NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER 2025
Edition 8

CONTENTS

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Welcome to the latest newsletter from NASDU. I hope that you are all recovering from a busy events season and taking the opportunity to catch up on some training and well-earned down time before it gets busy at Christmas and New Year.

I do hope that you find the newsletter of use to you and once again I take the opportunity to ask you all to take a few minutes out of your busy schedules to send us a few lines or photos so that the newsletter doesn't just become a committee update. It doesn't have to be anything in particular, as long as it will be of interest to Members. It can be serious or lighthearted or even just photos of different deployments (Nothing offensive please). If you haven't contributed before then please don't be shy and take a few minutes to submit something. If we don't have anything to put in the newsletter then it will die again.

I would just like finish by thanking all the Committee for their continued hard work and to Sara for her work on keeping the newsletter alive.

Jed Marshall

Editors note:

Thank you Jed for the introduction and welcome to the latest edition of the NASDU newsletter.

We have our usual updates from the Teams at NASDU plus a useful reminder of the importance of Public Liability insurance from BJP.

We've included an excellent article on feeding your dog and a new feature 'A Day in the Life' and thanks go to Julie Aspinall for providing copy for this. If you'd like to take part, do let us know.

Finally, as we always say, this newsletter is for our Members and it is a much more enjoyable read if it contains your stories and successes. As Jed reiterated, without your input we don't have a newsletter.

Deadline and ideas for the our January issue is 20th December 2025.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

A common query among pet owners is, "What dog food should I feed my dog?" With so many dog food brands available, making an informed choice can be challenging. It is essential to understand the ingredients required for a dog's optimal health and well-being—not only for proper digestion, but also for a shiny coat and sustained energy levels.
It is important to remember that a dog's diet will vary according to the individual. While pet dogs are predominantly carnivorous, they also consume omnivorous foods. Regardless, a dog's diet should always be both complete and balanced, ensuring it meets the pet's daily nutritional requirements.

Dry Dog Food

Recent research indicates that dry dog food is the most commonly fed diet among pet owners, accounting for approximately 71% of the market. This type of food, with a low moisture content of around 8%, is extruded into pellets, biscuits, or kibbles and is typically packaged in bags or boxes. Meat is generally added in either fresh or dried form. One major advantage of dry food is its extended shelf life compared to wet food, which is more prone to spoilage.

Wet Dog Food

Wet dog food constitutes roughly 33% of the market. It contains a high moisture content and is usually cooked at elevated temperatures to sterilise the product before being sealed under pressure in cans, foil trays, or pouches. An additional benefit of wet dog food is its ability to contribute to a dog's daily fluid intake.

Raw Diet

Commercially prepared raw meat diets account for about 5% of the market. This form of food typically consists of muscle meat, often still on the bone, and is stored frozen. Many owners also choose to prepare homemade raw diets. One notable characteristic of this diet is that, since it is served wet, it may result in a dog drinking less.

How Much Food Does a Dog Require?

The appropriate amount of food for a dog depends primarily on its size, breed, and age. Ensuring that a dog receives the correct portion of food is vital, as being either underweight or overweight can lead to long-term health issues.

Rather than focusing solely on weight, it is advisable to assess a dog's body condition. You should be able to feel the ribs and notice a defined waist.

Puppies

The nutrition provided to a puppy is the foundation for lifelong health. Puppies require more calories, as well as higher levels of vitamins, minerals, fats, and protein to support their rapid development. Puppy foods are generally designed for dogs between 4 weeks and 12 months old, although this can vary.

A delicate balance of calcium and phosphorus is essential to support skeletal development, and a nutrient-dense diet is necessary to meet growth requirements and sustain energy levels between meals. Smaller breeds typically require more concentrated levels of nutrients, while larger breed puppies need less, as different-sized breeds reach maturity at different rates.

Adult Dogs

Dogs usually transition to the adult life stage between 12 and 18 months of age. Small and medium-breed dogs often require food with a higher energy content due to their faster metabolic rates; diets rich in protein, vitamins, and minerals are beneficial for their continued development. Larger dogs generally reach adulthood around the age of two, and to prevent excessive weight gain, they require food with lower levels of fats. Their diets must contain controlled amounts of protein, energy, calcium, and phosphorus to ensure steady growth, while additional nutrients such as glucosamine are important for supporting joint health.

Senior Dogs

As dogs age, they tend to become less active and require more rest, with a longer recovery period after exercise. Dogs aged seven years or older are generally classed as seniors. Their diet should be modified to include higher fibre levels and reduced oil and fat content. It is also important to maintain joint health through the inclusion of vitamins and minerals such as Omega 3 fatty acids, glucosamine, MSM, and chondroitin.

Food Intolerances and Allergies

Pet owners sometimes confuse food intolerances with allergies, often attributing gastrointestinal disturbances to allergies. In reality, less than 10% of all allergic reactions are due to a food allergy. A true food allergy is an immunological response to a specific protein allergen, typically manifesting as itchy skin, infections, or even hair loss. Most allergies in pets are caused by environmental factors such as fleas, dust mites, or other irritants.

Veterinary practices can offer allergy testing to help identify the underlying causes.

Brought to you by Sam Flett of The Canine Classroom, providers of Trainers Favourite Dog Food
www.thecanineclassroom.co.uk

Private Medical Cover

Transfer & Save or Start Today

- Your choice of hospital & specialist
- Avoid NHS waiting list
- Prompt treatment
- Open to all ages
- Claims settled promptly
- Making a claim will not affect your subscription
- Excellent UK based service

EXCLUSIVE OFFER†
for members

92% SAVED MONEY
transferring to HMCA*

*Based on data provided by members who joined HMCA between 1st January 2023 and 31st December 2023. †Exclusive offer available to Institution of Agricultural Engineers and other selected membership groups.

Call today for a no obligation quote on

01423 799949

or enquire online at **www.hmca.co.uk**

OVER 45 YEARS
PROVIDING SERVICES TO MEMBERSHIP GROUPS

Rated '**Excellent**' by our customers on Trustpilot

REPORT FROM THE ADMIN OFFICE

I would like to thank all of those who are letting us know about issues and problems on the ground. This information is very helpful as it allows us to gain a picture of what is happening in the 'real world'.

There is an issue at present with a number of Dog Handlers in the sector who have a different set of values and attitude towards working and caring for dogs.

Whilst not everybody is lucky enough to do a job they enjoy, becoming a Dog Handler in our sector is usually because someone enjoys and wants to work with dogs. Whilst there will always, no matter the profession, be some that fall short of the standard expected or behave badly, the fact that most Handlers do this work because they love their dogs has meant these people have been few and far between.

I believe that a number of factors are contributing to some of the poor welfare and safety standards we are now experiencing amongst which are:-

- Culturally there are those who come from differing backgrounds and see the dog only as a tool and have no real connection with it as an animal with needs that require time and dedication.
- Handlers who are not in a position financially to provide the correct housing and transportation for the dogs. This becomes more of an issue in areas with high house prices and rents.
- A belief amongst some that it is easier and acceptable to commit fraud and not follow the rules rather than working to attain the correct standard.
- The attitude that everything is disposable and should be easily obtained by payment rather than effort.

These issues are difficult for us to address as an Association and have their roots as deeper issues in society in general.

NASDU however is working at trying to implement changes to make it harder for those looking to abuse the system or neglect their duty of care to their dogs and others they affect.

From the enquiries we are receiving from the police it seems that many Forces are now being more proactive, and we know of several Handlers, some NASDU members and others not, that have been charged under the Dangerous Dogs Act or animal welfare legislation.

We have removed the membership which revokes current team certification from several handlers and removed them from the team verification checker.

NASDU does not have any statutory powers and are a relatively small Association. As such it is hard to carry out in-depth and fair investigations. However, we have in a recent meeting, asked the SIA about whether breaches of the Animal Welfare Act would affect an application for an SIA licence. We also mentioned our support for business licensing if it includes provision for including welfare and operational standards of dog teams.

We are at present concentrating on 3 initiatives now in the hope of improving standards that in turn will help to add value to our certification, which hopefully will improve your worth as Handlers and Trainers.

Dog identification

At present a lot of effort is being made to ensure that all certified dogs are correctly identified by trainers.

This is quite time consuming for the office staff and difficult for the trainers who are at times having to deal with some Handlers who are trying to cheat the system. We understand this and would like to thank our Trainers who are working with us and making the effort to address this issue.

We have been trying to crack down on multiple Handlers who are using one dog with different Trainers to gain certification then work a different dog on site.

Unfortunately, there is a section of the modern workforce who do not work with dogs because they have an empathy with them or enjoy this kind of work but just as a means of earning money.

Whilst this could be the case with many occupations it can cause issues with dog handling if a Handler has no interest in standards or welfare.

For this reason, when Handlers attend an assessment for certification they should be asked for proof of:-

- microchip registration checked against dog's micro chip
- vaccination certificate.

Titre testing will be accepted for distemper, hepatitis and parvo virus after at least 1 initial course but Lepto Spiros is will still be required annually.

Both documents should be in the Handler's name and current address showing the dogs name, breed, sex, description and microchip number.

If you handle a company dog, explain the situation to your Trainer but both documents should be available with the same address and owner on them.

If dual handled (only certain disciplines) only 2 Handlers would be accepted for certification at any time and all training requirements must be completed by both Handlers throughout the year.

Where a dog appears to be certified with more than 1 Handler, we are now refusing certification without proof of identity/ownership or explanation.

Change to certification

At present, after completing an initial course but not reaching the standard for team certification (Handler and dog), a Handler will receive an HABC certificate and a NASDU Handler only certificate.

The HABC certificate is an educational award and recognises that the Handler has achieved the standard in theory and practical skills required of a dog handler.

The NASDU team certificate recognises that the Handler and dog have both achieved the required standards individually and as a team.

The original idea was a Handler who had completed the course with a dog supplied by the trainer or had a dog that had not quite reached the required standard could receive a NASDU Handler only certificate.

This certificate was never meant to be used to gain employment with a dog as the team part was not achieved. However, many employers or end users do not understand and are happy to accept any NASDU certificate meaning that some Handlers have been working untrained and non-certified dogs.

In future anyone achieving the standard required but not completing a team assessment at the end of initial training will only receive the HABC certificate.

They will then have to complete a team End Point Assessment with any dog they wish to work to gain a NASDU team certificate.

This does not mean that the Handler will have to complete another course as it will depend on the amount of training the dog needs to achieve certification.

If a trained Handler, purchased a fully trained dog of the right standard, and gained a relationship with it prior to assessment, this could possibly be done in one day, although most Trainers would probably wish to do at least 1 session with a new dog prior to assessment.

Monitoring of End Point Assessments (EPA)

Through an ongoing process of reviewing our processes for ensuring compliance within our certification process, it has been identified that there is no process in place to monitor compliance on End Point Assessments. **It has been decided that we will in future ask all trainers to give NASDU at least 7 days' notice as to when they are going to carry out any end point assessments leading to Highfield and NASDU certification.**

If you receive a monitoring visit there is no charge as this is part of NASDU's compliance responsibilities.

This would allow the Association to carry out a limited amount of monitoring inspections throughout the year and enable us to:-

- Provide evidence of compliance to Awarding Body (Highfield) and ISO9001.
- Provide reassurance to other third parties such as end users, trade bodies, Home Office that we are effectively ensuring compliance within our certification process.
- Identify any issues with understanding and delivery of end point assessments.
- Identify issues regarding standards of students achieving certification.
- Gain more contact with trainers and students obtaining feedback about NASDU courses.

The Monitor carrying out the visit will:-

- Identify themselves to the Trainer and End Point Assessor or witness (GP Level 2) and discuss what is going to happen and ask if there are any issues they should know about.
- Make it clear to the students that they are not doing the assessment for the EPA and all decisions on pass/fail will be made by the Trainer/End Point Assessor as usual.
- Ask for proof of identity of those being assessed and of their dogs including microchip numbers.
- Monitor the End Point Assessments being as unobtrusive as possible.
- At the end of the assessments discuss with the trainer/end point assessor any observations made.
- A report will be made and submitted to NASDU Head Office and to the Trainer.

Membership

The membership numbers continue to grow with:-

- 252 company members
- 2523 certified team memberships
- 60 individuals non team members

These numbers are for currently certified teams and in date companys.

As usual I would like to thank all in the Association for their help in assisting us at Head Office. Especially our Trainers who have to deal with the new initiatives and bear the brunt of ensuring compliance.

Roger Flett NASDU
Admin Office

A Day in the Life

Thank you to Julie Aspinall of FSS Canine Patrols Security for contributing to our new feature, 'A Day in the Life'. We would like to make this a regular feature, particularly highlighting smaller organisations or fascinating stories from our Members.

What made you decide to become a Trainer for Security Dog Handlers?
I've always had dogs especially Rottweilers and sort of fell into it when I took one of my dogs for training as the trainer I went to was a NASDU trainer.

Have you always wanted to work with dogs?
Always

Did you start in another part of the security world and transition to training for Security Dog Handlers?
No. I started in NASDU training and ended up with a security company.

How does being a NASDU member help you in your work?
It enhances my professional growth.

What do you enjoy most when training new Handlers?
Seeing them progress from the introduction on day 1 to the final assessment on the course.

What would you say has been a challenge?
People lol.

What would you say has your most recent success?
Growing my company. I also had a dog that starred in many Bollywood films, won best male Rottweiler at Crufts, was accredited as a level 3 GP dog, was an accredited PAT dog and competed in competitive obedience.

Outside of the training environment, what do you enjoy doing?
I compete in competitive obedience and IGP.

REPORT FROM INSPECTORATE

This summer has seen the second round of Trainer renewal inspections for 2025 completed. I want to thank all trainers who engaged openly and constructively with the process. The majority continue to deliver excellent work, and it's encouraging to see the commitment and passion that so many of you bring to your learners.

That said, some recurring issues do remain. Lesson plans and assessment sheets are not always being used correctly — and in some cases, not at all. This is a fundamental requirement, and one that cannot be overlooked. Going forward, Trainers will also be required to notify NASDU in advance of their End-Point Assessments. This will allow us to carry out spot checks to make sure courses and assessments are being delivered consistently and to the correct standards. We're currently finalising the logistics of how best to support this.

Trainer Renewal Inspections

Trainer renewals come up every three years, and this year has seen a large number fall due. To make the process more structured, I now carry out inspections in two fixed blocks — one early in the year, and one later on. This approach ensures consistency across the board and makes the best use of time and resources, while also allowing me to balance the inspectorate role alongside my own business commitments.

Supporting New Trainers

Another area I am keen to strengthen is the support we give to newly qualified Trainers. I know from experience how challenging that first year can be. Independent freelance Trainers especially have to be the Salesperson, the Trainer, the Admin staff, the Bookkeeper, HR, and everything else rolled into one. We're looking at introducing a more structured support period during the first year after qualification — a time where the inspectorate and committee can offer guidance on delivery, paperwork, and the practical realities of getting established.

Looking Ahead

On a personal note, I am reviewing ways to reduce my own outside business commitments so I can devote more time directly to NASDU. The inspectorate function is growing, and with it the demands of the role. Although I do call on committee members for advice and practical support, the reality is that the inspectorate is predominantly me — and I want to make sure I'm giving it the time and attention it deserves as NASDU continues to grow and develop.

I appreciate the continued hard work of all our Trainers and the support of the committee in helping me carry out this role. Together we can keep driving standards forward and ensure that NASDU training continues to be the benchmark across the industry.

Simon Mallin
NASDU Inspectorate Lead

QUALITY UPDATE

Our next Audit in February 2026 (how quickly these seem to arrive), will be a full re-audit, giving us a further 3 years of recognition, with annual surveillance checks until 2029 rolls around and we're back to full audit!

All continues to work well, particularly recognising improvements, however small. We are also about to produce the next Member and Trainer surveys and these should be available before the end of 2025. Your feedback was very useful and is now part of the AGM agenda. The newsletter is a key part of how we demonstrate communication with our Members so do please continue to contribute.

Sara Rathbone
Quality

IN THE NEWS

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY...

Deadlines for submissions to our newsletters through to end of 2026 as follows:

January 2026 - deadline 20th December 2025
April 2026 - deadline 21st March
July 2026 - deadline 20th June
Oct 2026 - deadline 19th September

COMING NEXT TIME...

We will have our interview with Kieran Stanbridge, Chairman of The Thin Blue Paw in our January edition. As well as discussing the charity, he will also talk about their newly launched National Association for Police Dog Handlers.

We are also hoping to have more interviews with our smaller training organisations showing a Day in the Life of a security dog trainer. However, this will only happen if you provide us with your stories.

Any more ideas you would like us to include, please do let us know.

NASDU 30th Anniversary

NASDU will be 30 years old in December 2026 and we are looking at ways to celebrate this. One idea is to have a special edition of the newsletter, looking back at key moments in the development of NASDU and the many changes that have taken place in the private security world over that time. We are already starting to collate ideas from the archives and we will need your help.

- Have you been a long standing member of NASDU?
- Do you have photographs showing special events?
- Did you win at one of the NASDU trials over the years?

The team will be meeting in January to begin putting things into motion. We will put out a reminder via social media and in subsequent newsletter.

BJP Insurance Brokers: Security Claims Tips
Steve Neudegg
Senior Account Manager - BJP Insurance Brokers

BJP INSURANCE BROKERS

INSURANCE

With a keen understanding and a dedication in supporting the security industry, we understand the vital role that security and detection dog handlers and teams play in safeguarding communities, businesses, and properties. However, with great responsibility comes the need for comprehensive protection — especially when it comes to Public Liability insurance.

Why is Public Liability so important?
Public Liability Insurance shields you from financial loss if your actions accidentally cause harm or damage to third parties or their property. For security and detection dog handlers, this coverage is essential due to the potential risks involved in operational activities.

Key Reasons to Prioritise Public Liability Cover:

- Protection Against Accidents: With the responsibility taken when handling a dog, despite training and precautions, unforeseen incidents can and do occur.
- Client and Public Confidence: Demonstrating that you are insured enhances your professionalism and reassures clients and the public of your commitment to safety and responsibility.
- Legal and Contractual Requirements: Many contracts and clients require Public Liability insurance to be active and in place before engaging your services.
- Financial Security: Claims can result in significant costs. Insurance ensures you're protected from these unexpected financial liabilities.

What should NASDU members consider?
- Indemnity Limits: Ensure your policy provides sufficient coverage for the scope of your operations.
- Inclusive Coverage: Confirm that your policy covers incidents involving your security and detection dog teams in various settings.
- Tailored Policies: Work with brokers who specialise in security and detection operations to find the best fit.

Our security team (Josh, Antony, Steve or Simon) are happy to help if you have any questions or wish to receive any quotes or advice.

Please call us on 0345 365 2121

Or email Security@bjpinsure.com

Or visit our website at - https://bjpinsure.com/security-insurance/security-dog-handler-insurance/

COMPANY SECRETARY'S UPDATE

Welcome to the Autumn edition of our Newsletter, it only seems like yesterday I was writing for our Summer edition, regarding the dangers of leaving dogs in cars. as the temperature started to rise.

Head Office continues to deliver the Corporate Governance and Centre Approval for the Association, and over the last few months has addressed:

HABC – The re-approval of our suite of 16 Learning Programmes with HABC is now complete, for which the following are Accredited for a further 3 years.

- 2 x Level 2- Core disciplines in GP
- 1 x Level 3 -Additional discipline in GP (tracking)
- 2 x Level 3- Core detection disciplines in DDD
- 3 x Level 3- Additional detection discipline in Pyro, Tobacco & Live person (vehicle)
- 2 x Level 4- Core detection disciplines in EDD
- 6 x Level 3- Introductory disciplines in S&R (4), Fire investigation & Bedbugs.

BSI – BS8517 still remains awaiting review, unfortunately this has been delayed due to the revision of BS 10800 and other standards to accommodate the recently introduced "Martyn's Law"

SIA – NASDU continues its engagement with the SIA regarding the new voluntary "Business Approval Scheme" which is likely to take over the current "ACS scheme", together with the proposed compulsory "Business Licencing" by this government which will require "Primary Legislation".

At a recent meeting with the SIA in September, better recognition of Security Dog Handling by the SIA within the wider security industry was discussed, together with items such as: Animal Welfare and Criminality Checks (to include offences under the Animal Welfare Act & Dangerous Dogs Act).

Also discussed were: issues around English not being the first language of many security officers, work visa's (with working time restrictions) and skilled worker visa's

Martyn's Law – The current work to introduce this new law " The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025" (for which the SIA will be the Enforcement Authority) continues to be monitored regarding any impact it may have to the Manned Private Security Industry and in particular the Security Dog Sector.

HMRC – Having met directly with HMRC in late September, regarding issues around PAYE and Agency Legislation, NASDU awaits the outcome of a recent tribunal, before considering any formal communication to its members.

Brixton Academy – Having spoken with the Metropolitan Police regarding this unfortunate tragedy, NASDU awaits the outcome of any court action.

NASDU Inspectorate – Several improvements have recently been introduced to the current Trainer Inspection process by our Lead Inspector (Simon Mallin).

In addition, the NASDU Management committee together with Simon are currently looking at further ways to ensure we have a robust inspection scheme and career path for our Trainers, at both the Initial Approval and Renewal stages of their careers within the Security Industry.

These changes will be communicated to Trainers and if necessary, Handlers as they are rolled out.

Finally, I would like to thank those at our remote offices; Admin Office-Roger and Sam, Quality-Sara Rathbone and Inspectorate-Simon Mallin for all their hard work, together with those remaining committee members: Lee Deighton, Ali Todd, Dave Pitt, Charlotte Smith, Arun Dhanoa and Jed Marshall who have assisted Myself and the Association over the past months.

Steve Hill
Company Secretary
HABC Centre Contact

national association of
NASDU
security dog users

Tel: 01483 224320 Option 2
Email: info@nasdu.co.uk
Web: www.nasdu.co.uk

national association of
NASDU
security dog users

DISCLAIMER:
The views expressed in this newsletter are the views of the author of that article and not necessarily those of NASDU.

Highfield Approved Centre

BSI Distributor

British Assessment Bureau
UKAS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS
8289
ISO 9001
QUALITY MANAGEMENT