INTERNATIONAL SEARCH AND RESCUE DOG ORGANISATION

**International Search and Rescue Dog Organisation**

# Rules and Regulations for International Judges of the IRO

Approved by the General Meeting 2003
as well as amended at the General Meetings 2009, 2018, 2020, 2026 and 2026

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**Abbreviations used:**

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| DH | search and rescue dog handlers |
| OLRRH | Rules and Regulations for international assessors |
| JC | Judges candidate |
| TJ | Search and rescue dog Testing Judges |
| STJ | Spokesperson for Training and Judges |
| IRO | International Search and Rescue Dog Organisation |
| NRO | National Search and Rescue Dog Organisation |
| FCI | Federation Cynologique Internationale |

## Section I: General

### § 1 The Principles of Judges' Duties

1.1 Assignments in the Search and Rescue Dog Discipline require the uniform training of search and rescue dog handlers (DH). This can only be assured when testing judges (TJ) charged with conducting the testing fulfill all the necessary prerequisites and have been trained and educated using uniform criteria and the most up-to-date standards.

1.2 Testing Judges must ensure that the concerns of the Search and Rescue Dog discipline in general, and those of IRO in particular, are upheld honorably and conscientiously.

1.3 For all personnel sent officially by IRO this rule applies: If he/she doesn't have proper German or English language skills for the respective task and an interpreter is needed for communication, he/she has to cover the costs for this him/herself.

### § 2 Legal Basis and Jurisdiction

2.1 These regulations, hereafter referred to as the OLRRH, constitute the performance standards for Judges of the International Search and Rescue Dog Organisation, hereafter referred to as IRO.

2.2 These regulations are universally valid at all IRO events and all IRO sponsored events.

### § 3 Definition of Disciplines

3.1 The following disciplines are defined: International Judges, Judges' instructors, and the Spokesperson for Training and Judges.

3.2 Upon successful completion of training, International Judges are qualified to perform performance assessments in search and rescue dog tests and are appointed by the Board of Directors of IRO.

3.3 Judges' instructors are appointed by the Board of Directors of IRO after nomination by the STJ

3.3.1 Their term in office may not exceed the term of office of the nominating STJ.

3.4 The STJ is an official elected by the Delegates in accordance with the constitution.

## Section II: Selection and training

### § 4 Personal and Professional Prerequisites

4.1 An applicant must fulfill the following personal prerequisites:
4.1.1 has attained the age of 25 and be in appropriate physical condition.
4.1.2 and has been a member of an IRO affiliated organization for at least 5 years.
4.2 The applicant must fulfill the following profession prerequisites:
4.2.1 has trained two search and rescue dogs to the highest testing level in at least two disciplines in accordance with national or international testing standards within the last 10 years, which has to be proved by entry in the scorebook (logbook).
4.2.2 has proof of participation in the training of search and rescue dogs as an assistant, a trainer, and a Testing Official.
4.2.3 has basic canine knowledge.
4.2.4 be knowledgeable of the organization and structure of IRO and FCI.
4.2.5 be an active dog handler. “Active dog handler” means:
- one passed test in IPO-R per year; the level doesn’t matter
- Max. silent period 2 years

### § 5 Application and Content of Application

5.1 The financing of the training of Judges and related legal matters are the responsibility of the NROs.
5.2. The application to become a judge is to be sent to the IRO Head Office.
5.2.1 It must be filled out in accordance with the constitution, and all necessary documents must be enclosed.
5.2.2 All NROs and the STJ are entitled to file an application.
5.2.3 IRO has a grace period of 8 weeks to raise an objection to any application.
5.3 To be included with the application:
5.3.1 a personal canine-related résumé
5.3.2 proof of experience as laid out in § 4.
5.4 Objections relating to a Judges Candidate are confidential and are to be handled by the Legal Commission. The STJ must given the chance to take a position beforehand.
5.5 Should the objections not be cleared, the JC is to receive official notification thereof, which may not be appealed. The chairperson of the NRO will receive a copy for the record.
5.6 IRO may, at the discretion of the STJ, require applicants to undergo and pass a theoretical pre-test on their own cost in order to be nominated as a Judge Candidate and to go on with further training. This may especially apply if IRO receives a considerable number of applications within a short time frame. The applicants who do not pass the pre-test with at least 70 % will not be admitted as Judge Candidates. Re-testing is possible but not until two years have elapsed.

### § 6 Nomination of Candidates, Training

6.1 The length of training is limited to 2 years.
6.2 The IRO testing regulations and standards as laid out in this document are applicable to the training and testing of Judges.

6.3 The JC will undergo search and rescue dog tests during the training period. These can be judged by judges' instructors. The performance of JC residing outside Europe may also be assessed by TJ.

6.3.1 Under the supervision of the Certified Judge, the JC is to autonomously fulfill all assignments necessary for the smooth functioning of the test.

6.3.2 It is the duty of the candidate to release the results with comments and substantiations after consultation with the Certified Judge.

6.4 The JC must assess a minimum of 25 Search and Rescue Dogs in various disciplines in at least 3 performance tests and under the supervision of various judges.

6.5 The candidate is to present his score sheets and lists to the Certified Judge immediately following the test. The Certified Judge is to prepare a report and send it and all other documents to the STJ within 14 days.

6.6 The following knowledge and skills are also part of the evaluation during the training period and will be included in the report:

- organization, procedures and duties at an IRO test
- soft skills such as communication skills, neutrality and social competence

6.7 These reports are the foundation for the decision by the STJ to admit a candidate to the final exam.

6.8 After consideration, the STJ decides whether further candidate testing is required.

## § 7 Testing, Re-Testing

7.1 When all prerequisites have been fulfilled by the candidate, the STJ, functioning as the chairperson of *at least* a two-person Testing Commission, will designate a time and place for the test. Effort should be made to avoid the testing of a single candidate. The invitation from the Testing Committee and to the JC is the responsibility of the Head Office.

7.2 The test is comprised of a written and a practical section.

7.3. In the practical section, the JC is to assess several dogs in varying disciplines, one of which must be a RH-T, in the presence of both Assessor-Instructors or the STJ.

7.3.1 The number of Search and Rescue Dogs to be assessed is determined by the STJ.

7.3.2 The results of the JC must be within a set range and must correspond to those of both Assessor-Instructors or of the STJ.

7.3.3 The set range will be announced with the invitation to the test.

7.3.4 The following knowledge and skills are also part of the evaluation during the test:

- the organization and structure of IRO and FCI
- organization, procedures and duties at an IRO test
- soft skills such as communication skills, neutrality and social competence

7.4 In the written section, questions (questionnaires) from actual IPO-R are to be answered.

7.5 If the judge candidate doesn't achieve a score of 90% of correct answers in the written section of the judges' test, this part can be repeated as part of a separate re-test. The written section of the test may only be repeated once. If the practical part of the test isn't passed, both parts of the judge test (written and practical) must be repeated. This repeat test is only possible once.

7.6. The tests are carried out in German or English. Translators can be involved. The answers, however, must be given in German or English.

### § 8 Appointment as a Judge

8.1 After successfully completing the final exam and upon nomination by the chairperson of the Testing Commission, the candidate will be recognized as an official Judge by majority vote of the Board of Directors of IRO and be issued appropriate certification.

## Section III: Assignments, Rights, Duties

### § 9 Judges Activities

9.1 The appointment as a judge entitles the candidate to function as a judge in the Search and Rescue Dog Discipline within IRO.
9.2 A TJ may only assess NRO-approved tests.
9.3 The Standard for Assessment is the IRO-PO (IRO-R).
9.4 Complains will be handled in accordance with the IRO-PO (IPO-R).
9.5 The TJ is to keep his Score sheets for a period of one year. The originals must be transferred to the STJ upon demand.
9.6 TJ are required to participate in continued education every two years and to participate in IRO Assessor/Judges Events and should perform testing at least once a year. Continued Education Events are at the discretion of the STJ. If a TJ did not participate in IRO Judge Events for 2 consecutive years, he is to take part in the third year on own costs. Until taking part again he will be suspended from his judge activity. If a TJ did not participate in IRO Judge Events for 3 consecutive years he will be discharged as TJ.
9.7 TJ should be active in their home organization's training programs and be available to other associations as a consultant as well as for courses and seminars of IRO.
9.8 The STJ may allow a Leave of Absence for a judge for up to one year and may determine any re-entry training.

### § 10 Jurisdiction, Duties of the Spokesperson for Training and Judges

10.1 Professional Area
10.1.1 Recommendations to the Board of Directors of IRO regarding the recognition of JC.
10.1.2 Responsible organization of the training, courses, tests and continued education in the Assessment / Judges Area.
10.1.3 Spokesperson of the Testing Commission of IRO
10.1.4 Granting Leaves of Absence for TJ for up to 12 months
10.1.5 Recommendations to the Board of Directors of IRO regarding the nomination of judges for selected international IRO events.
10.1.6 Taking a position regarding objections to and accusations of judges in the professional area

### § 11 Resignation of Duties, Reinstatement

11.1 A TJ may be relieved of his duties by the Board of Directors upon his own request.

11.2 The TJ loses the rights granted him in this document upon resignation of his duties, or when stripped thereof, or upon withdrawal or expulsion. The Assessor's Certificate is to be returned to the Head Office without request and simultaneously loses its validity.

11.3 A TJ is to uphold the standards of IRO as laid out in the IPO-R, Rules and Regulations, Guidelines, and any other IRO standards applicable to his activities. If IRO has been notified of a breach by the TJ, a formal hearing has to be set. As a result, the TJ may be discharged by the STJ in accordance with the IRO Executive Board.

11.4 A TJ may be discharged by the STJ in accordance with the IRO Executive Board if his health, on a long-term basis, does not permit to execute the duties as TJ and the activities as laid out in § 9. In this case, he will be invited to Education Events and can make himself available as a consultant as well as for courses and seminars of IRO.

11.5 A TJ who has relinquished or been discharged of his duties as TJ and would like to be reinstated, may send an application to be invited for a test following § 7. The STJ and the Testing Commission (see § 7) will decide whether a written and practical section are to be undergone, or only the practical section of the test.

## Section IV: Final Clause

### § 12 Passing Resolutions, Validity

12.1 This document will become effective upon its acceptance by the Meeting of Delegates on April 26th 2003 as well as the Meeting of Delegates on April 18th 2009, on June 24th, 2018, on September 28th 2020, on 26th of October 2024 and 10th of October 2026.