

SWGDOG SC8– SUBSTANCE DETECTOR DOGS

Narcotics Section

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Statement of purpose: To provide recommended guidelines for training, certification and documentation pertaining to **narcotic** detector canines.

1. Initial Training

- 1.1. Training shall be conducted by a competent, qualified narcotic detector canine trainer from an entity which utilizes a structured curriculum with specific training and learning objectives.
- 1.2. The narcotic detection training course shall include training the canine to detect marijuana, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine and other substances as required to meet the mission, regional and operational deployment needs.
- 1.3. Training shall include varying quantities (typically varying by factors of ten) of the substances listed in 1.2.
- 1.4. Training shall include exposing the canine to a variety of different types of searches and locations.
- 1.5. The initial training should continue until the narcotic detection canine team is certified or deemed not certifiable.
- 1.6. Initial training shall represent all conditions that could be encountered during a certification process.

2. Canine/Handler Team Certification

- 2.1. Parameters of test
 - 2.1.1. The narcotic detector canine shall be tested on the substance odors for which it is trained.
 - 2.1.2. All odors for which the dog will be certified must be tested.
 - 2.1.3. The test shall be designed to resemble normal operational searches by using vehicles, buildings, parcels, luggage, etc. to conceal substances.
 - 2.1.4. Certification testing shall be conducted with no less than 5 grams of the actual substance to be detected.
 - 2.1.5. The test shall include a variety of searches designed to evaluate the canine's ability to recognize the odor, respond to the odor and the handler's ability to recognize this response.
 - 2.1.6. The test shall include scenarios resembling searches within the normal operational environment and include at least 3 different searches (see categories below) designed to evaluate the canine's ability to recognize

the odor, respond to the odor and the handler's ability to recognize this response. Not all odors will necessarily be in each type of search and some search areas shall contain no odors (blanks). Types of searches and suggested maximum search times are listed below:

- 2.1.6.1. Parcels searches with 2-6 articles per odor should take 1 minute to search 2-6 parcels.
 - 2.1.6.2. Baggage searches with 2-6 articles per odor should take 1 minute to search 2-6 bags.
 - 2.1.6.3. Person/crowd searches: as permitted by state and federal law, with 2 persons per odor should take 1 minute per person.
 - 2.1.6.4. Building/room searches (the room may contain zero to three aids depending upon the size and environmental conditions. Rooms that are 18.6 – 111.5 m² (200-1200 sq. ft.) with furniture should take 1.5 minute per 9.3 m²/ 28 m³ (100 sq.ft./1000 cu. ft.).
 - 2.1.6.5. Motor vehicle searches including interiors and exteriors (3-6 vehicles per search using passenger cars and trucks, 3 minutes per vehicle).
 - 2.1.6.6. Open area/perimeter searches of 93 – 930 m² (1,000-10,000 sq. ft.) per search, should take 1-3 minutes per 93 m² (1000 sq. ft.).
 - 2.1.7. The dog/handler team must demonstrate the ability to detect all trained odors.
 - 2.1.8. For successful certification, the canine/handler team shall achieve at least a 90% confirmed alert rate for certification, and a false alert rate not to exceed 10%, as defined and calculated in SC 2.
 - 2.1.9. Excessive handler errors, as defined by the certifying authority, shall result in failure of the team.
 - 2.1.10. Disqualification due to time should be left to the discretion of the certifying authority. The test should end if the certifying authority determines that the dog/handler team is no longer working (e.g., Observable behaviors to be added in final annotated version).
- 2.2. Use of distracters
 - 2.2.1. Natural distracters are normally present in the testing area.
 - 2.2.2. Placement of distracters in the certification area is required when no natural distracters are present.
 - 2.2.3. Care must be taken not to place artificial distractions in a manner that causes contamination of the test substance odor.
 - 2.3. Proofing/Verification of certification area should be conducted prior to the actual certification using a certified canine team who is not participating in the certification. This practice is designed to show that the trained odor is present in the target locations and nowhere else, including the blank areas.
 - 2.4. Certification should not be conducted in areas in which narcotics detection canine teams have recently trained or certified.

- 2.5. Certification for narcotic detection dogs should be comprised of a comprehensive assessment, which includes elements of odor recognition as outlined in SWGDOG General Guidelines.
 - 2.5.1. Odor recognition assessment
 - 2.5.1.1. The handler shall be advised of the parameters of the search.
 - 2.5.1.2. The handler shall know the number of target objects, but not the placement.
 - 2.5.1.3. The evaluating official shall know the desired outcome of the search.
 - 2.5.2. Comprehensive assessment
 - 2.5.2.1. The handler shall be advised of the parameters of the search, yet shall not know the desired outcome.
 - 2.5.2.2. The handler shall not know the number or placement of the target objects.
 - 2.5.2.3. The evaluating official shall know the desired outcome of the search.
 - 2.5.2.4. The assessments shall include a blank search.
 - 2.5.3. Double-blind assessment
 - 2.5.3.1. No participant or observer present at the assessment location(s) shall be aware of the parameters of the search.

3. Maintenance Training

- 3.1. The canine team shall conduct regular objective-oriented training sufficient to maintain operational proficiency on all trained odors.
- 3.2. Training is meant to sustain and enhance the performance of the handler, canine and the canine team.
- 3.3. In training, situations are purposely sought where the capabilities of the canine team is challenged within the operational environments for which the team may be deployed.
- 3.4. Teams shall be challenged to improve and enhance their abilities.
- 3.5. Training shall include:
 - 3.5.1. A variety of locations.
 - 3.5.2. A variety of training material amounts (no less than 1 gram).
 - 3.5.3. A variety of heights, depths, containers and distraction odors.
 - 3.5.4. Various types of searches (e.g., vehicles, building, parcels, luggage, blank areas and persons depending on local, state and federal law).
 - 3.5.5. A varied duration of set times.
 - 3.5.6. Varied duration of search times.

- 3.6. The canine team shall spend an average of 4 hours per week in routine training to maintain the proficiency level of the team.
- 3.7. Routine training, conducted by the handler to maintain the dog's proficiency and to reinforce odor recognition, is an acceptable form of training but shall be combined with supervised training on a regular basis. Supervised Training is conducted by a qualified trainer other than the handler, in order to improve performance, identify and correct training deficiencies. Performing proficiency assessments is considered a best practice.

4. Training Materials

- 4.1. The training materials shall be packaged in a manner safe for the canine throughout training.
- 4.2. The training materials shall be maintained in a manner to avoid loss or destruction.
- 4.3. Materials shall be stored in a manner that prevents odor contamination or physical contamination, i.e., the materials shall be stored in separate labeled containers.
- 4.4. Training materials shall be obtained from a reliable and documented source such as the DEA lab.
- 4.5. Required security procedures pertaining to the training materials shall be followed according to local, state and federal laws.
- 4.6. Required substance registrations shall be current and accurate records maintained.
- 4.7. Training materials shall be replaced every 1-3 years, sooner if contaminated or compromised.
- 4.8. Disposal/destruction of the training aids shall follow local, state and federal guidelines.

5. Documentation

- 5.1. The handler, department and organization shall maintain training records, certification records, proficiency assessments and seizure records.
- 5.2. Deployment/utilization records may be kept in accordance with agency policy.

- 5.3. Records shall contain discipline-related specifics.
- 5.4. Records shall be standardized within the department, agency and/or organization.
- 5.5. Documents shall be retained in accordance with state and federal and unit guidelines. Records shall contain but are not limited to the following:
 - 5.5.1. Training records kept by the handler and/or the department shall contain the following information:
 - 5.5.1.1. Date training held.
 - 5.5.1.2. Name of individual conducting training.
 - 5.5.1.3. Type and amount of training aid used.
 - 5.5.1.4. Length of training session.
 - 5.5.1.5. Location of training.
 - 5.5.1.6. Type of training (e.g., vehicle, luggage, building, open area).
 - 5.5.1.7. Number of searches and results.
 - 5.5.1.8. Name of canine and handler.
 - 5.5.2. Seizure records kept by the handler shall include:
 - 5.5.2.1. Date of seizure.
 - 5.5.2.2. Location of seizure.
 - 5.5.2.3. Length of search.
 - 5.5.2.4. Description of activity.
 - 5.5.2.5. Results of search.
 - 5.5.2.6. Name of canine and handler.
 - 5.5.2.7. Non-productive responses (i.e., dog alerts with no detectable or seizable amounts of narcotics).
 - 5.5.2.8. Seizure substance type.
 - 5.5.2.8.1. Narcotics.
 - 5.5.2.8.2. Currency.
 - 5.5.2.8.3. Currency non-seizures.
 - 5.5.2.9. Other information as required by the organization and/or agency.
 - 5.5.3. Certification records kept by the certifying authority and handler shall include the following information.
 - 5.5.3.1. Date team was certified.
 - 5.5.3.2. Certification authority i.e., agency or professional organization.
 - 5.5.3.3. Name of certified individual.
 - 5.5.3.4. Type of materials.
 - 5.5.3.5. Location of certification.
 - 5.5.3.6. Name of canine and handler.
- 5.6. Deployment/utilization/seizure information shall be kept separate from training and testing information.
- 5.7. Supervisory review is recommended.

5.8. Digital format is recommended to facilitate compiling and analyzing data.

6. Use of records/documentation

6.1. Reliability of the canine team shall be based upon the results of certification and proficiency assessments.

6.2. Training records do not necessarily reflect reliability of the team.

6.3. Training records are necessary to illustrate the type and amount of training that the team has experienced before and after certification.

6.4. Confirmed operational outcomes may be used to determine capability.

6.5. Unconfirmed operational outcomes shall not be used to determine capability in that they do not correctly evaluate a canine team's proficiency.