not restrict entrance to the earth.

#### **4.12. Senior Earthdog Test – Qualifying Performance (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 4.12.1 Each dog shall be brought to the test area entrance by the handler who shall remove all leads, collars, harnesses etc before entering the test area. The handler shall carry the dog into the area and shall stand at the release point designated by the Judge (a point no less than 4.5 metres (15 feet) from the edge of the area, at a point marked by the Judge. This release point shall be approximately 6 metres (20 feet) from the entrance to the earth). Upon instruction from the Judge, the handler shall release the dog. The dog shall be released not higher than waist level and may be placed on the ground before release. Throwing the dog in the direction of the den entrance shall not be permitted and shall cause the dog to fail. The handler may provide unlimited verbal encouragement. The handler may not move past the den entrance, may not touch the dog or any equipment, or reprimand the dog.
- 4.12.2 Timing of the dog for the approach portion of the test shall start when the dog is released by the handler. The dog has 90 seconds from the time of release to reach the quarry, provided that it is continuously searching during that time. The dog must initially enter the den through the main entrance, but may then enter and leave the den, provided it has not reached the quarry.
- 4.12.3 Once the dog has reached the quarry, it must remain with the quarry until the working portion of the test is completed. Should the dog leave the quarry area during the test it shall fail. The Judge shall allow the dog 15 seconds from the time it reached the quarry to begin working. If the dog fails to begin working within 15 seconds the dog shall not qualify.
- 4.12.4 Work shall be defined as barking, growling, digging, or any other form of activity which, in the Judge's opinion, indicates the dog's interest in the quarry. A change from one form of work to another shall not be considered as a break. Lunging and clearing dirt shall be considered work. Intense staring/or sniffing the quarry should not be considered working.
- 4.12.5 Once the dog has started to work, it must work the quarry continuously for 60 seconds. –, the judge may attempt to interest the dog with no penalty to the dog. This may include manipulation of the quarry or the use of noisemakers or voice encouragement. Dogs that work for less than the required time shall not pass.
- 4.12.6 Once the dog has completed the working portion of the test, the Judge shall seal the viewing area, remove the quarry a sufficient distance so as not to be a distraction. The Judge shall then instruct the handler to recall the dog. The handler may go to the entrance of the den to call the dog and may use a whistle. No bait, hides, noisemakers or toys may be used to recall the dog from the den. The handler is permitted to reach into the entrance of the den to retrieve the dog.
- 4.12.7 Dogs, which exit the den (from any exit) and are retrieved by the handler within 90 seconds from the recall, shall pass this portion of the test. The handler may move around the test area, calling their dog, they may not interfere with the den liners, hide or quarry. Dogs which exit the den in more than 90 seconds shall not pass.
- 4.12.8 The dog shall be carried from the test area as soon as possible and should not be allowed to investigate the test area.
- 4.12.9 Dogs must pass all three parts of the test in order to qualify.
- 4.12.10 The Judge shall mark the judging form to indicated pass or fail and may make written comments as provided on the form. The completed judging forms may be held by either the Judge's Steward or the Test Steward and collected only the Test Secretary.
- 4.12.11 At the completion of the test, the Judge shall announce the names of those dogs, which have qualified. The test-giving club may award prizes or trophies to the dogs that have qualified.

#### **4.13. Master Earthdog Test (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1)**

- 4.13.1 This test is designed to come as close as possible to a natural hunting situation. On a natural hunt the dog is expected to locate the den and enter without encouragement. It should remain in the den working the quarry in a manner that will allow the hunter to locate both the dog and the quarry.

#### **4.14. Master Earthdog Test – Den Design (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 4.14.1 The suggested Senior earthdog tunnel is used for the Master Test with modifications discussed below.
- 4.14.2 The den entrance shall not be readily visible and shall be blocked with an object that is able to be moved by the dog to gain entrance to the den (e.g., a hessian flap, loose grass, plastic strips, etc.). A scent line of approximately 6 metres (20 feet) shall lead to the entrance. An unscented false den entrance (visible to dogs) is located midway along the scent line, at least 1.5 metres (5 feet) from the scent line.
- 4.14.3 There must be any two of the following obstacles located in the tunnel, neither of which shall be placed within 1.5 metres (5 feet) of the entrance or the quarry:
- (a) The constriction point consists of boards or slats approximately 3.8 centimetres wide (1.5 inches) and 45.6 centimetres (18 inches) long placed opposite each other to narrow the tunnel opening to approximately 15.2 centimetres (6 inches). The ends of the boards or slats should be bevelled or rounded.
  - (b) The obstruction should be 15.2 centimetres (6 inches) diameter PVC pipe placed crossways in the tunnel and loosely mounted on a 2.54 centimetre (1 inch) dowel so that it is movable (it should move approximately 6.3 centimetres (2.5 inches) each way). The portion of the liner above the obstruction (22.8 centimetres (9 inches) on each side of the pipe's centre line for a total of 45.6 centimetres (18 inches) is elevated at least 15.2 centimetres (6 inches) over the main liner and naturally covered or otherwise camouflaged.
  - (c) The tendril obstruction consists of a board 9 inches (22.8 centimetres) wide by 18 inches (45.6 centimetres) long, through which has been threaded a minimum of 30 (thirty) tendrils of 9 inches (22.8 centimetres) in length. The tendrils are made of thin, flexible tubing no more than 5mm in width. This board is to replace the roof of a section of tunnel, with the tendrils hanging vertically.
  - (d) The sand mound obstruction consists of sand dampened with water until it holds form and built into a mound approximately 9 inches (22.8 centimetres) wide and 6 inches (15.2 centimetres) high, leaving a gap of approximately 3 inches (7.6 centimetres) between the top of the mound and the roof of the tunnel.

#### **4.15. Master Earthdog Test – Qualifying Performance (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

- 4.15.1 The handler is positioned with the steward, and they proceed in the direction of the scent line from a release point approximately 50-100 metres from the real den entrance. The steward and handler should reach the den in approximately 60 seconds. Dogs barking at the false den cannot qualify. The dog must indicate the real tunnel entrance before the Judge or Steward reaches the tunnel entrance. A second steward (or trainee judge) may be positioned in the test area to observe the dog indicate the tunnel entrance, this is especially important when the dog reaches the den entrance before the steward or when the judge is unable to see the den entrance from within the hide. If the dog does not indicate the tunnel entrance it cannot qualify, but can continue to be tested. Once the dog has indicated the den entrance, the second steward (or trainee judge) may remove the entrance obstruction. The handler may provide unlimited verbal encouragement. The handler may not move past the den entrance, may not touch the dog or any equipment or reprimand the dog.

- 4.15.2 The entrance obstruction is now removed, if it is still in place.
- 4.15.3 A Dog must reach the quarry within 90 seconds and work the quarry for 60 seconds for non-live quarry - 90 seconds when live quarry is permitted to be used. The dog must initially enter the den through the main entrance, but may then enter and leave the den through either the false exit or the main entrance, provided it has not reached the quarry. When the dog is working the quarry the Judge or Steward will create a distraction in the working area by lightly striking the top of the working area for 30 seconds with a piece of wood to simulate digging sounds. If in the opinion of the Judge the dog is not reacting to the presence of the non-live quarry, the judge may attempt to interest the dog with no penalty to the dog. This may include manipulating the non-live quarry or the use of noisemakers or voice encouragement.
- 4.15.4 The dog should continue working and ignore the overhead distraction. The handler then removes the dog from the working area without injury to the handler.
- 4.15.5 Dogs must pass all parts of the test in order to qualify.
- 4.15.6 The Judges shall mark the judging form to indicate pass or fail and may make written comments as provided on the form. The completed form may be held by the Judge's Steward or the Test Steward and collected by the Test Secretary. At the completion of the test the Judge shall announce the names of those dogs who have qualified. The test-giving Club may award prizes or trophies to the dogs that have qualified.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Strong Dog Earthdog Test (Amended 02/22)**

#### **5.1 General**

- 5.1.1 The Strong Dog Earthdog Test is designed to test an earthdog's ability to draw a small quarry from a den.
- 5.1.2 The test shall consist of two parts:
  - 1 Approaching the quarry.
  - 2 Drawing the quarry from the den to be retrieved by handler
- 5.1.3 The quarry shall consist of a weighted pelt.

#### **5.2 Strong Dog Instinct Test**

- 5.2.1 The Strong Dog Instinct Title is open to all eligible breeds and associate registered dogs of Earthdog type.
- 5.2.2 The test shall be conducted using a modified EIC earthdog den design, i.e. 3 metres (10 feet) in length with one curved 90 degree turn. The dens may be either buried or above ground. The weighted quarry shall be placed at the end of the den and the full length of the den scented. The weight of the pelt shall be between 1kg and 2kg. The dog shall be given the opportunity to identify the scent just prior to being entered by the handler. The handler shall enter the dog at the entrance to the den and the dog shall be allowed two minutes to locate the quarry. The dog may give voice while undertaking the test. The dog shall be allowed five minutes to draw the quarry to the entrance of the den where the handler shall retrieve the quarry from the dog. The handler may give verbal commands to the dog throughout the test.
- 5.2.3 The dog must complete both parts of the test within the time limits in order to qualify.

#### **5.3 Strong Dog Instinct Title (SDI)**



5.3.1 The Strong Dog Instinct Title (*SDI*) shall be awarded to any dog which qualifies on two separate occasions under at least two different earth dog judges.

5.3.2 The Judges shall mark the judging form to indicate pass or fail and may make written comments as provided on the form. The completed form may be held by the Judge's Steward or the Test Steward and collected by the Test Secretary. At the completion of the test the Judge shall announce the names of those dogs who have qualified. The test-giving Club may award prizes or trophies to the dogs that have qualified.

#### 5.4 **Strong Dog Junior Test (SDJ)**

5.4.1 The test is eligible for dogs who already hold their SDI title.

5.4.2 The test shall be conducted using the normal junior earthdog den design, i.e. nine metres long with three *curved* ninety degree turns. The dens may be either buried or above ground. The weighted quarry shall be placed at the end of the den and the full length of the den scented. The dog shall be given the opportunity to identify the scent just prior to being entered by the handler. The handler shall enter the dog at the entrance to the den and the dog shall be allowed one minute to locate the quarry (2-3kg). The dog shall be allowed five minutes to draw the quarry to the entrance of the den where the handler shall retrieve the quarry from the dog. The handler may give verbal commands to the dog throughout the test.

#### 5.5 **Strong Dog Junior Title (SDJ)**

5.5.1 The dog must complete both parts of the test within five minutes in order to qualify.

5.5.2 The title shall be awarded to any dog which qualifies on two separate occasions under a minimum of two different earth dog judges.

5.5.3 Upon completion of these requirements, a Dogs Australia Strong Dog Junior certificate will be issued to the owner and the dog will be identified as a Strong Dog Junior in all official Dogs Australia records by the suffix title SDJ. Which shall be held alongside any earthdog title (i.e. it does not supersede EIC, JE, SE, or ME). It shall supersede the SDI title.

#### 5.6 **Strong Dog Excellent Test (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/22)**

5.6.1 The test shall be conducted using the normal Junior earthdog den design, i.e. nine metres {thirty feet} long with three curved ninety degree turns. The dens may be either buried or above ground. The weighted quarry (3-4 kg) shall be placed at the end of the den and the full length of the den scented. The dog shall be given the opportunity to identify the scent just prior to being entered by the handler. The handler shall enter the dog at the entrance to the den and the dog shall be allowed one minute to locate the quarry. The dog may give voice while undertaking the test. The dog shall be allowed five minutes to draw the quarry to the entrance of the den where the handler shall retrieve the quarry from the dog. The handler may give verbal commands to the dog throughout the test.

#### 5.7 **Strong Dog Excellent Title (SDE) (Amended 10/16, 6.10.1, 02/221)**

5.7.1 The dog must complete both parts of the test within the time limits in order to qualify.

5.7.2 The title shall be awarded to any dog which qualifies on three separate occasions under at least two different earth dog judges.

5.7.3 Upon completion of these requirements, an Dogs Australia Strong Dog Excellent certificate will be issued to the owner and the dog will be identified as a Strong Dog Excellent in all official Dogs Australia records by the suffix title SDE, which shall be held alongside any earthdog title (i.e. it does not supersede EIC, JE, SE, ME, or ED Ch.). It shall supersede the SDJ title.

# EARTHDOG INSTINCT TEST - JUDGING SHEET

Club .....

Judge ..... Date .....

| Cat Number | Approach To Quarry (120 sec max) | Start Work Within (30 sec) | Works Quarry (30 sec min) | Final Result (Pass/Fail) | Notes |
|------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|-------|
|            |                                  | N                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | O                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | T                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  |                            |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | A                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | P                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | P                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | L                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | I                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | C                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | A                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | B                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | L                          |                           |                          |       |
|            |                                  | E                          |                           |                          |       |

**Judges Signature**

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