

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES
SEARCH AND RESCUE PROGRAM

STANDARDS FOR
AIR SCENT SEARCH DOG TEAMS

May, 1997

I. SCOPE

- A. These standards are intended to define minimum qualification requirements for area search by the air scent dog team.
- B. The authorization issued under this standard is a requirement only for those personnel who wish to voluntarily participate in the search and rescue program of the Department of Emergency Services at the level indicated in the standard.
- C. The Air Scent Search Dog Team should be able to perform the following functions in the general environment of the Commonwealth of Virginia:
 - 1. Search for missing persons in wilderness, rural, suburban and urban areas using air-scent techniques.
 - 2. Assist with the evaluation, organization and investigation of missing person incidents.
- D. The team should be capable of performing these functions anytime of the year, day or night, and in all weather conditions experienced in the Commonwealth. The team may work with a variety of individuals and organizations, including law enforcement, fire and rescue, casual volunteers and family members of the missing subject(s). In order to do this the handler should be able to:
 - 1. Understand the search and rescue system used in the Commonwealth.
 - 2. Understand the theory and practice of missing person search.
 - 3. Plan, execute, debrief and document a variety of dog search tasks.
 - 4. Navigate accurately on land.
 - 5. Survive an unexpected wilderness emergency.
- E. Categories Of Dogs
 - 1. The types of dogs most commonly used for the purpose of locating missing persons, regardless of the environment or circumstances of loss, are the tracking dog, the trailing dog and the air scent dog.
 - 2. These standards do not address any particular breed of dog since many breeds can be trained to do search work. However, it is important that the dog have the stamina for long hours of searching in all kinds of weather. In addition, the dog must be sociable and controllable in situations involving crowds, noise, other dogs and a variety of distractions.

II. TERMINOLOGY

The definitions listed here are for the purpose of these standards only. They may or may not reflect the definitions used by other individuals, groups, or agencies.

Air scent dog - A search dog that will detect airborne human scent.

Aggressive Dog Behavior - Biting or lunging and growling at people or other controlled animals.

Alert - The dog's response, recognizable to the handler, to its detection of human scent.

Area search - Search of a specific geographical area. The area could be urban, suburban, rural or wilderness.

Article search - Search for any object or article that may contain human scent which may be above or below ground.

Cadaver search - Search for human remains that are on the surface or buried on land.

Disaster Search - Search for humans in rubble or debris, such as collapsed buildings and debris piles, that are a result of natural or human-caused disasters.

Dog team - 1 trained handler with 1 trained dog.

Handler - The person who controls and directs the dog during a search.

Heeling - The dog walking with the handler, on command, at the handlers side, either on or off lead.

Indication - Dog's method of communicating to the handler that the subject has been found. Examples: returns from subject with bringsel in mouth, stays with subject and barks, returns to handler and jumps on him/her.

Probability of Detection (POD) - The percentage of probability that if a subject was actually in the search area that he would have been located (detected) by the search effort.

Refind - When the dog has made a find, it returns to the handler and directs the handler back to the subject.

Rural - Country often given to farming or to woodland and sparsely to moderately populated.

SAR Dog Standards Committee - A committee of representatives of each search dog unit that has an MOU with the Virginia Department of Emergency Services. Each dog unit may have up to two voting members on the committee. The Virginia Department of Emergency Services may also appoint a member to the committee.

Scent discriminating dog - A search dog that will locate the scent of a specific individual.

Tracking dog - A search dog that will follow almost exactly the ground scent track of a person.

Trailing dog - A search dog that will follow the ground scent of a person, but not necessarily precisely where that person has walked.1 Trailing dogs are almost always scent discriminating.

Urban, suburban - Moderately to heavily populated areas given primarily to business and residential development.

Water search - Search for humans who are under water, such as a drowned victim.

Wilderness - An area generally uncultivated and uninhabited, and often inaccessible by road.

III. HANDLER KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

In order to attain state recognized air scent search dog team status, the handler will demonstrate an understanding of the items listed under each subject and the ability to perform the skills listed. Specific tests designed for this purpose are described in Section V. TEST METHODS, and are included as part of these standards.

A. SAR Operations

1. Understand how state missions are originated.
2. List several resources that might be utilized during a SAR event.
3. Demonstrate the ability to develop basic search dog assignments for a search incident and provide appropriate recommendations for additional resource support to the incident.
4. Understand the functions of these field team positions.
 - a. Field Team Member
 - b. Field Team Leader
5. Understand proper searcher conduct as it relates to law enforcement, the family of the missing subject(s) and the media.
6. Understand general safety considerations in SAR operations, including dealing with critical incident stress.
7. Understand the provisions of the Virginia Search and Rescue Council "Standard Operating Procedures. "

B. Legal Aspects of Search and Rescue

1. Understand SAR responsibilities at the state level.
2. Identify the limitations of the "Good Samaritan law.
3. Understand several methods of reducing liability exposure.
4. Understand the circumstances when entry upon private property may be justified

C. Survival

1. Understand the basic principals of clothing and equipment selection for the search environment. See APPENDIX A for guidelines for a personal equipment list.
2. Demonstrate the ability to bivouac overnight in the out-of-doors. See APPENDIX B for guidelines for an overnight bivouac.

D. Scent Transport Theory - understand the following concepts

1. Lofting
2. Pluming
3. Fumigating
4. Coning
5. Looping
6. Fanning

E. Land Navigation

1. Define the following terms or concepts:
 - a. True north and magnetic north
 - b. Declination
2. Demonstrate the ability to read and interpret topographic map border information, colors and symbols.
3. Demonstrate the ability to use a compass to plot a course on a map.
4. Demonstrate the ability to use the following plotting methods to determine the coordinates of a given point.
 - a. UTM
 - b. ASRC

- c. Ungrided map
- 5. Demonstrate the ability to perform the following navigational functions.
 - a. Obtain and follow a simple compass bearing.
 - b. Determine a reciprocal.
 - c. Move around obstacles.
 - d. Measure distance by pacing.
 - e. Determine position by terrain feature identification.
- 6. Describe how to use these land navigation concepts.
 - a. Catching features
 - b. Collecting features
 - c. Aiming off

F. Search Skills

- 1. Demonstrate an understanding of these search tactics:
 - a. Attraction
 - b. Containment
 - c. Contour search
 - d. Hasty search
 - e. Sweep search (Open grid search)
 - f. Line search (Closed grid search)
 - g. Sign cutting
 - h. Interviewing
 - i. Ridges/Drainages
 - j. K-9 grid search
 - k. Corridor search
- 2. Describe procedures for working with tracking or trailing dogs and mantrackers.
- 3. Given a search dog task, discuss and demonstrate the ability to plan the task considering wind direction and other weather conditions, visibility, terrain characteristics and desired POD.
- 4. Demonstrate the ability to perform the task planned above.
- 5. Demonstrate the ability to translate field activity onto a topographic map, including route taken, areas searched and not searched, alerts, clues located, wind direction, times for all of the above and estimated POD for the task.
- 6. Demonstrate the ability to accurately debrief the task, providing the debriefer all of the information listed in (F. 5).

G. Clue and Site Procedures

- 1. Describe the proper approach to a site containing clues or a subject.
- 2. Describe methods to preserve clues and to secure a site.
- 3. Explain the importance of accurate documentation of clues and of subject's location.

H. Helicopter Operations

- 1. Understand the hazards to ground personnel working around a helicopter
- 2. Understand the proper approach to a helicopter, including direction of approach and communication with the crew.

I. Field Communications

- 1. Define the common problems associated with the field use of portable radios and list some possible solutions.
- 2. Describe basic Virginia SAR Council radio procedures.

J. First Aid

- 1. Human
 - a. The handler must have current Basic First Aid, or equivalent, or higher.
 - b. The handler must have current 1-person CPR Authorization.
 - c. The handler must be able to define the following environmentally- related problems and their recognition, treatment and prevention

- i. Hypothermia
 - ii. Hyperthermia
 - iii. Frostbite
 - iv. Dehydration
2. Canine
 - a. The handler must recognize and know how to treat the following:
 - i. Excessive bleeding
 - ii. Heat stroke
 - iii. Bloat
 - iv. Shock
 - v. Dehydration
 - b. The handler must know which human medications carried in his pack may be shared with the dog and which may not be.

IV. CANINE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The dog will demonstrate compliance with the expectations of this section. Specific tests designed for this purpose are described in Section V. TEST METHODS, and are included as part of these standards.

- A. Behavior The dog must not display aggressive behavior.
- B. Obedience
 - 1. The dog must respond appropriately to handler commands.
 - 2. The dog must demonstrate the ability to walk with the handler in the heeling position, maintain a sit-stay or a down-stay, even when the handler is not present, and return to the handler when called.
- C. Agility
 - 1. The dog must demonstrate the ability to negotiate obstacles and walk on unsteady or elevated surfaces.
 - 2. The dog must demonstrate the ability to jump onto and off of elevated surfaces.
- D. Search Skills
 - 1. The dog must demonstrate the ability and stamina to search effectively for at least two hours.
 - 2. The dog team must demonstrate the ability to search day and night in terrain and weather conditions typically encountered in the Commonwealth.
- E. Alert
 - 1. The dog must indicate and the handler must be able to recognize and describe or demonstrate to another individual the dog's behavior when it encounters human scent.
 - 2. The alert must be clear enough that the handler is not likely to miss it or to mistake it for a non-human alert.
- F. Indication
 - 1. Once the dog has located the subject, it must indicate to the handler by some method that it has located the subject. It must then direct the handler to the subject.
 - 2. The method of indicating a find may be visual or audible, but must be clear enough that the handler is not likely to miss or mistake it.

V. TEST METHODS

The following testing procedures are designed to provide a representative evaluation of the expectations listed in Sections III and IV.

A. Handler Written Test

1. The handler will complete a comprehensive written or oral test and will achieve a score of at least 70%.
2. The test of 100 multiple choice questions will be provided by VDES and will be randomly selected from questions supplied by the SAR Dog Standards Committee.
3. The test will be administrated by the unit's evaluator(s) and kept with the unit's records.
4. At a minimum, topics will include:
 - a. scent transport theory
 - b. canine first aid
 - c. land navigation
 - d. search theory
 - e. victim characteristics
 - f. topographical maps
 - g. search strategy
 - h. ASRC grid
 - i. clue and site protection procedures

B. Dog Behavior Evaluation

1. The dog and handler will load into the back of a vehicle, such as a pickup truck, along with at least two other people and two other dogs. The vehicle will then be driven for a period of at least one mile during which time the dog must not display aggressive or uncontrolled behavior.
2. The handler will stand with the dog in the heeling position. A stranger will approach and engage the handler in conversation. The dog must not show aggressive behavior toward the stranger.
3. The dog will be tied to a stationary point on a 6-foot lead. Another handler, with a dog at heel, will walk within 10 feet of the point where the dog is tied. The dog will show no aggressive behavior.

C. Obedience Evaluation

1. The dog will heel on command through a straight walk, a right turn, a left turn, and a 180 degree turn. The dog will be off lead or on a loose lead.
2. The dog will sit or stand in the heeling position when the handler stops.
3. The dog will remain in place without correction for a minimum of five minutes with the handler a minimum of 50 feet away. The dog will remain in place even if people or other dogs are present and moving around the dog. The dog will not be tied.
4. The dog will return to the handler immediately when called.
5. The handler must be able to stop the dog while it is in motion.

D. Agility Evaluation

1. The dog will jump onto an object, such as the tailgate of a pickup truck or an elevated platform, having a minimum height of 2.5 feet.
2. The dog will walk across a board that is at least 12 feet long, no more than 12 inches wide, and is at least 3 feet above the ground. Step 3 can be combined with Step 2.
3. The dog will go through a 36" diameter passageway at least 8 feet long.
4. The dog will perform steps 2 through 4 physically unaided.

E. Field Skills Evaluations

1. The team must successfully complete a 40 Acre Night Field Problem. See Appendix E for evaluation criteria.

2. The team must successfully complete a 160 Acre Field Problem. See Appendix D for evaluation criteria.

F. Field Evaluation Procedures

1. Field evaluations will be conducted on an individual team basis. Each team test will be observed by a minimum of two (2) evaluators, at least one of which must be authorized according to the requirements in Appendix G.
2. Each evaluator will have a check list for scoring each of the field teams. At the conclusion of each test, the evaluators will compare their conclusions.
3. Performance will be rated as either "Satisfactory" or "Unsatisfactory". Both evaluators must agree on the rating for the test to be valid.
4. In the event there are conflicting ratings that the evaluators cannot resolve, the handler may be given a "NO TEST" rating and asked to repeat that test.
5. If any one of the field tests is scored "Unsatisfactory" by both evaluators, the procedures described under "G. Retesting" will apply.
6. Tests should be set up and conducted following the Evaluator instructions given in APPENDIX C.

G. Retesting

1. If the score on any test is below the passing score, the handler may arrange for a retest. The test may not be repeated on the same day.
2. In the case of retesting a field evaluation as the result of an "Unsatisfactory" rating, at least one of the evaluators that originally tested the team must be a participant in the retest. If only one state authorized evaluator was used during the first evaluation, then that evaluator must also participate in the retest.
3. After receiving an Unsatisfactory rating on a retest; if the evaluatee feels that he is being unfairly rated, then he may request a retest with two different evaluators. The evaluators who rated the team unsatisfactory may observe the retest but will have no input on the evaluation results.
This request for retest will be submitted by the evaluatee, in writing, to any of the unit's officers.

H. Method of Conducting State Recognized Evaluations

Groups whose internal evaluation procedures meet or exceed these standards may use those procedures for authorization testing provided the following conditions are met:

1. The evaluations are observed and scored by at least one state authorized evaluators.
2. The checklists used are approved in advance by the SAR Dog Standards Committee.
3. The approved checklist/evaluation form is completed and signed by each evaluator for each field evaluation

VI. AUTHORIZATION PROCEDURES

A. Prerequisites

1. In order to be authorized as an "Air Scent Search Dog Team" the team must be an active member in good standing of a SAR group currently operating under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Commonwealth.
2. Dog must have current immunizations.
3. The applicant must have satisfactorily completed all of the written and practical evaluations described in Section V. TEST METHODS, A through F.

B. Team Authorization Application Instructions

1. The candidate must submit an application for authorization to the office of the State SAR Coordinator.
2. The application form in Appendix I must be signed by the applicant, a state evaluator and a unit officer.
3. Upon receipt of the above documentation of requirements, the State SAR Coordinator will send confirmation of authorization to the individual dog handler.
4. Upon completion of all the requirements outlined in this document, the authorized team is eligible to respond as a state SAR resource on any State Mission with a valid mission number designation, as a representative of the unit holding the MOU.

C. Conditions of Authorization

1. Provided that all requirements are met, the team will be issued a authorization by the Virginia Department of Emergency Services as an "Air Scent Search Dog Team"
2. This authorization does not constitute a license to practice the skills tested, but signifies only that the team holding the certificate has met an established basic standard of knowledge and performance and has demonstrated competency.
3. The authorization will be for the handler and dog (team) that completed the testing together. If the handler wishes to certify as a team with another dog, the entire testing procedure, with the exception of the written test, must be repeated with the new dog
4. The authorization will be valid with the state as long as the organizations MOU with the state is in good standing, and as long as the team is in good standing and meets the requirement of the parent organization .
5. The parent unit must promptly notify VDES of a change of status of any operational team member.

VII. RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

A. Every 2 years:

1. The team must
 - a. be considered to be an active member in good standing within his organization.
 - b. take, and successfully complete, within three months before or after the anniversary date, a 40 Acre Recertification Field Evaluation (See APPENDIX F for evaluation criteria).
2. An officer of the team's unit must complete the Recertification section of the form in APPENDIX I and submit it to VDES.
3. Upon receipt of the form requesting recertification, VDES will renew the team's authorization for two additional years at which time the renewal process described in VII will apply.

B. Failure To Recertify

1. If a team fails to recertify within three (3) months of the expiration date, the authorization is dropped and the candidate will be required to complete the entire application and testing process for authorization again.
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APPENDIX A

GUIDELINES FOR SUGGESTED MINIMUM PERSONAL EQUIPMENT FOR THE AIR SCENT SEARCH DOG TEAM

These items are not required but are suggested equipment. Equivalent gear would be acceptable and this list may be modified to adapt to the seasonal and special conditions. Not all of this would be carried into the field but should be available to the individual searcher on the mission in some form. This would include a vehicle cache or pack to be left at base.

1. Wind shell jacket with hood
2. Water resistant jacket or parka with hood. - A Gore-Tex or similar jacket can serve for both items 1 and 2
3. Rain pants or rain chaps - add gaiters for winter
4. Heavy *wool shirts or sweaters as required
5. * Wool pants
6. Long underwear of *wool, silk, polypro or other suitable synthetic material - cotton thermal underwear is not acceptable
7. *Wool stocking cap or balaclava - a scarf is recommended if a stocking cap is used
8. Heavy *wool socks with lightweight liner socks
9. Leather gloves with *wool liners - mittens required suggested for extremely cold weather
10. Backpacking or mountaineering boots appropriate to the terrain and conditions
11. Backpack or fanny pack suitable for day use
12. Canteens or water bottles containing a minimum of 2 quarts of water.
13. Multiblade pocketknife .
14. Whistle
15. Orienteering-type compass
16. Flashlight or head lamp with alkaline or lithium batteries, spare batteries and spare bulbs - head lamp preferred
17. Waterproof matches or disposable lighter
18. Personal first-aid kit, to include adequate supplies for the dog
19. Storm shelter: Tube tent, space blanket, lightweight tarp
20. Two 30-gallon leaf bags
21. One-day minimum supply of quick energy food for dog and handler.
22. A sleeping bag, an Ensolite or similar sleeping pad, and a suitable shelter will be needed for overnight bivouacs at base.

*Wool or a comparable fabric that retains insulating properties when wet. Down is not acceptable.

APPENDIX B

AIR SCENT SEARCH DOG TEAM GUIDELINES FOR OVERNIGHT BIVOUAC

1. The purpose of the overnight bivouac is to test the individual's ability to spend the night in the out-of-doors in a bivouac and still be able to function adequately the next day.
2. The reason for this requirement is that a search and rescue person may find themselves in a situation in the field where they are forced to spend the night with whatever equipment they happen to have with them.
3. In order to simulate this situation for an evaluation, the following guidelines should apply.
 - a. The individual's equipment should be restricted to what they normally carry in a "day pack" during an actual search.
 - b. The bivouac area should be typical terrain found in searches and far enough from roads and vehicles to create some sense of realism.
 - c. Access to vehicles and equipment caches during the bivouac should be denied.
 - d. The individual must demonstrate the ability to build a fire and shelter.
4. The bivouac should not become an exercise in raw survival. The evaluators should inspect each person's equipment and help ensure that it is at least minimally adequate for the environment.
5. Safety is of paramount importance. The participating individuals should be monitored carefully during the night to ensure that problems such as hypothermia do not develop. The evaluators should have a contingency plan for such emergencies.

APPENDIX C

EVALUATOR INSTRUCTIONS

1. Written test materials will be issued to the evaluator(s) by the State SAR Coordinator upon request. All test materials are confidential and security is the responsibility of the evaluator(s) to whom it is issued.
2. All tests and evaluations will be scored on forms approved by the SAR Dog Standards Committee and will be signed by the evaluator(s).
3. The objectives of the behavior, obedience and agility evaluations are to help ensure that both the dog and the handler can work together as a team safely, efficiently and in conjunction with other teams and personnel. Performance on these evaluations should be as written, but does not have to be to competition (dog trial) standards.
4. The objectives of the 40 acre and the 160 acre field evaluations are to evaluate planning ability search techniques and team stamina. The following guidelines should be observed.
 - a. It is the evaluator's responsibility to ensure that the subjects are properly dressed for the conditions and have adequate food, water and other necessary equipment to remain for the duration of the evaluation.
 - b. The subjects should be placed in the search area far enough apart that the team must search a substantial portion of the area before all of the subjects are located.
 - c. The goal is not just to locate the subject(s) but to evaluate planning and technique. It is possible for a team to do an adequate job of searching an area, and to achieve a high POD without finding all of the subjects.
 - d. It is also possible for the team to locate all of the subjects and still score an overall "Unsatisfactory" on the evaluation.
 - e. As subjects are located, they should immediately leave the area by a route that will not interfere with the continuing search effort.

APPENDIX D

Search Skills Evaluation

160 Acre Problem

1. An area of approximately 160 acres will be used for the evaluation. The area should contain mostly woods with at least some light to moderate underbrush. The area should not contain large areas of extreme terrain such as dense underbrush, swamps, or large streams, or be extremely steep. It should also not contain large areas of open fields.
2. The evaluation will be conducted during daylight hours. Weather conditions should not be extreme, such as heavy rain or snow, or high winds.
3. Two or three subjects will be placed by the evaluators in the search area. The subjects will remain quiet during the evaluation, either sitting or lying down, dressed in muted clothes, and not obvious beyond 25 feet. They are not to assist the team in locating them in any way.
4. The handler will be given a scenario and a map of the search area, and will not be told the number of subjects. He/she must describe to the evaluators how the area will be searched based on terrain, wind direction, visibility and any other pertinent factors.
5. The handler must describe to the evaluators how the dog will alert when it detects human scent. During the actual search, each time the handler observes the dog alerting he/she must clearly inform the evaluators of that fact.
6. The evaluation must last at least two hours from the start of the actual search, and a maximum of six hours. The evaluators may terminate the search at any time if unsafe conditions exist or if they have observed enough to determine if the team will, or will not, pass.
7. At the end of the search, the handler will debrief with the evaluators and will indicate on the map areas searched, areas not searched, wind characteristics, alerts, clues located, estimated POD for the area searched and any other pertinent information.
8. During the evaluation the dog should make a self directed air scent find and indicate on and/or re-find at least one subject. If conditions are such that a self directed find is not probable, then the evaluators may direct the team to a known subject in another identified area, or may set up a smaller secondary problem to observe the dog's alert and re-find.

Appendix E

Search Skills Evaluation

40 Acre Night Problem

1. An area of approximately 40 acres will be used for the evaluation. The area should contain mostly woods with at least some light to moderate underbrush. The area should not contain large areas of extreme terrain such as dense underbrush, swamps, or large streams, or be extremely steep. It should also not contain large areas of open fields.
2. The evaluation will be conducted during night time hours, and should begin at least one hour after sunset. Weather conditions should not be extreme, such as heavy rain or snow, or high winds.
3. One or two subjects will be placed by the evaluators in the search area. The subjects will remain quiet during the evaluation, either sitting or lying down, dressed in muted clothes, and not obvious beyond 25 feet. They are not to assist the team in locating them in any way.
4. The handler will be given a scenario and a map of the search area, and will be told the number of subjects. He/she must describe to the evaluators how the area will be searched based on terrain, wind direction, visibility and any other pertinent factors.
5. The handler must describe to the evaluators how the dog will alert when it detects human scent. During the actual search, each time the handler observes the dog alerting he/she must clearly inform the evaluators of that fact.
6. The evaluation may last a maximum of three hours. The evaluators may terminate the search at any time if unsafe conditions exist, or if they have observed enough to determine that the team will, or will not, pass. If the subject(s) is/(are) found within an hour, the evaluators may require the team to continue searching until the evaluators are comfortable with the handler's night skills.
7. At the end of the search the handler will debrief with the evaluators and will indicate on the map, areas searched, areas not searched, estimated POD for the area searched and any other pertinent information.
8. During the evaluation the dog must should make a self-directed air scent find and indicate/refind on at least one subject. If conditions are such that a self directed find are is not probable, then the evaluators may direct the team to a known subject in another identified area, or may set up a smaller secondary problem to observe the dog's alert and indication and/or refind .

Appendix F

Field Skills Recertification

40 Acre Field Problem

1. An area of approximately 40 acres will be used for the evaluation. The area should contain mostly woods with at least some light to moderate underbrush. The area should not contain large areas of extreme terrain such as dense underbrush, swamps, or large streams, or be extremely steep. It should also not contain large areas of open fields.
2. The evaluation may be conducted at night or during daylight hours. Weather conditions should not be extreme, such as heavy rain or snow, or high winds.
3. Zero to two subjects will be placed by the evaluators in the search area. The number of victims will be unknown to the handler. The subjects will remain quiet during the evaluation, either sitting or lying down, dressed in muted clothes, and not obvious beyond 25 feet. They are not to assist the team in locating them in any way.
4. The handler will be given a scenario and a map of the search area, but will not be told the number of subjects. He/she must describe to the evaluators how the area will be searched based on terrain, wind direction, visibility and any other pertinent factors.
5. The handler must describe to the evaluators how the dog will alert when it detects human scent. During the actual search, each time the handler observes the dog alerting he/she must clearly inform the evaluators of that fact.
6. The evaluation must last at least 1 hour from the start of the actual search, and a maximum of three hours. The evaluators may terminate the search at any time if unsafe conditions exist or after 1 hour if they have observed enough to determine if the team will or will not pass.
7. At the end of the search the handler will debrief with the evaluators and will indicate on the map areas searched, areas not searched, wind characteristics, alerts, clues located, estimated POD for the area searched and any other pertinent information.
8. If a subject or subjects have been placed in the search area during the evaluation the dog must make a self-directed air scent find and indication/refind on at least one subject. If no subjects were placed in the search area, the team will be directed to a smaller secondary problem for the evaluators to observe the dog's alert and refind. If subjects are placed in the search area but conditions are such that a self-directed find is not probable, the evaluators may set up a smaller secondary problem to observe the dog's alert and indication/refind.

APPENDIX G

CRITERIA FOR STATE EVALUATORS

In order to evaluate dog teams to these State Air Scent Dog Authorization Standards, an individual must satisfy the following criteria:

- A. The individual must be an active operational member of his unit.
- B. The operational member must have been nominated by his unit to become a state evaluator.
- C. The handler must have responded to a minimum of five (5) searches and performed or assisted in a minimum of ten (10) air scent dog search tasks.
- D. Prior to performing evaluations as a state evaluator, the handler must participate in a state wide evaluators' seminar.
- E. The state is responsible for advising evaluators of major changes in the standards/evaluation procedures.
- F. The evaluator must remain a unit member in good standing.

APPENDIX H

IMPLEMENTATION

- A. Unit Recognition: Upon implementation of these standards, the units initially recognized as being state authorized organizations qualified to field state authorized dog handlers are:
1. Blue & Gray Search and Rescue Dogs, Inc.
 2. DOGS-East, Inc.
 3. K-9 Alert Search and Rescue Dogs, Inc.
 4. Mid-Atlantic D. O. G. S. , Inc.
 5. Search Services America, Inc.
 6. Virginia Search and Rescue Dog Association, Inc.
- B. Team Recognition: Upon implementation of these standards, for each of the identified organizations in Section A, above, each individual Dog Team that has met their unit's requirement for operational status will be recognized as state authorized air scent search dog teams. From the effective date of these standards, each of those dog teams will recertify as required by these standards and their organizations.
- C. In order for groups to be considered as Agents of the Commonwealth, all persons within a group, working in this discipline, must at least adhere to these minimum standards and are encouraged to go above and beyond this level of training.

These Standards will be maintained by the Virginia Department of Emergency Services, Operations Division and will remain in affect until updated or resinded by the Department.

Commonwealth of Virginia

Search and Rescue Council SAR Dog Standards Committee

Search Dog Aggression Test/Behavior Evaluation Form

Dog Handler _____ **Date** _____
Location _____ **Dog** _____
Evaluators _____ **and** _____

Behavior

1. The dog and handler are loaded into the back of a vehicle with at least two other people and two other dogs.
 - a) The vehicle was driven for a distance of _____ mile(s). (Must be at least one mile.)
 - b) The dog did not show aggressive behavior. Pass Fail

2. The handler stood with the dog in the heeling position. A stranger approached and engaged the handler in conversation.
 - a) Dog remained in the heel position. Pass Fail
 - b) Dog did not show aggressive behavior toward stranger. Pass Fail

The dog was tied to a stationary point on a 6 foot lead. Another handler, with a dog at heel, walked within 10 feet of the point where the dog being tested was tied.
 Dog showed no aggressive behavior. Pass Fail

Overall Score: Passed _____
 Failed _____

Evaluator Signature _____ Date _____

Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Search Dog Obedience Evaluation Form

Dog Handler _____ **Date** _____
Location _____ **Dog** _____
Evaluators _____ **and** _____

1) Heel:

The dog heeled on command on a loose lead or off-lead

- | | | | |
|---|------|------|--|
| a) Straight walk | | | |
| responded appropriately to command | Pass | Fail | |
| remained in position | Pass | Fail | |
| b) Right turn | | | |
| responded appropriately to command | Pass | Fail | |
| remained in position | Pass | Fail | |
| c) Left turn | | | |
| responded appropriately to command | Pass | Fail | |
| remained in position | Pass | Fail | |
| d) 180 degree turn | | | |
| responded appropriately to command | Pass | Fail | |
| remained in position | Pass | Fail | |
| e) Stop | | | |
| remained in position | Pass | Fail | |
| 2) Stay The dog remained in place (sitting or down) without correction for a minimum of five minutes with the handler at least 50 feet away with people and/or other dogs present and moving around the dog. | | | |
| responded appropriately to command | Pass | Fail | |
| remained in position | Pass | Fail | |
| 3) Recall The dog returned to the handler when called | | | |
| responded immediately to command | Pass | Fail | |
| came to within a reasonable distance of handler and stopped | Pass | Fail | |
| 4) Stop in Motion While the dog was in motion, it stopped on command from the handler | | | |
| responded appropriately to command | Pass | Fail | |
| remained in position until released | Pass | Fail | |

Overall Score: Passed _____
 Failed _____

Evaluator Signature _____ Date _____

Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Search Dog Agility Evaluation Form

Dog Handler _____ **Date** _____
Location _____ **Dog** _____
Evaluators _____ **and** _____

On command, the dog jumped onto an object having a minimum height of 2.5 feet.
Dog did not show undue fear Pass Fail
Dog completed task, above, physically unaided Pass Fail

On command, the dog walked across a board that was at least 12 feet long, no more than 12 inches wide and at least 3 feet above the ground.
Dog did not show undue fear Pass Fail
Dog completed task, above, physically unaided Pass Fail

On command, the dog went through a 36" diameter passageway at least 8 feet long.
Dog did not show undue fear Pass Fail
Dog completed task, above, physically unaided Pass Fail

Overall Score: Passed _____
Failed _____

Evaluator Signature _____ Date _____

Map & Compass Skills Evaluation

On a full size 7.5 minute USGS topo map:

1. Identify north, east, south, west.
2. Identify at least two different types of buildings.
3. Determine the magnetic declination for this map.
4. Determine the contour interval for this map.
5. State what an area shaded in green, white, and purple signify.
6. What is the scale for this map?
7. When was the map drawn and revised?
8. Define catching feature and identify several on the map.
9. Locate on map and identify at least three different types of roads.
10. Locate on map and identify at least three different types of water features.
11. Measure the distance between two road intersections in feet and meters.
12. Identify a hill top, drainage, swamp.

Field Evaluation:

Layout a compass course to find at least two prominent features. The course should be approximately one mile long and in roughly a triangle shape. The student can not use a GPS. The student must find all features and return to starting location. There is no time limit.

Overall Score: Passed _____
Failed _____

Evaluator Signature _____ Date _____

HASTY SEARCH / TRAIL PROBLEM

HANDLER / DOG: _____ DATE: _____

LOCATION: _____ WEATHER / TERRAIN: _____

EVALUATORS: _____ START: _____ FINISH: _____

HANDLER SKILLS:

- *1. Does handler have a plan of action? Pass Fail
- *2. Does handler recognize the dog's alert? Pass Fail
- *3. Does handler maintain control over dog? Pass Fail
- 4. Does handler cover the sector adequately? Pass Fail
- 5. Does handler change plan to meet changing conditions? Pass Fail
- 6. Does handler reward the dog adequately? Pass Fail
- 7. Is dog directed well by handler? Pass Fail
- 8. Is handler alert for visual clues? Pass Fail

DOG SKILLS:

- *1. Does dog attempt to follow up on alerts? Pass Fail
- *2. Does dog close well on victim? Pass Fail
- *3. Does dog do obvious refind/ and or bark alert? Pass Fail
- *4. Does dog take handler to the victim? Pass Fail
- 5. Does dog range well? Pass Fail
- 6. Does dog respond well to commands? Pass Fail
- 7. Does dog avoid distractions? Pass Fail
- 8. Does dog seem motivated? Pass Fail

DOG / HANDLER TEAM:

- 1. Do dog and handler appear to be at ease together? Pass Fail
- 2. Do dog and handler make an effective team? Pass Fail

* Unsatisfactory score in these items (score of three or four) results in failure of the evaluation. K-9 Alert Search and Rescue Dogs, Inc.

Overall Score: Passed _____
Failed _____

Evaluator Signature _____ Date _____

Virginia Search and Rescue Council 40 Acre Night Evaluation

Handler _____ Dog _____ Date _____
 Location _____ Weather Conditions _____
 Time Started _____ Time Completed _____ Time Found Subject One _____
 Time Found Subject Two (if applicable) _____ Pass _____ Fail _____

* **Starred items denote skills which must receive a passing score.**

Handler Skills

	Pass	Fail
1. Was handler adequately attired and equipped for conditions?	Pass	Fail
2. Did handler demonstrate the ability to glean enough information from briefing to adequately plan a strategy?	Pass	Fail
3. Did handler develop an appropriate strategy based on information acquired in interview?	Pass	Fail
4. Did handler follow strategy?	Pass	Fail
5. Did handler adjust strategy appropriately based on new information?	Pass	Fail
6. Did handler articulate dog's alert?	Pass	Fail
7. Did handler inform the evaluator each time he saw dog's alert?	Pass	Fail
8. Did handler articulate the dog's indication?	Pass	Fail
9. Was handler alert to visual clues?	Pass	Fail
10. Does handler demonstrate good land navigational field skills using map and compass? *	Pass	Fail
11. Did handler cover area adequately?	Pass	Fail
12. Did handler mark map with appropriate pertinent information?	Pass	Fail
13. Did handler accurately debrief the task? *	Pass	Fail
14. Did handler demonstrate basic Virginia SAR Council radio procedures?	Pass	Fail
15. Is handler in tune with dog's needs?	Pass	Fail
16. Is handler comfortable searching at night?	Pass	Fail

Dog Skills

1. Did the dog stay focused on search?	Pass	Fail
2. Is the dog easily refocused after being distracted?	Pass	Fail
3. Is the dog willing to leave the handler to follow up a scent?	Pass	Fail
4. Does the dog search effectively?	Pass	Fail
5. Did the dog make a self-directed find on Subject 1?	Pass	Fail
6. Did the dog indicate to the handler that it had found Subject 1?*	Pass	Fail
7. Did the dog direct the handler to Subject 1?*	Pass	Fail
8. Did the dog make a self-directed find on Subject 2?	Pass	Fail
9. Did the dog indicate to the handler that it had found Subject 2?*	Pass	Fail
10. Did the dog direct the handler to Subject 2?*	Pass	Fail
11. Does the dog work confidently at night?*	Pass	Fail

Team Skills

1. Does the handler have adequate control over the dog?	Pass	Fail
2. Do the dog and handler make an effective team? *	Pass	Fail

Evaluator 1 _____ Evaluator 2 _____

Virginia Search and Rescue Council 160 Acre Evaluation

Handler _____ Dog _____ Date _____
 Location _____ Weather Conditions _____
 Time Started _____ Time Completed _____ Time Found Subject One _____
 Time Found Subject Two _____ Time Found Subject Three _____

* Starred items denote skills which must receive a passing score.

Handler Skills

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1. Was handler adequately attired and equipped for conditions? | Pass | Fail |
| 2. Did handler demonstrate the ability to glean enough information from briefing to adequately plan a strategy? | Pass | Fail |
| 3. Did handler develop an appropriate strategy based on information acquired in interview? | Pass | Fail |
| 4. Did handler follow strategy? | Pass | Fail |
| 5. Did handler adjust strategy appropriately based on new information? | Pass | Fail |
| 6. Did handler articulate dog's alert? | Pass | Fail |
| 7. Did handler inform the evaluator each time he saw dog's alert? | Pass | Fail |
| 8. Did handler articulate the dog's indication? | Pass | Fail |
| 9. Was handler alert to visual clues? | Pass | Fail |
| 10. Does handler demonstrate good land navigational field skills using map and compass? * | Pass | Fail |
| 11. Did handler cover area adequately? | Pass | Fail |
| 12. Did handler mark map with appropriate pertinent information? | Pass | Fail |
| 13. Did handler accurately debrief the task? * | Pass | Fail |
| 14. Did handler demonstrate basic Virginia SAR Council radio procedures? | Pass | Fail |
| 15. Is handler in tune with dog's needs? | Pass | Fail |
| 16. Is handler comfortable searching at night? | Pass | Fail |

Dog Skills

- | | | | |
|--|------|------|-----|
| 1. Did the dog stay focused on search? | Pass | Fail | |
| 2. Is the dog easily refocused after being distracted? | Pass | Fail | |
| 3. Is the dog willing to leave the handler to follow up a scent? | Pass | Fail | |
| 4. Does the dog search effectively? | Pass | Fail | |
| 5. Did the dog make a self-directed find on Subject 1? | Pass | Fail | |
| 6. Did the dog indicate to the handler that it had found Subject 1?* | Pass | Fail | |
| 7. Did the dog direct the handler to Subject 1?* | Pass | Fail | |
| 8. Did the dog make a self-directed find on Subject 2? | Pass | Fail | |
| 9. Did the dog indicate to the handler that it had found Subject 2?* | Pass | Fail | |
| 10. Did the dog direct the handler to Subject 2? | Pass | Fail | |
| 11. Did the dog make a self-directed find on Subject 3? | Pass | Fail | N/A |
| 12. Did the dog indicate to the handler that it had found Subject 3? | Pass | Fail | N/A |
| 13. Did the dog direct the handler to Subject 3? | Pass | Fail | N/A |

Team Skills

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1. Does the handler have adequate control over the dog? | Pass | Fail |
| 2. Do the dog and handler make an effective team? * | Pass | Fail |

Evaluator 1 _____ Evaluator 2 _____

APPLICATION FOR AUTHORIZATION

AS Commonwealth of Virginia AIR SCENT SEARCH DOG TEAM

Handler Name _____ Dog Name _____ Unit Name _____

My dog and I have taken the following tests and wish to apply to be authorized by the state to become an Air Scent Search Dog Team.

Type of Test	Test Score	Date Taken	State Evaluator(s) present
Written			
40 Acre Night			
160 Acre			
Agility			
Aggression			
Obedience			

Date Signature of Applicant

The handler has the following First Aid Certification: _____, currently holds a CPR certificate and is in good standing with the unit. The dog has current inoculations against the following:
_____.

Date Unit Officer Signature Title

The team listed above has, in my opinion, qualified as an Air Scent Search Dog Team under the standards of the state of Virginia. Therefore, I recommend that the team be allowed to participate on searches as a state resource in the capacity of Air Scent Search Dog Team.

Date State Evaluator

APPLICATION FOR RECERTIFICATION

as Commonwealth of Virginia AIR SCENT SEARCH DOG TEAM

Date _____
Handler Name _____ Dog _____ Unit Name _____

The team above successfully completed a 40 acre test, on _____. The state evaluator(s) evaluating the test was/were _____ and _____. The handler has the following First Aid Certification: _____, currently holds a CPR certificate, and is in good standing with the unit. The dog has current inoculations against the following:
_____.

Unit Officer Signature Title Date

The team listed above is in good standing in this unit, and in our opinion, remains qualified as an Air Scent Search Dog Team under the standards of the state of Virginia. Therefore, we recommend that the team be recertified as a state resource.

Date State Evaluator