



Customs detector dog handler Helen and her charge Levi get down and dirty on the K9 biathlon course.

Our detector dogs shine at 2006 national K9 biathlon

Customs detector dog teams have taken on their competitors in the canine world and shown themselves to be among the fittest in Australia.

Australia's law-enforcement agencies gathered to watch 39 dog teams compete in the 2006 national K9 seminar and biathlon at the John Moroney Correctional Facility at Windsor, north west of Sydney.

The event brings together 10 Australian organisations from the border security, corrective, emergency, military and police services. State and Federal Government organisations attend.

The event also provides a valuable opportunity for officers working in Australia's detector dog units to network and share practices and techniques.

Held over a 2.9km course, the biathlon involves eight obstacles that challenge the dog and handler to negotiate barrels and water hazards, leopard crawl through mud and wade together through water.

Sydney dog handler Helen Dennis said, "The dog can only go as fast as the handler. The handler has to be in control of the dog 100 per cent of the time."

Three Customs dog teams from Sydney competed.

Taking on the top dog of the canine world - the German shepherd - is no walk in the park but the Customs labradors put in an outstanding effort.

The event may only temporarily sort out who's who in the dog kingdom but it definitely proves the Customs detector dog teams contain some of Australia's fittest officers.