

# Judging Guidelines

Judges must be conversant with, and have a full understanding of, the *AUSDS Inc. Essential Natural Traits for High Quality Practical Working Stock Dogs –Aiming at excellence –*

Judges must be conversant with both the *AUSDS Inc. Trial Rules* and *AUSDS Inc. Assessments of Practical ‘Utility’ Stock Dogs*.

Importance is placed on practicality and common sense over technicalities. Practical stock and stock dog experience and knowledge is a must, combined with a conduct of fairness at all times.

Emphasis is not on: ‘what’s been done’, but **‘how it is being achieved’**.

## **Judges require the skills to recognise:**

1. Some handlers can portray dogs better or worse than they actually are. Although the Society promotes sound training and handling techniques, the priority is to assess dogs, not the expertise of handlers.
2. Varying work experiences of dogs may have a significant effect in portraying their ability and merit.
3. Some *essential attributes* may be difficult to detect and assess during trials.
4. Any inappropriate help from the handler.
5. Any deliberate lack of progress and time wasting.
6. When dogs are, and when they’re not, in full control of stock.
7. When dogs weave to-and-fro (or are commanded to weave), it may be a ploy to move stock without using force.
8. Positioning dogs, such as using a ‘sling-shot’ situation for the start of casts, and apparent ‘boundary fence running’ casts, can be handler designed and initiated; which may deny the portrayal of their dogs’ natural casting and mustering abilities.
9. If dogs are not working naturally, but are acting like ‘mechanical robots’ without initiative, due to over commanding.

**\* NB Judges for trials are approved by an absolute majority of the Committee of the Society**