

SWGDOG SC5 - Canine Career Field Progression System

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Due to departmental policy, state and federal requirements, as well as the specific canine discipline, the canine instructor and trainer may perform dual roles as mission, qualifications, and resources dictate. The role of the canine instructor may require certification or accreditation through successful completion of a formal course of instruction as dictated by their department, organization, or jurisdiction.

Statement of purpose: This document clarifies the roles of the canine handler, canine trainer, canine instructor and certifying official in the context of adhering to best practice methods.

1. CANINE HANDLER :

A person who has successfully completed a recognized course of canine handling, as outlined in this document, in a specific discipline and maintains those abilities through field application, maintenance training, scheduled certification, and continuing canine education.

1.1. Continuing education should include but is not limited to training in the following areas of instruction:

- 1.1.1. Canine training methodology.
- 1.1.2. Normal canine behavior and the Principles of Learning.
- 1.1.3. Current canine team tactics and safety.
- 1.1.4. Operational utilization knowledge.
- 1.1.5. Current law and policies.
- 1.1.6. Canine first aid and first responder knowledge.
- 1.1.7. Canine preventive medicine programs including illness and disease.
- 1.1.8. Reoccurring safety training in all pertinent disciplines (e.g., explosives handling, storage, and transportation; narcotics, hazardous materials, dangerous environments, and weapons).

2. CANINE TRAINER:

A person providing training who has demonstrated through education, training and operational experience, extensive skill and knowledge in the subject field or discipline.

2.1. The canine trainer normally performs the maintenance and proficiency training in the field and may train canines in preparation for a formal course of instruction. This individual has acquired and demonstrated a minimum of the skill set listed below:

- 2.1.1. Knowledge of canine husbandry including kenneling, health and maintenance of canines.
- 2.1.2. The ability to accurately assess the canine's training progress.
- 2.1.3. The ability to accurately analyze and document the canine's training progress.
- 2.1.4. The ability to identify and analyze deficiencies related to canine training.
- 2.1.5. Thorough knowledge of problem solving techniques and the ability to implement those techniques.
- 2.1.6. The ability to formulate an effective training plan and provide positive transfers from previous training exercises.
- 2.1.7. The ability to analyze documentation and formulate training objectives.

- 2.1.8. The ability to recognize when outside assistance is required.
- 2.1.9. The ability to evaluate new and changing training methods.
- 2.1.10. The ability to analyze the results of canine studies and use the information to develop methods and procedures designed to improve the effectiveness of detector dog teams.
- 2.2. The canine trainer is responsible for ensuring compliance with animal health requirements to prevent the spread of diseases including zoonotic diseases.
- 2.3. The canine trainer is accountable for and provides security for a range of materials used in training (e.g., narcotics, explosives, hazardous materials and weapons). This includes the prevention of loss and/or contamination of the training materials.
- 2.4. Continuing education for the canine trainer shall include but not be limited to the following:
 - 2.4.1. Participating in canine certifications under the guidance of a certifying official.
 - 2.4.2. Attending seminars and courses to expand knowledge and gain a thorough understanding of canine behavior and training methodologies.
 - 2.4.3. Attend reoccurring safety training in all pertinent disciplines to ensure up-to-date knowledge of proper handling, storage, transportation and disposal of materials used in training (e.g., explosives, narcotics, hazardous materials and weapons) as well as operations in dangerous environments.

3. CANINE INSTRUCTOR:

A person providing instruction who has demonstrated, through education, training and operational experience, extensive skill and knowledge in the subject field or discipline.

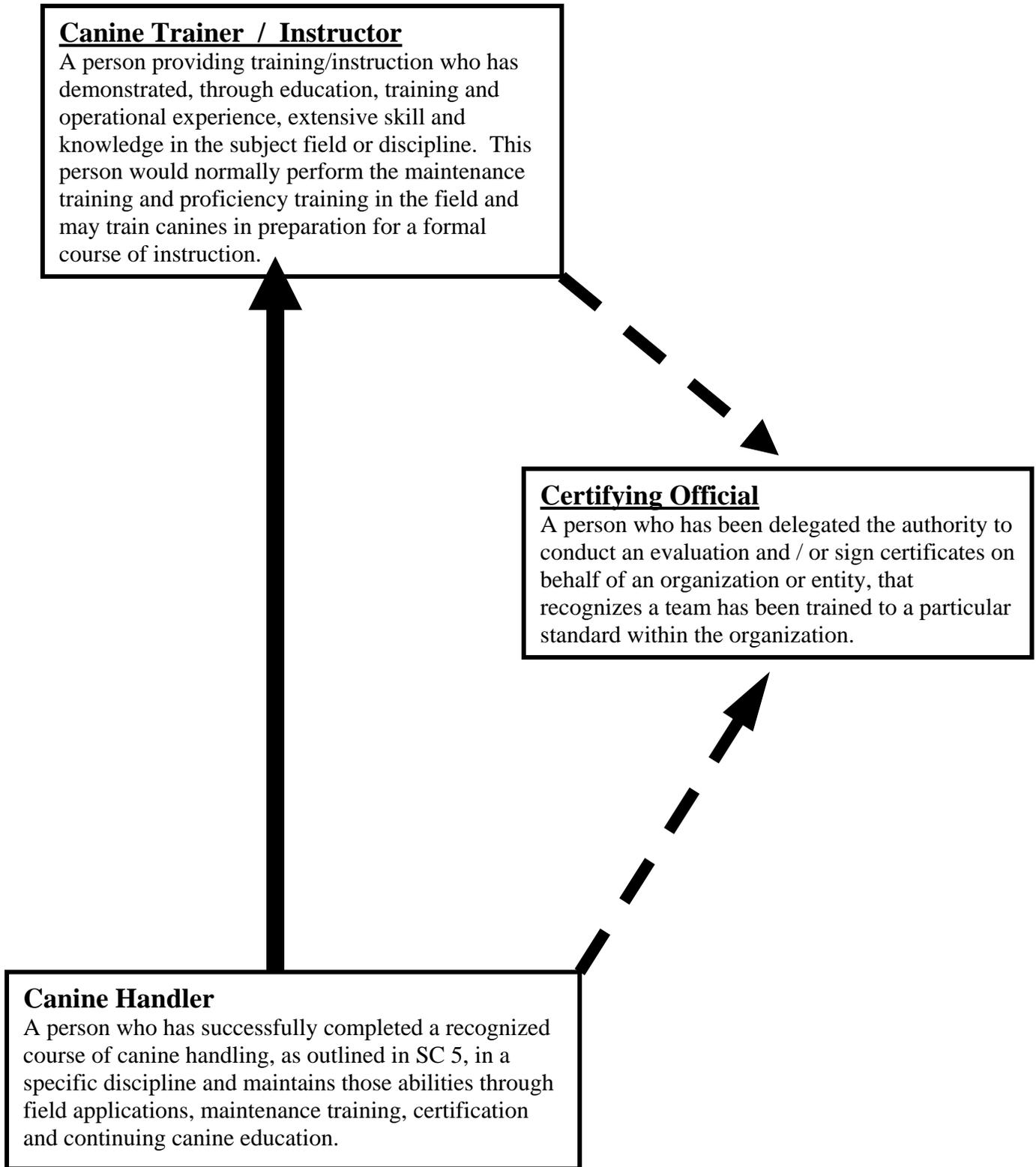
- 3.1. The canine instructor normally performs the maintenance and proficiency training in the field and may train canines in preparation for a formal course of instruction. The role of the canine instructor may require certification or accreditation by successful completion of a formal course of instruction as dictated by their jurisdiction. This individual has acquired and demonstrated the skills listed above under Canine Trainer section 2. Additional skills needed and duties performed in this position include:
 - 3.1.1. Instruction and supervision of trainees in classroom work as well as the hands-on performance phase of detector dog training. Instructors will teach the trainees how to effectively train and employ detector dogs in a variety of situations designed to meet their operational needs.
 - 3.1.2. Trainee instruction covering the physical and psychological characteristics of their assigned canines, particularly those aspects of animal behavior that have a bearing on the training objectives and utilization of the dog.
 - 3.1.3. The ability to recognize the behavioral traits that make a canine a good candidate for becoming a detector dog. This knowledge is critical when procuring dogs as potential detector canines.
 - 3.1.4. Responsibility for the design, development, revision and evaluation of a variety of detection training courses and programs.
 - 3.1.5. Revise course material to include up-to-date information, procedures, regulations and technical advances in canine detection.
 - 3.1.6. Evaluates new and changing methods of detection.
 - 3.1.7. Prepares course material for ongoing training programs including:

- 3.1.7.1. The planning, research and development of programs.
- 3.1.7.2. Identifies the interim and terminal performance objectives.
- 3.1.7.3. Develops lesson plans and trainee handouts.
- 3.1.7.4. Designs and produces training aids such as video, graphic reproductions and documents.
- 3.1.8. Continuously evaluates trainee's performance and counsels them as the need requires.
- 3.1.9. Constructs and administers evaluations, both written and practical, using them as an instructional tool to evaluate the progress of trainees and their assigned canines.
- 3.1.10. Must attend reoccurring safety training in all pertinent disciplines to ensure up-to-date knowledge of proper handling, storage, transportation and disposal of materials used in training (e.g., explosives, narcotics, hazardous materials and weapons) as well as operations in dangerous environments.

4. CERTIFYING OFFICIAL:

A person who has been delegated the authority to conduct an evaluation and or sign certificates on behalf of an organization or entity, that recognizes a team has been trained to a particular standard within the organization.

- 4.1. The certifying official or designee shall have demonstrated the knowledge and skills as may be required by military, federal and state statutes, rules, or regulations and / or professional canine organizations Further, those persons would have also demonstrated, either in part or whole, those attributes / qualifications as defined above in the sections on canine trainer and canine instructor (i.e., sections 2 and 3). Additionally, the certifying official or designee will have the following skills, knowledge and abilities:
 - 4.1.1. A demonstrated knowledge or experience in the discipline for which he or she is evaluating others.
 - 4.1.2. Successful completion of a training process, determined appropriate by the entity or organization conferring the authority on the official. The training process may include but is not limited to:
 - 4.1.2.1. Understudy or apprenticeship to someone already qualified in the role of certifying official.
 - 4.1.2.2. Completion of a course of instruction developed by the certifying entity.
 - 4.1.3. As with all the roles defined in this document, it is imperative that a certifying official or designee engage in reoccurring safety training in all pertinent disciplines to ensure up-to-date knowledge of proper handling, storage, transportation and disposal of materials used in training (e.g., explosives, narcotics, hazardous materials and weapons) as well as operations in dangerous environments.



SWGDOG SC 5 Progression System: Handler – Trainer / Instructor – Certifying Official