



# American Rescue Dog Association

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General Standards  
(Revisions 7/1977, 9/1987, 9/2002, 3/2004)

## I. Handler Standards

Philosophy: Handler action should not jeopardize the lives of the subject(s) or searchers or the effectiveness of the mission.

### A. First Aid

1. American Red Cross First Aid Responding to Emergencies Course or equivalent and CPR.
2. An additional 20 hours of unit documented first aid training every 3 years to include environmental emergencies.
3. Dog care and maintenance – heat, cold, nutrition, *etc.*

### B. Wilderness Navigation and Safety

1. Reference Text: Be Expert with Map and Compass, by Bjorn Kjellstrom
2. Philosophy: Being generally aware of where you are at all times day and night even without a compass.
3. Intimate familiarity with contour maps
4. Mapping an area in conjunction with a dog evaluation. Draw both map of the area and where you were in the area.
5. General information on map systems.

### C. Wilderness Survival - Reference Text or Equivalent: Surviving the Unexpected Wilderness Emergency, by Gene Fear

### D. Avalanche Rescue and Safety - For all-purpose units

### E. Disaster Rescue and Safety - For all-purpose units

### F. Radio

1. Basic radio operation
  - a. Operating knowledge of FCC regulations as they apply to handler's radio
  - b. Use of radio
  - c. Protocol on air
    - i). Coded commentary as per ARDA
    - ii). Professional language



2. Elementary troubleshooting
  - a. Power
  - b. Connectors
  - c. Antenna
3. Emergency Procedures
  - a. Click code
  - b. Jury-rig an antenna
4. Power sources
5. Your frequency - emergency and general
  - a. Information on others
  - b. O.L. or radio officer should know specifics on others

#### **G. Equipment - Field Gear**

1. Philosophy: 24 hours survival for handler, subject, and dog - minimal first aid, food (with intent to travel as light as possible)
2. Equipment list to supplement

#### **H. Familiarity with the Search and Rescue Structure**

1. Local
2. State
3. National

#### **I. Awareness of Special Skills (See Unit Standards)**

#### **J. Dog Knowledge**

1. Motivation
2. Training
3. Behavior patterns

#### **K. Base Camp Operations**

1. General Philosophy
  - a. Handlers - Every handler should have moderate (medium) level skill
    - i). In order to substitute
    - ii). In order to enhance base operations
  - b. Base Camp Operator
    - i). Should have above average skills
    - ii). Should have a minimum of 20 hours in-field experience with handler(s)



2. Philosophy of Base Operator: A person skilled in running the coordination center for the unit and thereby providing maximum support to handlers in all phases of the operation.
3. Prime Functions
  - a. 100% manning of radio and maintaining contacts
  - b. Liaison with agency and other units as necessary
  - c. Maintenance of maps and handler location (general)
  - d. Food and living support for handlers and dogs
  - e. Public relations and protocol as necessary
  - f. Provide backup of equipment, assistance and/or transportation for field teams

#### **L. Transportation**

1. Procedures
2. Problems
3. Safety

#### **M. Evacuation Management**

1. Philosophy: Every handler should be able to lead a non-technical evacuation
2. Basic equipment - blankets, lights, safety rope, brush cutting, food
3. Litter team techniques - *i.e.* number of people, rest stops, changeover, pacing
4. Helicopter requirements - route selection, group management, rendezvous coordination

#### **N. Physical Requirements for Dog Handlers**

1. Philosophy: Every handler should appear competent and be able to make a substantial contribution, even under adverse conditions.
2. Requirements
  - a. 3 miles in 30 minutes, or
  - b. Modified Harvard Step Test - passing rate, or
  - c. Search with 20-30 lb pack over rough and varied terrain for 6-8 hours
3. Recommended
  - a. Annual physical checkup
  - b. Med-alert tags

## **II. Dog Standards**

### **A. Breed: Registerable German Shepherd Dog of sociable temperament**

### **B. General Training: As per Dog Obedience sheets, Field Tests and Specialties**



### III. Handler/Dog Standards

- A. Handler's performance will be observed and evaluated according to handler standards**
- B. Dog's performance will be observed and evaluated according to the dog standards and as per the Dog Obedience Evaluation**
- C. Wilderness Work: As per Wilderness Search Evaluation**
- D. Collapsed Structure Work: As per Collapsed Structure Search Evaluation**
- E. Human Remains Detection Work: As per Human Remains Detection Evaluation**
- F. Water Work: As per Water Search Evaluation**
- G. Trailing/Tracking Work: As per Trailing /Tracking Evaluation – under development**
- H. Avalanche Work: Area specific - no current standard**

### IV. Unit Standards

- A. Unit specifies which they want, local or remote evaluation**
- B. Must have no less than three certifiable wilderness handler/dog teams plus one base camp operator for evaluation**
- C. Equipment**
  - 1. Local Base Equipment
    - a. Physical Form - some form of organized base set-up that provides a center for communications, information and living with a neat, organized appearance
    - b. Equipment - communications, lights, first aid supplies, map materials, evacuation equipment, tools, water and food (with appropriate cooking facilities), shelter from excessive heat, cold or wet, *etc.*
  - 2. Remote Base Equipment
    - a. Physical Form - same as above
    - b. Equipment - as per Flyaway Kits list
- D. Skills - workable knowledge by all, expertise by some**
  - 1. Interviewing
  - 2. Terrain analysis
  - 3. Subject profiles
  - 4. Strategy and tactics
  - 5. Visual tracking
  - 6. Evacuation
  - 7. Communications



**E. Operational Leader Skills - above average abilities in most areas**

1. Search management skills - strategy and tactics, subject behavior, medical management, *etc.*
2. Special coordination abilities - familiarity with agency SOP'S, other units, *etc.*

**F. Base Operator Skills - see philosophy under Base Camp**

1. All facets of Base Operations
2. Extra knowledge in communications, first aid, interviewing, public relations

**G. Operations - SOP - unit should have a well-defined one**

V. Protocol - basis in ARDA's files

**A. Appropriate Dress**

**B. Organized Operations Structure**

**C. Dissemination of Information on a Search**

**D. Agency and Other Unit Rapport**

**E. Conduct**



## Dog Obedience Evaluation

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1. Heeling - Both on and off-lead. On-lead work to be done on a “loose” lead. On command “forward” the handler will command the dog to heel. The dog will walk on the left side of handler, close by with no crowding, forging or lagging. At the command “halt” the handler will stop, and the dog will sit. Heeling will include right and left turns, about turns, fast, slow and normal pace.
2. Heeling in a Crowd - In addition to heeling alone, the handler will heel the dog, off-lead, through a scattered group of at least 5 people . The handler should have dog’s attention at all times.
3. Stop on Recall - The dog shall be placed on a stay command 80 to 100 feet from the handler and the evaluator. Upon direction from the evaluator, the handler will call the dog. The handler will then stop the dog when directed by the evaluator. Once the stop command has been given, an immediate change in gait is required and the canine must then come to a stop. The dog may drop, sit, or stand and will be judged by the quickness of its response. The handler may give multiple commands. The dog will remain stationary until released or recalled by the handler at the direction of the evaluator.
4. High Jump - On command the dog will jump into back of pick-up truck or equivalent. Height to be about 36 inches.
5. People Acceptance – The handler will “tie out” the dog (e.g., tie lead to a fence or a tree, etc.) and leave it in view of the evaluator. The handler will proceed to a designated area out of the dog’s sight. After a minimum of 1 minute out of sight, a team member (not family member) will untie the dog and return it to its handler.
6. Vehicle Behavior – Dog will be in the handler’s vehicle. Three people, one at a time, will pass within 1 to 2 feet of the vehicle, drop an object, pick it up and move on. They will make no aggressive moves or talk to the dog. They will not touch the vehicle. The dog will show no overt aggression. The dog’s behavior will be assessed and deemed acceptable or unacceptable by the evaluator.
7. Response to Another Handler - Heeling on-lead, in the manner described in Exercise #1, with another unit member (not family member).
8. Control – The dog, under control, will precede the handler across an elevated narrow surface approximately 12 feet long and 12 inches wide.
9. Swimming – The handler will demonstrate the dog’s willingness to enter the water and its competence in swimming.
10. Long Down - A minimum of 3 dogs will be placed in a down-stay in a group. There will be approximately 5 feet separation between dogs. The leashes may be removed or left clipped to the collar, handlers’ preference. Upon direction from the evaluator, the handlers will move out of sight of the dogs. The dogs must remain in the area where they were downed, under the supervision of a unit-provided monitor, for a period of 20 minutes. Dogs may shift, sit up, go down again, but must remain in the same general location. The monitor may correct the dogs.



11. Confinement – The dog will be put with the handler in a very confined space, such as the floor of the front seat of a car for a period of time long enough for the evaluator to determine whether the dog exhibits acceptable behavior in a confined situation.
12. Figure Eight – Two posts, each consisting of a handler with dog sitting quietly on lead in heel position, will be placed approximately 8 feet apart facing each other. The handler being evaluated will heel his/her dog, on a loose lead, in a figure 8 around and close to the 2 posts. At the direction of the evaluator, the handler will sit the dog. The figure 8 will be worked in both directions. The dog being evaluated must remain under control and display no overt aggression. For the test to be fair, the dogs acting as posts must also remain under control and display no overt aggression to each other or the dog being evaluated.



## Wilderness Search Evaluation

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1. Open Field Problem - An area approximate  $\frac{1}{4}$  sq. mile. A hidden subject must be found by air scenting (about 1 hour).\*

Objective: Direct observation of the dog's air scenting ability. Evaluators will not only consider the successful conclusion, but will also consider the following factors:

- a) Development by the handler of a good search strategy appropriate to the weather, cover, and terrain. Execution of same.
- b) Eagerness of the dog to work.
- c) Long range detection and quartering to scent source by dog (appropriate for wind conditions).
- d) Good ranging distance of the dog appropriate to open field cover and terrain.
- e) Ability of handler to recognize and correctly interpret the dog's behavior.
- f) Eagerness of dog to approach an unfamiliar person.
- g) A good "found subject" indication by the dog (recall/refind or bark alert).

\*Note: ARDA Standards require that  $\frac{1}{4}$  sq. mile of open field be cleared in approximately 2 hours.

2. Trail Problem - A trail  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1 mile long, through moderately dense underbrush. The subject may or may not cross the trail and will be hidden approximately 100 feet off to the side of the trail. The dog and handler will perform a "hasty" search.

Objective: The dog must recognize where the subject has crossed the trail or be able to pick up the drifting scent from the subject and close in with minimal assistance from handler while handler remains on trail edge. Evaluators will not only consider the successful conclusion, but will also consider the following factors:

- a) Development by the handler of a good search strategy appropriate to the weather, cover, and terrain. Execution of same.
- b) Eagerness of the dog to work.
- c) Willingness of dog to leave beaten path and forge through brush to find the subject (with minimal encouragement from handler).\*
- d) Ability of handler to recognize and correctly interpret the dog's behavior.
- e) Eagerness of dog to approach an unfamiliar person.
- f) A good "found subject" indication by the dog (recall/refind or bark alert).

\*Note: On a trail problem, the dog is expected to run on the trail in front of the handler; it is not expected to quarter back and forth on either side of the trail. Only when the dog encounters scent is it expected to leave the trail to find the subject.

3. Light Brush Problem - An area approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  sq. mile entirely covered in light brush. The subject may be placed anywhere within the given area. The dog and handler must find the subject by air scenting or by picking up the fresh trail of the subject (about 2 hours).\*



Objective: To observe the dog and handler's ability to work together to solve a problem. Evaluators will not only consider the successful conclusion, but will also consider the following factors:

- a) Development by the handler of a good search strategy appropriate to the weather, cover, and terrain. Execution of same.
- b) Eagerness of the dog to work.
- c) Ability of the handler to navigate in light brush.
- d) Ability of handler/dog team to work efficiently and effectively in light brush.
- e) Handler ability to assess detection distance for dog according to weather, cover, and terrain.
- f) Good ranging distance of the dog appropriate to light brush cover and terrain.
- g) Ability of handler to recognize and correctly interpret the dog's behavior.
- h) Eagerness of dog to approach an unfamiliar person.
- i) A good "found subject" indication by the dog (recall/refind or bark alert).

\*Note: ARDA standards require that ¼ sq. mile of light brush be cleared in approximately 4 hours.

- 4. Dense Brush Problem - An area covered in dense brush. The subject is placed anywhere in the area. Must last at least 2 hours with a good close in by the dog.

Objective: To observe the ability to problem solve as a team and evaluate the physical capabilities and adroitness of both to handle the cover and terrain. May be included as part of the multiple person problem. Evaluators will not only consider the successful conclusion, but will also consider the following factors:

- a) Development by the handler of a good search strategy appropriate to the weather, cover, and terrain. Execution of same.
- b) Eagerness of the dog to work.
- c) Ability of handler to navigate in dense brush.
- d) Ability of handler/dog team to work efficiently and effectively in dense brush.
- e) Handler ability to assess detection distance for dog according to weather, cover, and terrain.
- f) Good ranging distance of the dog appropriate to dense brush cover and terrain.
- g) Ability of handler to recognize and correctly interpret the dog's behavior.
- h) Eagerness of dog to approach an unfamiliar person.
- i) A good "found subject" indication by the dog (recall/refind or bark alert).

- 5. Night Problem - Requirements of #3 (Light Brush) or #4 (Dense Brush) except the problem is to be worked at night. Must last at least 2 hours with a good close in by the dog.

Objective: To observe night navigation and problem solving. May be included as part of the multiple person problem.



6. Long Multiple Person Problem - An area which contains three persons hidden in three different locations. Should last between 4 to 6 hours with a good close in by the dog.

Objective: To ensure that the dog will continue working after he has found one or more persons and remains effective in long term working situation. Evaluators will not only consider the successful conclusion, but will also consider the following factors:

- a) Development by the handler of a good search strategy appropriate to the weather, cover, and terrain. Execution of same.
- b) Eagerness of the dog to work.
- c) Ability of handler to navigate in various types of cover and terrain.
- d) Ability of handler/dog team to work efficiently and effectively in various types of cover and terrain.
- e) Working stamina of both handler and dog in a variety of terrains.
- f) Ability to memorize terrain.
- g) Handler ability to assess detection distance for dog according to weather, cover, and terrain.
- h) Good ranging distance of the dog appropriate to various types of cover and terrain.
- i) Demonstrate appropriate use of hasty or close grid search methods appropriate to weather, cover, and terrain.
- j) Ability of handler to recognize and correctly interpret the dog's behavior.
- k) Eagerness of dog to approach an unfamiliar person.
- l) A good "found subject" indication by the dog (recall/refind or bark alert).
- m) Ability and willingness of dog to return to work and find successive people.



## Collapsed Structure Search Evaluation

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The American Rescue Dog Association uses the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Canine Search Readiness Evaluation as the standard for collapsed structure search. Those handler/dog teams that have passed the FEMA evaluation administered by FEMA shall be considered to have met the ARDA collapsed structure search certification requirements. ARDA handler/dog teams that pass a collapsed structure evaluation equivalent to FEMA's but administered by ARDA evaluators using FEMA standards shall also be considered to have met the ARDA collapse structure search certification requirements. Handler/dog teams so certified are expected to continue training at a frequency to ensure operational skills at FEMA standard level.

ARDA teams responding to collapsed structure incidences must use extreme caution. Handler/dog teams shall not be deployed into structures until the structure has been evaluated by an entity qualified to assess the structure's integrity. If a structure is to be searched, each handler/dog team must have at least one escort.

Note: The term "collapsed structure" includes structures that are visibly damaged or otherwise suspected of being in a condition where collapse or injury could occur.



## Human Remains Detection Evaluation

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- I. Purpose: To ensure a well trained dog team's ability to effectively search for, accurately locate, and indicate various scent sources of human remains, both above and underground.

Note: Due to the increased demand for the use of dogs trained to assist in the location of human remains, it is highly recommended that the operational wilderness dog receive additional training specific to locating human remains.

- II. Eligibility Requirements for Certification in Human Remains Detection:

- A.** The handler may qualify his/her operational wilderness dog for human remains detection.
- B.** The handler may qualify a separate dog for the use of human remains detection once the handler has reached operational status for wilderness search. A handler shall not train a dog for the sole purpose of human remains detection without maintaining an operational wilderness dog. Exceptions will be made if a physical limitation or unusual circumstance exists, however, the handler must have prior operational wilderness experience and maintain his/her operational skills. The handler will have to submit his/her request to have a human remains detection-only dog in writing to the Unit's Training Director and the Unit's Board of Directors for approval.

- III. Evaluation

**A. Setup**

1. The handler and dog must complete the obedience elements referenced in this standard.
2. The handler must have a human remains detection training log completed and present it to his/her unit's Evaluation Officer (or equivalent) prior to requesting an evaluation.
3. Prior to the evaluation, the handler must have completed crime scene preservation training, to be provided by the ARDA Unit.
4. Efforts shall be made to ensure consistent test conditions for teams within each ARDA Unit.
5. The handler/dog team will be allowed a specific amount of time to search each test area. The handler will be given a 2 minute warning. The handler may declare an area completed before the allotted time has expired, but having done so may not re-enter the area later to re-search it.
6. The cadaver materials used for this evaluation, hereafter referred to as the positive scent source, will be of human origin (*e.g.*, blood, teeth, hair, tissues, bone, body dirt, *etc.*). The positive scent source may be placed in a container (*e.g.*, PVC pipe, jar, bag, *etc.*), attached to articles of clothing (*e.g.*, shoes, shirt, *etc.*), or attached to an instrument that might be used in a crime (*e.g.*, knife, club, hammer, *etc.*). The types of materials used as well as the vehicles used to contain them will be determined by the evaluator(s).

Note: The safety of the dog is to be taken into account by the evaluator when selecting and placing articles and cadaver material.



## **B. Field Evaluation – Wilderness Scenario**

1. The handler/dog team will be given 3 areas to search. Each area will measure 75 feet by 75 feet and will have marked boundaries. There will be a minimum of 150 feet between areas.
2. Two areas will contain one positive scent source each. One of these positive scent sources will be above ground and one will be buried. The above ground positive scent source will be placed no more than 30 inches above ground level approximately 1 hour prior to the evaluation. The buried positive scent source will be covered by 4 to 6 inches of loose soil and/or vegetation approximately 24 hours prior to the evaluation. The positive scent sources may or may not be accessible to the dog (*e.g.*, bones may be placed in a cage in order to preserve the material).
3. The third test area will contain no positive scent sources. An empty container (*e.g.*, PVC, bag, etc.) with no live human scent or cadaver material contamination will be placed in this test area.
4. The areas will be presented to the team being evaluated in random order; the team will not be told which areas contain a positive scent source.
5. The test areas will consist of a mix of terrains with open and wooded sections and will contain small amounts of debris (*e.g.*, thick ground cover, rocks, leaves, dead branches, etc.)
6. There will be a total of 5 disturbed areas (*e.g.*, false holes) spread across the three search areas.
7. One distraction (non-human scent source, such as food or animal remains) will be placed in one of the search areas.
8. The dog will be worked off-leash.
9. The handler must remain outside the boundaries of each test area until the dog indicates it has made a find and the handler calls the indication.
10. Upon calling the indication, the handler will be given permission to enter the search area. Once in the search area the handler must point to the location of the positive scent source.
11. The handler/dog team will have one attempt of up to 10 minutes duration to search each of the 3 sites.
12. In order for the team to pass the evaluation:
  - a. The dog must successfully locate and perform its trained indication and the handler must declare a “find” for both positive scent sources.
  - b. The team must clear the area containing no positive scent source without declaring a “find”.
  - c. The handler must not declare a “find” on anything except the positive scent sources.
  - d. The dog must not attempt to eat the cadaver material.
  - e. The search of each area must be completed within the allowed time.



### C. Field Evaluation – Urban Scenario

1. The search area will be of a size that can be reasonably searched within 15 minutes.
2. The search area will consist of one or several buildings, man-made structures, and/or vehicles where human remains might be placed.
3. The area will contain two positive scent sources. The positive scent sources will be placed between 6 inches below the surface and 30 inches above the surface in two discernibly different locations. Any above ground positive scent sources will be placed approximately 1 hour prior to the evaluation. Any buried positive scent sources will be covered with loose soil and/or non-hazardous man-made materials approximately 24 hours prior to the evaluation. The positive scent sources may or may not be accessible to the dog (e.g. bones may be placed in a cage to preserve the material).
4. One distraction (non-human scent source, such as food or animal remains) will be placed in the search area.
5. The dog may be worked on or off-leash at the handler's discretion.
6. The handler will have full access to the search area.
7. Upon the handler calling a "find" on the dog's indication, the handler will point to the location of the positive scent source.
8. In order for the team to pass the evaluation:
  - a. The dog must successfully locate and perform its trained indication and the handler must declare a "find" for both positive scent sources.
  - b. The handler must not declare a "find" on anything except the positive scent sources.
  - c. The dog must not attempt to eat the cadaver material.
  - d. The exercises must be completed within the allowed time.

### D. Criteria

1. The handler/dog team must successfully complete both the wilderness and urban field evaluations for certification in human remains detection. No partial certification is awarded for passing only one of the evaluations.
2. The dog may use either a passive or active indication.
  - a. **Passive Indication** – The dog indicates to the handler the positive scent source through passive means, such as sit or down.
  - b. **Active Indication** – The dog indicates to the handler the positive scent source through active means, such as barking, touching, or recall/refind.
3. The handler must "call" the dog's indication for a "find" to count. If the handler decides not to call what appears to be an indication by the dog, it will not count as an indication. Only the handler is qualified to interpret his/her dog's behavior and discern between the dog's behavior on a distraction as opposed to its behavior on a positive scent source. Upon calling the indication, the handler has committed to declaring a "find".
4. The dog will be responsive to handler direction and control.



5. The dog will remain focused while searching.
6. The handler must be able to describe the dog's indication to the evaluators.
7. The handler must effectively communicate to the evaluators that the dog has indicated a positive scent source.
8. The handler cannot assist the dog in the indication.
9. The handler will execute and communicate an effective search strategy.
10. The handler must draw a map of the areas searched, including the position of any positive scent source(s), distractions, vegetation, and other pertinent information.
11. A debriefing will be conducted and should include a description of the weather and search conditions, search area covered, start and end time, findings and clues, and any other important information.

**E. Proof of the Test**

1. If a handler/dog team fails the evaluation because they were unable to locate a positive scent source, the handler may request a dog certified in human remains detection work the area to prove the test.



## Water Search Evaluation

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I. Purpose: To ensure a well trained handler/dog team's ability, working from a boat or shore, to effectively search for, locate, and indicate subjects partially or totally submerged in water.

Note: Due to the increased demand for the use of dogs trained to assist in the location of drowned subjects, it is highly recommended that the operational wilderness dog and the operational human remains detection dog receive additional training specific to locating subjects partially or totally submerged in water.

II. Eligibility Requirements for Certification in Water Search:

- A.** The handler may qualify his/her operational wilderness dog for water search.
- B.** The handler may qualify his/her operational human remains detection dog for water search.

III. Evaluation

**A. Setup**

1. The scent source for evaluation will be a diver to ensure a standard scent source for all dogs.
2. Current weather conditions, wind speed, and wave height are to be taken into consideration with regard to safety of the test prior to and during the evaluation. Water evaluations are not to be conducted when wind speed exceeds 10 m.p.h..
3. Effort shall be made to ensure consistent test conditions for teams within each ARDA Unit.
4. Two to four null distractions (*e.g.*, floats, buoys, etc.) will be added to the test area where the handler/dog team will be working from a boat. Distractions will be placed in such a way as to minimize the collection or retention of human scent from either the hidden diver or the individual(s) placing the objects.
5. Prior to the evaluation starting, the evaluator will determine the time to be allowed for the team to cover each of the search areas.
6. The diver's safety is paramount. The time and depth of placement of the diver must be done in consultation with the diver, based on his/her assessment of the conditions, the air tank capacity, and other safety factors.

**B. Evaluation Working from a Boat**

1. It is the responsibility of the evaluator(s) to ensure the boat provided for this evaluation is operated in a safe and skilled manner. The boat is to be driven by someone other than the evaluator.
2. The area searched by boat will be approximately 300 feet by 300 feet.
3. The diver must be placed at a depth between 10 and 20 feet at least 10 minutes prior to the start of the evaluation. The depth may be varied to ensure the diver's safety.
4. In order for the team to pass this evaluation:



- a. The dog must successfully locate and perform its trained indication and the handler must declare a “find” near the area where the scent from the diver is strongest.
- b. The handler must not declare a “find” on anything except the area where the scent of the diver is strongest.
- c. The evaluation must be completed within the allowed time.

### **C. Evaluation Working from Shore**

1. The shore search shall be approximately one-quarter mile in length. Evaluators must ensure wind direction allows for an accurate and fair test; for this reason, a pond or area which allows the dog to work from all sides is recommended.
2. The water must be deep enough for the diver to be completely submerged or completely hidden from view by a combination of water depth and shoreline vegetation.
3. The diver must be placed no deeper than 10 feet and no more than 50 feet from shore at least 10 minutes prior to the start of the evaluation. The depth may be varied to ensure the diver’s safety.
4. In order for the team to pass this evaluation:
  - a. The dog must successfully locate and perform its trained indication and the handler must declare a “find” near the area where the scent from the diver is strongest.
  - b. The handler must not declare a “find” on anything except the area where the scent of the diver is strongest.
  - c. The exercises must be completed within the allowed time.

### **D. Criteria**

1. The handler/dog team must successfully complete both the evaluation working from a boat and the evaluation working from shore for certification in water search. No partial certification is awarded for passing only one of the evaluations.
2. Dog Requirements
  - a. The dog must show focus and enthusiasm for the mission, remaining alert and searching for scent for the duration of the evaluation.
  - b. The dog may use either an active or a passive indication.
    - 1) **Passive Indication** – The dog indicates to the handler the positive scent source through passive means, such as sitting or downing.
    - 2) **Active Indication** – The dog indicates to the handler the positive scent source through active means, such as barking, biting at the water, recall/refind, or entering the water (from shore). Dogs are not to jump into the water from the boat. Active responses on a boat must be consistent with boat safety.

The dog’s indication from shore may be the same or different from its indications from a boat.
  - c. When evaluating the dog’s response, evaluators must bear in mind that scent drift may preclude the dog from indicating directly above the scent source and this must be considered in determining the success or failure of the team. The search shall be



deemed successful if the dog strongly indicates scent downwind from the diver, with a definite interest directed toward the correct location.

- d. The dog must exhibit a willingness to enter and work from a boat in both a confident and safe manner.
- e. The shore search should be performed in accordance with normal wilderness searching, with a dog that ranges ahead of the handler and eagerly seeks the airborne scent.
- f. The handler must “call” the dog’s indication for a “find” to count. If the handler decides not to call what appears to be an indication by the dog, it will not count as an indication. Only the handler is qualified to interpret his/her dog’s behavior and discern between the dog’s behavior on a distraction as opposed to its behavior on a positive scent source. Upon calling the indication, the handler has committed to declaring a “find”.

### 3. Handler Requirements

- a. The handler must demonstrate a knowledge of working safely around water, both in a boat and from shore.
- b. The handler must demonstrate a thorough knowledge of how wind and current drift affects scent and how those factors can help or hinder the search.
- c. The handler must direct the boat operator in a manner which will ensure a complete search of the assigned area, taking into consideration wind and current.
- d. Based on wind and current drift, the handler should be able to give the evaluators an accurate estimate of the diver’s location.
- e. The handler must be able to distinguish between the dog showing interest in any distraction and giving its trained indication on the positive scent source.

## **E. Proof of the Test**

- 1. If a handler/dog team fails the evaluation because they were unable to locate the diver, the handler may request a dog certified in water search work the area to prove the test.



## Required Minimum Equipment

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### I. Individual Requirements

#### A. Uniform

1. A unit adopted long sleeve shirt with identification (appropriate for season)
2. Field pants (appropriate for season)
3. Boots
4. Leather gloves
5. Gaitors
6. A unit adopted helmet with identification
7. A unit adopted jacket with identification (highly visible, preferably orange)
8. Rain gear ( highly visible, preferably orange)

#### B. Personal Pack (to be left at base)

1. Extra socks (several pairs of both heavy wool and light)
2. Undergarments
3. Extra shirts
4. Extra pants
5. Wool sweater
6. One pair of light shoes
7. Shaving kit, toothbrush, *etc.*
8. Sleeping bag with pad
9. Knife, fork, and spoon
10. Stove/Fuel
11. Dehydrated foods
12. A tent and food for 5 days (dog and handler) may be required if not supplied by the unit.

#### C. Field Pack (to be carried by each handler in the field)

O – Optional      R – Recommended      S - Seasonal

1. Radio – may be provided by base camp
2. Extra antenna for radio – **R**
3. Compass (2)
4. Whistle – low pitch
5. Canteen – metal or large mouth plastic



6. Metal cup
7. Heavy duty knife
8. Flashlight
9. Headlight and battery
10. Spare bulbs/batteries
11. Surveyors flagging or equivalent
12. Extra hardware/parts
13. Pliers
14. Nail clippers (handler/dog)
15. High visibility dog collar
16. Leash
17. Paper and pencil
18. Nylon rope (1/8 inch) – about 50 feet
19. Signal mirror (n/a if mirror on compass)
20. Aerial flares
21. Orange smoke flares
22. Waterproof matches
23. Sterno or dry fuel tablets
24. Tea bags or powdered tea (iced tea, *etc.*)
25. Bouillon cubes or soup packets
26. Sugar cubes or glucose
27. Drink to hydrate (powdered Jell-o, *etc.*)
28. Food – high energy snacks, one emergency meal for handler and dog
29. Band-Aids – moleskin
30. Elastic bandage (3 to 4 inch width)
31. Sterile compress bandage
32. Triangular bandage (2)
33. Safety pins
34. Adhesive tape
35. Aluminum foil
36. Kwik stop or equivalent
37. Heat pack(s)
38. Sunscreen/lip protection



39. Insect repellent – **S**
40. Buffered aspirin or equivalent
41. Tissues/toilet paper
42. Extra socks
43. Sunglasses
44. Wool cap/balaclava
45. Neckerchief
46. 9' x 12' plastic tarp, and either a tube tent or heavy gauge space bag/blanket (survival bag/blanket) plus an extra of one of the items for a total of 3 shelter items.
47. Camera/extra film – **O**
48. Altimeter – **O**
49. Wire saw or folding saw – **O**
50. Water purifier (filter or chemical) - **O**
51. Disposable towelettes – **O**
52. Can opener – **R**

## II. Unit Requirements

Unit supplies are used to sustain the members of the unit on a mission. It is not practical for each member to be completely self-sufficient, thus some items are shared.

- A. Tenting** – Light weight 4/6 man tents will usually accommodate 3 people and 3 dogs. Equipment may be stored under tarps and in smaller one man tents. Tarps may also serve as dining canopies, *etc.*
- B. Feeding** – There should be stock to feed the handlers and dogs for at least 5 days. This would include a stove(s), fuel, cooking utensils, plates, cups, garbage bags, and collapsible water containers.
- C. First Aid** – There should be an extensive First Aid Kit (in a pack). It should include bandages and associated dressings, air splints, antibiotic medications, low reading thermometer, tweezers, scissors, *etc.* (First aid supplies for dogs may be packed separately).
- D. Radios**
  1. Base camp radio setup
  2. Radio for each handler
  3. Extra radio(s)
  4. Spare hardware – nuts, bolts, small tools, *etc.*
  5. Battery chargers
  6. Spare batteries
  7. Extra antennas



**E. Records** – A briefcase or folder will protect the various forms and materials necessary for record maintenance during a search. This kit should include:

1. Blank forms (interview, radio logs, *etc.*)
2. Pens, pencils, markers
3. Plastic sheeting for maps
4. Tracing paper
5. Writing/drawing paper
6. Protractor, ruler, *etc.*
7. Grids, scales
8. Clips
9. Compass (provided by base camp operator)
10. Heel/sole information and report pads
11. Clipboard or similar
12. Contact and emergency phone numbers

Suggested items:

13. Plexiglass to cover base camp map
14. Business cards/brochures
15. Extra radio codes
16. Penlight
17. “Search Is An Emergency”, (Field Coordinators Handbook)

**F. General**

1. There should be an assortment of spare parts and accessories (extra lighting – headlamp, flashlights/lanterns, bulbs, batteries; a unit altimeter, flagging, tools, flares, *etc.*).

All of these items should be packed in flyaway kits (duffle bags or equivalent).