Working Aptitude Evaluation

Your Dobermann must be a minimum of 18 months of age and be registered with [Dogs Australia](#) to participate in a WAE.

The purpose of the **Working Aptitude Evaluation (WAE)** is to help determine if your Dobermann has the attitude to do the work for which the breed was intended — that of companion and protector.

The WAE is a test designed to assess the temperament and working abilities of Dobermanns. It is conducted by a certified evaluator under the auspices of the **National Dobermann Council (Australia), NDCA**.

The WAE is specifically designed to evaluate the temperament of an untrained Dobermann. No prior training is required or preferred for the evaluation. The purpose of the WAE is to provide breeders and owners with a consistent method to assess the temperament and working potential of their dogs.

The evaluation is not a training test but rather a temperament assessment. It aims to determine if a Dobermann possesses the characteristics required to be a stable companion and resolute working dog. The test evaluates various aspects of a Doberman's temperament, including stability, confidence, and adaptability to different situations.

The WAE is open to Dobermanns that meet the eligibility criteria set by the NDCA. The evaluation is conducted as a specific event organised by the club and it is important to note that the availability of the WAE may vary.

Overall, the WAE provides valuable insights into a Dobermann's temperament and working potential, helping breeders and owners make informed decisions about their dogs' future roles and activities.

The exercises included in the Working Aptitude Evaluation (WAE) are designed to measure a Dobermann's response to people, visual and auditory stimuli, footing and to threat situations to ascertain the dog's aptitude for the work for which the Dobermann was created eg: Companion and Protector. It is primarily a "breeders" tool.

There are five exercises in which the dog's responses to the stimuli presented are measured in accordance with the degree of approach or avoidance behaviour to a given stimuli.

There are minimal accepted scores of which the Dobermann who achieves these or better will earn a **Working Aptitude Certificate (WAC)**.

The WAE is conducted through a series of 5 x Exercises, as listed below:

1. A. Neutral Stranger

    B. Friendly Stranger

2. A. Hidden Clattering – Alert and Discover

    B. Hidden Clattering – Investigation

    C. Gunshot (Starter Pistol) or Loud Horn

3. Umbrella

4. A. Footing Exercise – Polyethylene Strip

    B. Footing Exercise – Wire Mesh – Heavy Duty

5. A. Threat – Decoy Crossing

    B. Threat – Decoy Approach

    C. Threat – Decoy/Dog Confrontation

D. Dog Under Control

The flow of the WAE exercises above can be described as follows -

The dog and handler greet a neutral stranger, followed by meeting a friendly stranger. From there the dog and handler pass by a hidden volunteer who rattles a can, requiring the dog to alert and investigate the noise. In the next exercise, they pass a person who fires three shots from a starter pistol, after the dog and handler has passed, to judge the dog startles and recovery reaction. The dog and handler then approach a person sitting in a chair, who then raises a closed umbrella which snaps open in the face of the dog. The dog is expected to examine the umbrella within a certain time period. The following exercises are the Footing and require the dog to walk over unnatural surfaces, first a sheet of plastic followed by walking across wire mesh laid on the ground. The final exercise is the "threat" where the objective is to measure the dog's capacity to recognise and to react in a positive manner to a potentially threatening situation and to defend themselves in the face of such a threat. The threat is an angry person who staggers weirdly across the path of the dog and then approaches while yelling and acting irrational. The dog is expected to be protective of the handler, then return to a controlled state after the person retreats.

The Dobermann Club of VIC Inc.