MINUTES of a meeting of the BOARD OF DIRECTORS held on
Wednesday 14 October 2026 commencing at **1.00pm**

DISTRIBUTION:	C Rafton	A McIlrath **(by Teams)**
	L Brand	S McFadden
	N Curwen	S Hannigan
	G Vernon	T Hofman **(by Teams)**
	J Bryson	A Gilson
	R Sinclair	D Harbin
	K Hedberg BVSc	C Dwyer

IN ATTENDANCE: V Gagan-Wilson (Company Secretary)
S Buddee (Committee Secretary/Examinations Administrator)
D Crofts (Animal Welfare & Community Liaison Officer) – **by Teams**

The President welcomed new Directors, Deborah Harbin and Crystal Dwyer.

IN CAMERA

1. Opening & Procedural Matters

- **Welcome and Apologies**
  - **Apologies**

MOVED G Vernon SECONDED K Hedberg BVSc
THAT the following apologies be **received**:-
- P Brown

CARRIED

Meeting recessed for a break to fix electronics @ 1.07pm
Meeting resumed @ 1.12pm

- **Recording of Board Meeting**

MOVED L Brand SECONDED K Hedberg BVSc
THAT Directors **note** that, in accordance with the resolution of the Board at Item 5.1 of the Board of Directors meeting held on 8 December 2021, **this Board meeting is being recorded** for the purposes of confirmation of the Minutes and once confirmed at a future Meeting the recording will then be deleted.

CARRIED

- **Declarations of Conflicts of Interest**
  - **Director T Hofman** made the following statement:-
    "For the minutes, as a current aspirant Judge, I have a personal conflict of interest regarding the outcome of the motions in the CJTP minutes, and I will be abstaining **from the vote** when the motions are put forward. That notwithstanding, and to be clear - I will be speaking on it from a purely governance perspective, as the motions as currently written introduce a mandatory process without defining the administrative consequences of non-compliance. To prevent future appeals against DOGS NSW, the text needs a clear remedy framework to support to the motion. I cannot vote on a process that alters my own engagement as a trainee – as a director I do have a duty of care and diligence and pointing out what I believe is a missing 'consequence' is doing my duty to ensure the board makes an informed, robust decision.

- **Receive all Reports on the Agenda**

MOVED A McIlrath SECONDED S McFadden
THAT all Reports on the Agenda be **received**.

CARRIED

MOVED N Curwen SECONDED L Brand
THAT standing orders be suspended to bring forward the Dogs Australia October 2026 AGM & Board Meeting Agenda to be discussed at this time.

CARRIED

- **AGENDA – Dogs Australia 2026 October AGM & Board Meeting**
  - Annual General Meeting
  - Board of Directors Meeting
    - RATG Rules

Directors sought information on the appointment of the new ANKC Ltd President. The DOGS NSW Chair advised the meeting that the appointment of a new President will be dealt with at the February 2027 Special Board Meeting at which time the appointment will be made in accordance with the Constitution/Articles of Association of the ANKC td which is that each Director of each State Member Body can nominate a person who is not a current Director on the ANKC Ltd Board but must be a Director of the actual State Member Body to take the position. The nominations are then open for the Directors at the meeting to decide.

MOVED K Hedberg BVSc SECONDED G Vernon
THAT the Board allow the DOGS NSW Delegates on the Dogs Australia Board to decide on the Agenda Items at the meeting.

CARRIED

2. Emerging Issues (Risk, Culture, & Updates)

Meeting recessed @ 1.37pm
Meeting resumed @ 2.05pm

3. Judicial Matters

4. General Business - In Camera

T Hofman left the meeting @ 2.57pm
T Hofman returned to the meeting @ 3.25pm

- **Finance Minutes** – T Hofman
  - **Scent Work Trailer**
    Director T Hofman stated that she was pleased to note that the funds for purchase of the Scent Work trailer will come from the Scent Work funds and not the Office.

  - **Regional Grants**

    RECOMMENDATION 1 – Item 6.2.7: Financial Assistance – Regional Grants
    THAT the proposal for Regional Grants be **REFERRED** back to Board for clarification as to what they envision the purpose of the grant would be, the intended recipients and the proposed amounts.

    Director G Vernon advised the meeting that this was a work in progress. The intention was for an amount of $5,000.00, once per year and once per Region, be allocated to each Region to conduct Family Fun Days/Community Events to promote responsibly dog ownership.

- **Aggressive Dog Minutes** – T Hofman

N Curwen left the meeting @ 3.42pm
N Curwen rejoined the meeting @ 3.44pm

MOVED G Vernon SECONDED L Brand
THAT, In the absence of a Chair of the Aggressive Dog Committee, aggressive dog matters are to go directly to the Board for consideration.

CARRIED

- **Agility Minutes** – T Hofman

  NOTE FOR BOARD - Item 3.1: Recording of Committee & Working Party Meetings
  The Committee seeks clarification regarding the rationale, purpose, privacy arrangements and practical implementation of the resolution?

  The Board advised that the intent of the motion was that "all" meetings are to be set up by the Office, not the Chairperson, as a situation had occurred where the Chairperson had not provided a copy of the recording to the Office or the Committee to verify, or otherwise, the true and accurate record of the meeting.

  This matter will be **REFERRED** back to the next Board meeting for further clarification.

  RECOMMENDATION 1 – Item 4.2: Amendment to Regulations Part II-Show, Clause 5.7
  THAT DOGS NSW Regulations Part 2 - Show, Section 5.7 remain unchanged.

  RATIONALE:
  The current Section 5.7 was introduced following ongoing complaints concerning inequitable access to trial information and entry opportunities. Removing or substantially weakening those requirements may result in similar concerns and complaints recurring

  The Company Secretary gave background on the purpose of the implementation of this Clause, ie, being to ensure that all interested parties were privy to the relevant information to allow them to choose whether they enter an event, or not. The Board accepted that advice and, consequently, agreed with the Recommendation of the Agility Committee.

- **Sporting Minutes – Recording of Meetings** – T Hofman

  NOTE FOR BOARD - Item 3.1: Recording of Committee & Working Party Meetings
  The Committee seeks clarification regarding the rationale, purpose, privacy arrangements and practical implementation of the resolution?

  The Board advised that the intent of the motion was that "all" meetings are to be set up by the Office, not the Chairperson, as a situation had occurred where the Chairperson had not provided a copy of the recording to the Office or the Committee to verify, or otherwise, the true and accurate record of the meeting.

  This matter will be **REFERRED** back to the next Board meeting for further clarification.

- **Sporting Minutes – Approval of Judges Training Applications** – T Hofman

  NOTE FOR BOARD – Item 4.1: Committee Approval of Judges Training Applications
  The Company Secretary advised the meeting that it was general practice that a Committee approves its own Judges Training Applications and Examination Results and simply minutes those decisions/results in the Committee Minutes which are then submitted to the Board for ratification at which time the Board simply endorses those decisions

  Given that explanation, the Board endorsed the current process of Committees approving their own Judges Training applications and examination results.

- **Sporting Minutes** – T Hofman

  RECOMMENDATIONS 5, 6, 7 & 8– Item 8.8: SprintDog™ Levy
  The Board refers the Committee to its most recent resolution, at its August 2026 meeting, as follows:-

  ***THAT** the **$1.00 SprintDog™ levy remain** until January 2027 and to be revised after 1 January 2027.*

  AMENDMENT
  ***THAT** the review set above for 1 January implementation be **DEFERRED** to February 2027 Board Meeting.*

  CARRIED

OPEN MEETING

5. Consent Agenda

- **Previous Minutes**
  - Face to Face Meeting – 10/9/2026
  - Electronic Motion–15/9/2026–Office Closure
- **Directors' Updates**
- **Committee Reports - For Noting and/or Consideration**
  - **OPERATIONS MANAGER'S REPORT**
  - **COMPANY SECRETARY'S REPORT**
  - **ANIMAL WELFARE & COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICER'S REPORT**

- **FINANCE COMMITTEE – 24/9/2026**

  RECOMMENDATION 2 – Item 8.1.1: Financial Statements as @ 30 August 2026
  THAT the Financial Statements as @ 30 August 2026 be approved by the Board of Directors.

- **AGILITY COMMITTEE – 21/9/2026**

- **AGILITY JUDGES COMMITTEE – 6/10/2026**

- **CONFORMATION JUDGES EXAM COMMITTEE - 23/9/2026**

  RECOMMENDATION 1 – Item 3.1: Judge's Permission to Film
  THAT DOGS NSW Regulations Part III- Conformation Judges Education Program, Clause 10 **remain unchanged**.

  RATIONALE:
  Our activities are regulated activities bound by DOGS Australia and DOGS NSW Regulations. A member undertakes to be bound when joining and upon annual renewal, thus making the undertaking a matter of "contractual agreement." The grounds at Orchard Hills are closed during examinations, therefore, the Committee does NOT recommend a change to the regulation.

- **CONFORMATION JUDGES TRAINING COMMITTEE**
  - **Meeting 19/8/206**
  - **Meeting 26/9/2026**

- **GOVERNMENT FRAMEWORK WORKING PARTY – 25/8/2026**

- **LIBRARY & ARCHIVES – 7/9/2026**

- **MEDIA & GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION COMMITTEE – 17/9/2026**

  NOTE FOR BOARD – Item 4.1: NSW Parliament Budget Estimates – Companion Animals
  Legislation progress and proposed amendments
  The Committee discussed the current progress of the legislation, including the proposed amendments and their potential implications.

  Previous engagement
  It was noted that the Committee had previously communicated with members of the Legislative Council regarding the legislation.

Stakeholder consultation
The Committee further noted that they had not consulted DOGS NSW as a stakeholder on the proposed amendments.

Current Legislative Position
The Committee reviewed the current status of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Bill and the likelihood of further amendments before the end of the parliamentary term.

Parliamentary timing constraints
As of 17 September, 40 Bills remained before Parliament, with only 18 sitting days available. Given this limited timeframe, the Committee considered it likely that the Bill will proceed in the form passed by the Upper House and referred to the Lower House.

Legislation progress and proposed amendments
The Committee discussed the current progress of the legislation, including the proposed amendments and their potential implications. There are two (2) sets of amendments proposed by Emma Hurst (Animal Justice Party) where the most concerning amendments cover:-

1. Banning of Surgical AI
2. Classifying animals as sentient beings
3. Dramatically increased staffing requirements
4. Changing the reference to 'dogs' to 'animals'

Mark Banasiak (Shooters Fishers Farmers Party) has also lodged potential amendments, they appear to be favorable towards animals and their owners and the reigning in of some proposed enforcement body powers.

The AJP amendments have the greatest potential for negative outcomes if accepted. Malcolm McDonald was of the opinion that these amendments will not progress.

<u>NOTE FOR BOARD – Item 4.2: POCTA Bill to Inquiry</u>
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS' AMENDMENT (ENFORCEMENT AND OPERATIONAL POWERS) BILL 2026
Email from Mr Steve Courtney expresses his perceived concerns about the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment (Enforcement and Operational Powers) Bill 2026 and specifically calls for further amendments to the Bill beyond what was sent to the Lower House.

There is insufficient time for there to be any of the four (4) suggestions put by Mr Courtney by reason of the fact that the Government has specifically stated that it is their intention to pass the Bill prior to the end of their current sitting.

The Government has very limited time to deal with some 40 current Bills awaiting assent and there is no time to have the matter referred to a Parliamentary inquiry as sought by Mr Courtney. Nor would it be likely for any Member of Legislative Council to interfere with the passage of the Bill that has been referred from the Legislative Council to the Lower House.

Whilst it may be that certain portions of the Bill are unpalatable to Mr Courtney in his capacity as a professional dog trainer, DOGS NSW cannot accept that there is any time for there to be any action taken to amend the Bill prior to the end of the Parliamentary term.

In the event that there is a subsequent Parliamentary Inquiry, then DOGS NSW would no doubt participate as a stakeholder in such an inquiry.

NOTE FOR BOARD – Item 4.2: Next Parliament Sitting Day
The next sitting day is Tuesday 13 October 2026. Currently, they have listed the Bill at No.17 in the Notice Paper, Government Business–Orders of the Day. On the day itself, they can modify the order.

- **OBEDIENCE TRACKING & PERFORMANCE DISCIPLINES COMMITTEE – 15/9/2026**

- **OBEDIENCE TRACKING & PERFORMANCE DISCIPLINES JUDGES COMMITTEE – 11/9/2026**

- **RETRIEVING & FIELD TRIALS COMMITTEE – 17/9/2026**

NOTE FOR BOARD – Item 8.3: National RAFT – Judges Assessment
DOGS NSW RAFT Chair advised National RAFT Committee members via email on 7/9/2026 that "*NSW will continue to retain responsibility for the assessment, nomination and discipline of RAFT Judges*".

RECOMMENDATION 1 – Item 8.5: Thermal Vests in Retrieving Trials
THAT DOGS NSW issue a directive in accordance with Rule 5 of the Rules for the Conduct of Retrieving Trial for Gundogs stating:-

"In order to ensure compliance with NSW Animal Welfare legislation, and that dogs are not unnecessarily exposed to excessive cold, competitors will have the discretion to use a neoprene vest on their dog for the duration of any run requiring the dogs to swim. This shall apply to all Retrieving Trials conducted in NSW including State and National Championships."

- **RNSWCC HEALTH & WELFARE CHARITY – 7/9/2026**

- **SERIOUS ANIMAL WELFARE COMMITTEE – 15/9/2026**

- **SHOW COMMITTEE – 16/9/2026**

- **SPORTING COMMITTEE – 22/9/2026**

RECOMMENDATION 1 – Item 8.2: Earthdog Working Party
THAT the Board approve the Earthdog Working Party's request to conduct a 2027 Judges Training Scheme. The Scheme is proposed to support succession planning and maintain an adequate pool of suitably trained Judges across NSW. It will also assist in reducing reliance on a limited number of existing Judges and interstate appointments.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – Item 8.5: Lure Coursing Working Party
THAT the Board approve the Lure Coursing Competitions Working Party's request to conduct a 2027-2028 Judges Training Scheme. The Scheme is proposed to support succession planning and maintain an adequate pool of suitably trained Judges across NSW. It will also assist in reducing reliance on a limited number of existing Judges and interstate appointments.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – Item 8.6: Sled Dog Sports
THAT, following the successful completion of their respective Judges Training Scheme disciplines, the below be recognised as Judges:-

- **Samantha Hartwig** **Sled Sports Judge – Sled Racing**
- **Kym Balcomb** **Sled Sports Judge – Backpacking**

RECOMMENDATION (to Finance Committee) – Item 8.9: Bale Seek Foundation Judges Training Scheme – Funding Request

RECOMMENDATION 9 – Item 8.9: Bale Seek Mission Statement
THAT the Board approve the Bale Seek Working Party Charter for consideration, adoption and publishing.

The following Committees DID NOT MEET:-

- Aggressive Dog Appeals Panel
- Aggressive Dog Committee
- Breed Standards Committee
- Canine Promotions & Public Awareness Committee
- Grounds Development Committee – 19/8/2026
- Judges Committee
- PR Events Committee
- Regional Committees Working Party
- Spring Fair Dog Show Committee

- **Dogs Australia Matters**
  - AGENDA – Dogs Australia 2026 October AGM & Board Meeting
    - Annual General Meeting
    - Board of Directors Meeting
      - RATG Rules
  - Conflicting Regulations Part 5: Conformation Shows, Clause 10.12.5
  - Electronic Motion 226-A20 & CACIB Shows-APPROVED
  - Electronic Motion 228-DOGS NSW A20 Shows-APPROVED

- **FCI Matters**
  - FCI Meetings - Various
  - FCI Meetings – 8 to 21 February 2026
  - FCI Meetings – 29 & 30 May 2026
  - FCI Meeting – 8 to 9 September 2026 & Amendments
  - Global Campaign Performance Report

- **Miscellaneous Matters**
  - RAS Request for Copyright Waiver – DOGS NSW Magazine

6. Strategic Reporting & Decisions

- **Strategic Plan 2026-2030 – Implementation**
- **Project Planning & Participation**
- **Future Month Items:-**
  - Youth Forum
  - State Dog Sports Plan

7. General Business

- **Motions on Notice**
  - **Review of 2026 Metropolitan Elections** – T Hofman

    MOVED L Brand SECONDED K Hedberg BVSc
    THAT for future Elections members be advised "You may vote for (1) OR MORE Candidates".

    CARRIED

8. Other Business & Closing

- **Identification of Recommendation/Note for Board in Committee Minutes**

  ***For the Company Secretary:** To identify a method of clearly identifying Recommendations and/or Notes for Board from Committee Minutes to enable the Board to properly consider these items.*

- **Sporting Affiliates – Outstanding Levies & Annual Reports**
  Director G Vernon advised the meeting that there were numerous Sporting Affiliates who had outstanding levies and annual reports and that the Show Committee will be drawing up a list of those Affiliates and requesting the Sporting Committee follow up with them.

- **Field Spaniel Club of NSW Inc – SprintDog™ Events**
  Director G Vernon advised the meeting that the Field Spaniel Club of NSW Inc has approximately 21 SprintDog™ events booked in the next 12 months which is making it difficult to combine with the Conformation Calendar. It should be noted that Conformation Affiliates are only entitled to conduct three (3) Championship Shows per year.

  ***For the Sporting Committee:** To consider a cap on the number of SprintDog™ events to be held per year.*

- **Sporting Disciplines – Judges Training Examinations**
  Director G Vernon sought advice in respect of the Judges Training Examinations for sporting disciplines, in particular whether there was an independent panel to review results, or is this undertaken by the Committee. Director L Brand advised the meeting that the appointment of Judges for new sporting disciplines is undertaken by experts in the field. It was suggested that the Regulations governing this situation should be balanced across all disciplines.

- **Director A McIlrath**
  Director S McFadden offered her thanks, on behalf of the Board, to Director A McIlrath for his attendance at today's Board meeting considering he had suffered a serious accident earlier on in the day.

- **Review of newly assigned actions**

- **Confirmation of Next Meeting:-**
  - RNSWCC 2026 Annual General Meeting – Wednesday 4 November 2026 @ 7.30pm
  - Board of Directors Meeting – Wednesday 11 November 2026 @ 2.00pm

- **MEETING CLOSED: 4.41PM**