



## Midland Counties Labrador Retriever Club



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### Health & Safety Policy Statement

This Policy covers all MCLRC canine activities.

Specific information is accentuated as follows:

With regard to Field Trials (FT)

With regard to Working Tests (WT)

With regard to Training Events (TE)

General Policy to:

- Provide knowledge of Health and Safety requirements. Health and Safety procedures must be followed in order to ensure the well being of everyone involved at MCLRC events
- Provide adequate control of the Health and Safety risks arising from our activities
- Provide Health and Safety information for those involved with all MCLRC events
- Ensure that all those involved in shooting activities/tasks at Field Trials are competent, licensed, and insured, AND CAN COMPLY WITH SAFE SHOOTING PRACTICES (see Shotgun Safety) (FT)
- Prevent accidents where possible, and promote accident prevention amongst ALL participants
- Review and revise this Policy at regular intervals

Responsibility

The ultimate goal is to minimise risk as far as possible at all MCLRC events. Everyone attending Working Tests, Field Trials (including those taking part in shooting activities), and Training Events have responsibilities, both separately and collectively as a group, to take care of the health and safety of themselves and others, and to co-operate in order to comply with any legal requirements. ALL those involved must:

- Co-operate on Health and Safety matters
- Not interfere with any procedure, process, actions or equipment which safeguards Health and Safety
- Take all reasonable care of their own Health and Safety

- Report all Health and Safety concerns to the relevant official. For example: Chief Steward and Steward of the Beat (FT), Chief Steward (WT), or the Training Co-ordinator or a Committee member (TE).
- Individual dog handlers are responsible for the welfare and conduct of their dogs and must carry out their own risk assessment of the tasks asked of their dogs during the event. Handlers are responsible for the control of their dogs and must take every possible precaution to prevent them from causing accidents or injury to themselves or others. In particular, owners should ensure that dogs are not left in vehicles with insufficient ventilation and without water (particularly in hot weather).

#### Event Risk Assessment

1. Risks will be assessed by the relevant official before any event takes place - Chief Steward and Steward of the Beat (FT), Chief Steward (WT), or the Training Co-ordinator or a Committee member (TE).
2. Any findings of risk assessments will be reported to or by the Chief Steward (FT) (WT), or the Training Co-ordinator (TE).
3. Assessments will be reviewed annually.
4. Action required to remove and or control risks will be approved by the Field Trial Secretary (FT), Working Test Secretary (WT), or the Training Co-ordinator (TE) (depending on type of event).
5. An additional risk assessment should also be carried out immediately before an event begins (and during the event if conditions change materially after it has started), to ensure ground surfaces (including those on which dogs are exercised and compete) are sufficiently well maintained and visually safe in order to reduce factors that could lead to injuries; e.g. ice, snow, flooding, deep mud or sand, and rutted, slippery, or abrasive surfaces.

#### Vehicle Parking and Transport

The MCLRC will not take any responsibility for transport arrangements of those attending Club events, including off-road driving situations where vehicle insurance may or may not be valid.

Where necessary, access to an event will be clearly marked with a sign. At most events there may be a certain amount of off road driving, where motor access is only possible by vehicles equipped with all wheel drive. As a consequence some competitors (with their dogs) and spectators may be asked to share vehicles or walk. All competitors and spectators must make their own transport arrangements. The MCLRC cannot accept any responsibility for injury, loss or damage to persons or property howsoever occasioned or caused.

#### First Aid

A first aid kit will be available. The MCLRC does not provide qualified personnel, but such help as is requested will be provided.

#### Accidents

All accidents are to be reported to the Chief Steward (FT) (WT), or the Training Co-ordinator (TE), who will be responsible for investigating accidents and act upon such findings to prevent a recurrence.

#### Safety Briefings

A briefing including an outline of safety measures must precede the start of every event. The event organiser should ensure that all present are made aware of any significant hazards as identified in a risk assessment for all MCLRC events.

- The Chief Steward will be introduced at Field Trials and Working Tests. That person will then summarise

event and safety procedures during a Pre-Field Trial or Pre-Working Test briefing. Everyone in attendance must consider themselves under the control of the Chief Steward, Stewards, and officials of the Club (FT) (WT)

- The Training Co-ordinator, Committee member, or an official of the Club will summarise safety procedures before training commences. Everyone in attendance must consider themselves under the control of the the Training Co-ordinator, Committee members, or any other Club official (TE)

Any member of the Committee or person attending a MCLRC event must inform the Chief Steward (FT) (WT) or the Training Co-ordinator (TE) if they are aware of any risks or potential risks (whether actual or perceived).

At each Field Trial (and on occasion at Working Tests) the following will have specific responsibilities (FT) (WT)

- Chief Steward: Make announcements before the trial commences, including reference to any particular risks or safety issues. During the trial to oversee the organisation and any relevant safety matters with regard to the guns, helpers, competitors (and their dogs), and spectators.
- Steward of the Beat (Gamekeeper or Host): To assist in conducting the trial, and make all present aware of any particular hazards. Jointly with the Shoot Captain he will ensure the guns are aware of good safety practices and will oversee the placing of the guns.
- Judges: To be aware of any hazards and conduct the trial with regard to safe practices for handlers, their dogs, and any helpers or spectators.
- Flagman: To carry a red flag indicating the safe location of spectators/competitors not in line. Guns should be aware of the location of the flag and spectators should stay close to the flag.

At each Working Test the following will have specific responsibilities (WT):

- Chief Steward: Make announcements before the test commences, including reference to any particular risks or safety issues. During the test oversee the organisation and any relevant safety matters with regard to helpers (including those responsible for the safe care and use of starting pistols and dummy launchers), competitors (and their dogs), and spectators.
- Judges: To be aware of any hazards and conduct the test with regard to safe practices for handlers, their dogs, and any helpers or spectators.

ONCE A FIELD TRIAL OR WORKING TEST HAS STARTED NO ONE IS TO LEAVE WITHOUT FIRST NOTIFYING THE CHIEF STEWARD (FT) (WT).

Everyone present at any MCLRC event is expected to comply with the highest standards of safety and sportsmanship with respect to their dogs, quarry, wildlife and the countryside in general. Any unsafe or inappropriate behaviour will result in instant dismissal from the event. Any person under the age of sixteen must be accompanied by an adult.

Weather

- In cases of extreme weather conditions, the event may have to be curtailed or cancelled.
- In hot, dry conditions, and in order to to minimise the risk of fire, there may be no smoking restrictions in force.

Topography

The ground used for all MCLRC events includes moorland, wooded areas and farm land. The terrain may be

rugged so walking could prove difficult, and obstacles such as ditches, stiles, and streams might have to be negotiated - all can result in risk due to slipping, tripping, or falling.

- Everyone attending Club events are responsible for their own footwear which should be appropriate for rough terrain.
- Clothing is also the responsibility of the individual and must be appropriate with regard to the prevailing weather conditions.
- Everyone must also be aware that a reasonable level of fitness is required. Midland Counties Labrador Retriever Club cannot accept responsibility for injury, loss or damage to person or property however occasioned.

#### Shotgun Safety (FT) (WT)

- All participants carrying shotguns must have a current shotgun licence which must be made available to a MCLRC official for inspection prior to commencement on the day of the event.
- All participants carrying shotguns should be both competent and experienced in handling firearms and shooting game. They must also be fully conversant with shotgun safety codes of practice as set out by official bodies such as The British Association of Shooting and Conservation (BASC), and The National Gamekeepers Organisation before accepting an invitation to shoot at a trial.
- Shotgun safety and security is the sole responsibility of the person carrying the gun and the MCLRC can accept no liability for any incident arising from misuse. All guns must have their own insurance cover (for example cover bestowed by BASC membership). Any unsafe handling or misuse of firearms must be reported to an official IMMEDIATELY.

#### Staring pistols and dummy launchers (WT) (TE)

- The Chief Steward or Training Co-ordinator must announce their use (or possible use) during the Pre-Working Test briefing or prior to the commencement of training. Helpers must be fully conversant with the use of such equipment, and must remain responsible for the security of such items whilst in their care. They must only be loaded and used when safe to do so and always remain unloaded when not in use.

#### Catering

There are no outside caterers our events. Everyone must make their own arrangements for themselves and their dogs.

#### Emergencies

In the event of an emergency, the Chief Steward, Working Test Secretary, or Training Co-ordinator will have a mobile phone to contact the emergency services if necessary. Please be aware that sometimes there may be insufficient signal strength for mobile devices.

Veterinary support may also be available for canine emergencies and a list of Veterinarian RCVS Accredited Practices located nearest the venue will be available from the Chief Steward (WT), or the Training Co-ordinator (TE). It is procedure that all Accredited Practices abide by The RCVS Practice Standards Scheme Manual (PSS) provide an emergency telephone number, and that all practices must take steps to provide 24-hour emergency cover for the care of animals of those species treated by the practice during normal working hours. In the event of a canine emergency you should first check if any vets are present at the event.

Any accidents will be recorded.

The Public (and other users of the countryside)

Participants should be aware of possible risk or disturbance to others and should respect everyone's rights to lawfully and peacefully enjoy the countryside - for example horse riders, or walkers. Please also remember that the countryside is also a working environment and everyone should understand the risks and safety concerns regarding farm workers, farm machinery, and farm animals.

#### Anti Field-Sports Lobbyists

Everyone attending MCLRC events should be observant at all times and be aware of the risk of malevolent action from anti-field sports lobbyists. Any unusual or suspicious circumstances should be reported immediately to the Chief Steward (FT) (WT), or Training Co-ordinator or any Committee member (TE) who can then ensure that proper action is taken and, if necessary, contact the appropriate authorities. At all times everyone must remain calm, polite, and non confrontational, and also focus on the safety of all concerned.

Please note that by accepting a run, an invitation to participate, or if you are attending an event organised by the MCLRC for any other reason, you are deemed to have read, understood, and will abide by the safeguarding procedures set out in this Policy statement. All participants have a responsibility to make themselves aware of the contents and abide by the guidelines.

A copy of this Health and Safety Policy Statement will be available at every event and will be held by the Chief Steward (FT) (WT)