

SWGDOG SC 9 - HUMAN SCENT DOGS

Tracking/Trailing People Based on Last Known Position

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Tracking or trailing people based on their last known position is the area of canine scent detection that utilizes a canine team to search for and follow a specific person's track or trail after the canine has been started on the person's last known position or a scented article associated with that person. The primary goal is for the canine to detect and follow the track or trail to the exclusion of all other tracks or trails, leading to a specific person, location, and/or article associated with that person. This is done within the canine team's mission-specific environment. A secondary goal of this task may be to locate articles left by this specific person along the track or trail.

Statement of Purpose: To provide recommended guidelines for the training, certification and documentation pertaining to canines trained to search for a specific person, location and/or article by starting from that person's last known position.

1. INITIAL TRAINING

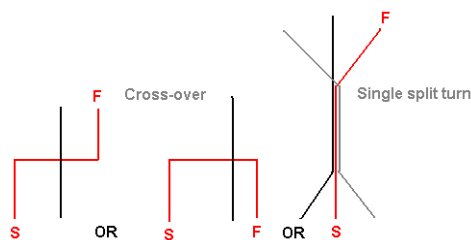
- 1.1. To achieve search functionality, the handler shall be trained by a competent individual who utilizes a structured curriculum with specific training and learning objectives.
- 1.2. Handler training shall include human scent theory, relevant canine case law and legal preparation, including court testimony.
- 1.3. Training of the handler shall include recognition and articulation of the canine's (change of) behavior during the search and the specific final response.
- 1.4. Handler training may include techniques for collecting, handling, storing and disposing of articles and human scent evidence as required by the handler's department or organization.
- 1.5. In order to maximize search efficiency, handler training shall include learning search techniques and tactics, as well as the principals of odor dispersion and how dispersion is affected by environmental conditions.
- 1.6. Training shall include exposing the canine to a variety of different types of locations, noises, odors, people and environments.
- 1.7. Initial training shall include sufficient obedience training to ensure the canine will operate effectively based on mission requirements.
- 1.8. The canine shall be trained to perform a pre-determined specific final response (active or passive alert) upon locating the human target.

- 1.9. If article location is required, the canine shall be trained to leave the articles undisturbed.
- 1.10. To achieve search functionality, the canine team shall be trained by a competent trainer utilizing a structured curriculum with specific training and learning objectives.
- 1.11. The canine team's training shall be continued to until a level of operational proficiency is achieved and the team is certified..
- 1.12. The training shall be structured to meet the typical mission requirements of the canine team's department or organization.

2. CANINE TEAM ASSESSMENTS

- 2.1. Assessments are part of certification, maintenance and proficiency testing.
- 2.2. Each assessment is the evaluation of a search.
- 2.3. The canine team shall be assessed in the following ways:
 - 2.3.1. Odor recognition assessments that test the following:
 - 2.3.1.1. The canine's ability to follow a simple human track or trail containing a minimum of one turn and a distractor track or trail.
 - 2.3.1.2. The handler's interpretation of the canine's behavior on the track or trail.
 - 2.3.1.3. Each canine team shall work on a separate track or trail.
 - 2.3.1.4. For an odor recognition assessment, one human target and one or two human distractors (depending on the track or trail design, see point 4.1.1. below) are utilized to lay human tracks or trails in an environment similar to where the canine usually works (e.g., urban, suburban or rural environments).
 - 2.3.1.5. An odor recognition assessment track or trail shall consist of either one of two track or trail designs: a cross-over design or a split turn¹ design.

¹ Track or trail designs: examples of cross-over and single split turn: S is starting point for the human target, F is finishing point (or the mirror images). In a cross-over design, the target makes two turns and his track or trail is crossed once by a distractor fresher track or trail. In the split turn design, the target track or trail joins two separate distractor tracks or trails: one fresher, one the same age. After a common part, the tracks or trails split up and the target makes a turn.



These shall consist of one human target track or trail and one (cross-over) or two (split turn) human distractors tracks or trails, positioned within a minimum of 185 meters (\approx 200 yd) from each other. Of the 185 meters minimum, 90 meters (\approx 100 yd) must be track or trail odor identification.

- 2.3.1.6. The target track or trail of the cross-over track shall be aged a minimum of 1 hour and the distractor a maximum of 30 minutes.
 - 2.3.1.7. The target track or trail and one of the split turn human distractor trails shall be aged a minimum of 1 hour and the other distractor track or trail shall be aged a maximum of 30 minutes.
 - 2.3.1.8. Prior to the test, the start of the track or trail shall be marked by the assessing agency.
 - 2.3.1.9. The handler shall be directed to the start marker, but not given the target's direction of travel.
 - 2.3.1.10. The assessor shall know the correct outcome of the assessment.
 - 2.3.1.11. The handler shall not know the correct outcome of the assessment.
 - 2.3.1.12. A successful completion of the odor recognition assessment is the ability to determine the correct direction of travel and follow the track or trail beyond the turns to its completion.
 - 2.3.1.13. The assessor shall take into consideration environmental influences on odor dispersion in determining whether or not the canine team has successfully completed the odor recognition assessment.
 - 2.3.2. Comprehensive assessments shall test the following:
 - 2.3.2.1. The ability of the canine team to follow a track or trail on different surfaces and identify a specific person, location, or article, as required by the organization or agency.
 - 2.3.2.2. The handler's ability to interpret the canine's behavior, including the final response.
 - 2.3.2.3. The canine's responses.
 - 2.3.2.4. Each canine team shall work on a separate track or trail.
 - 2.3.2.5. A mission-oriented assessment environment shall be used.
 - 2.3.3. Parameters of the assessment may vary based upon mission requirements.
 - 2.3.3.6. Rural environment parameters include a track or trail that is a minimum of 730 meters (\approx 800 yards) in length, a minimum of 4 turns, at least 2 surface changes and a minimum set time of 30 minutes.
 - 2.3.3.7. Urban environment parameters include a track or trail that is a minimum of 275 meters (\approx 300 yards) in length, a minimum of 3 turns, at least 2 surface changes and a minimum set time of 30 minutes.
 - 2.3.3.8. The target may leave personally scented articles along the track or trail.
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- 2.3.3.9. If the assessment location does not contain normally occurring distractors, such as human and animal activity, distractors should be placed along the track or trail.
- 2.3.3.10. The assessment area shall contain other human tracks or trails (fresher than the target trail) occurring both intermittently across and along a section of the target track or trail.
- 2.3.3.11. The assessment location shall not be an area regularly used for the training of the team.
- 2.3.3.12. The handler shall be informed of the start location.
- 2.3.3.13. The assessment shall be completed in less than 30 minutes.
- 2.3.3.14. The assessor shall know the correct layout of the track or trail.
- 2.3.3.15. The handler shall not know the correct layout of the track or trail.
- 2.3.3.16. If required during the assessment, the handler shall identify the presence of articles along the track or trail based on the canine's behavior.
- 2.3.3.17. The parameters of a successful conclusion of the assessment shall be defined by organization or agency protocol. Examples of such parameters may include the following:
 - 2.3.3.17.1. Maximum allowable distance off track.
 - 2.3.3.17.2. Acceptable alert(s).
 - 2.3.3.17.3. Number of articles to be located.
- 2.3.3.18. The assessor shall take into consideration environmental influences on odor dispersion in determining whether or not a canine team is still on the track or trail.
- 2.3.3.19. Identifying a human distracter or following a distracter odor track or trail will be considered a failure.
- 2.3.3. Double-blind assessments demonstrate the proficiency of the canine handler team in an operational setting.
 - 2.3.3.1. The handler will be advised of the start location.
 - 2.3.3.2. The handler shall not know the location of the end point, nor the number of turns.
 - 2.3.3.3. The canine team shall be required to successfully complete the assessment as defined by the assessing agency.
 - 2.3.3.4. Identifying a human distracter or following a distracter odor track or trail will be considered a failure.
 - 2.3.3.5. No participant or observer present at the assessment locations shall be aware of the desired outcome of the search.
 - 2.3.3.6. The assessor shall observe the canine team. At the conclusion of the assessment, the assessor shall compare the search results with the parameters of the search. This comparison may be done immediately after the handler determines the canine has made its trained response, or at the conclusion of the entire assessment.

3. CANINE TEAM CERTIFICATION

- 3.1. Certification for the named canine team shall be valid for one year.
- 3.2. Certification does not relieve the canine team from regular maintenance training, periodic proficiency assessments, and following other recommended SWGDOG guidelines.
- 3.3. The certifying officials shall not be routinely involved in the day to day training of the canine team being evaluated.
- 3.4. Handler errors, when excessive, may result in failure of the team.
- 3.5. A mission-oriented test environment shall be used.
 - 3.5.1. Parameters of the assessment may vary based upon mission requirements.
 - 3.5.1.1. Rural environment parameters include a track or trail that is a minimum of 730 meters (\approx 800 yards) in length, a minimum of 4 turns, at least 2 surface changes and a minimum set time of 30 minutes.
 - 3.5.1.2. Urban environment parameters include a track or trail that is a minimum of 275 meters (\approx 300 yards) in length a minimum of 3 turns, at least 2 surface changes and a minimum set time of 30 minutes.
- 3.6. Human targets used in the certification process shall not have been used in the day to day training activities of the team being certified.
- 3.7. A canine team which fails the certification process shall complete a corrective action plan before making another attempt to certify.

4. MAINTENANCE TRAINING

- 4.1. The canine team shall conduct regular objective-oriented training sufficient to maintain operational proficiency.
- 4.2. Training is meant to sustain, enhance, and promote the performance of the canine team.
- 4.3. Canine teams shall be challenged during the regular maintenance training sessions within the operational environments for which the team may be deployed.
 - 4.3.1. Training shall include:
 - 4.3.1.1. A variety of locations, terrain, search area sizes and weather conditions.
 - 4.3.1.2. A variety of distraction odors in the search area.
 - 4.3.1.3. A variety of articles(various shapes, sizes, manner and duration of contact, weights, materials, etc.) if required by the agency/organization
 - 4.3.1.4. A varied duration of search times and times of day.
 - 4.3.1.5. A variety of blank search areas.

- 4.3.1.6. A variety of set times of target track or trails, articles and degrees of concealment.
- 4.3.1.7. A variety of human targets.
- 4.4. Routine training conducted solely by the handler to maintain the canine's proficiency is acceptable but should be periodically combined with supervised training.
 - 4.4.1. Supervised training by a qualified trainer or instructor, is recommended in order to monitor and improve performance, identify and correct training deficiencies and perform proficiency assessments.
- 4.5. Tracking/trailing training shall be included in the minimum of 16 hours of training per month to maintain and improve the proficiency level of the canine team.
- 4.6. The canine team shall perform periodic proficiency assessments throughout the certification period as outlined in section 2- Canine Team Assessments, including a variety of odor recognition assessments, comprehensive assessments and double-blind assessments.

5. RECORD KEEPING AND DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

- 5.1. The handler and department or organization shall document training, certification, proficiency assessments and discipline-related deployment records.
- 5.2. Proficiency assessments and training records may be combined or separate documents.
- 5.3. Discipline-related deployment records shall be separated from training, proficiency assessment, and certification documentation.
- 5.4. Training and discipline-related records should be standardized within the department or organization.
- 5.5. Training records may include, but are not limited to the following data:
 - 5.5.1. Name of handler and canine.
 - 5.5.2. Names of individual conducting or assisting with training.
 - 5.5.3. Time and date of training.
 - 5.5.4. Location and environmental conditions of training.
 - 5.5.5. Training design (non-blind, single-blind or double-blind).
 - 5.5.6. Description of targets.
 - 5.5.7. Location of targets.
 - 5.5.8. Set time.
 - 5.5.9. Size of search area.
 - 5.5.10. Length of training session.
 - 5.5.11. Search results.
 - 5.5.12. Deficiencies and corrective measures implemented during training regimen.
 - 5.5.13. Other information required by department or organization.

- 5.6. Certification records shall be kept by the certifying authority and the handler and include the following information:
 - 5.6.1. Name of canine and handler.
 - 5.6.2. Date team certified.
 - 5.6.3. Certification authority, i.e., agency, professional organization, or individuals.
 - 5.6.4. The standard or guideline to which the canine team is certified.
 - 5.6.5. Name of individuals awarding certification.
 - 5.6.6. Search area types included in certification assessment.
 - 5.6.7. Name and description of targets and locations included in certification assessment.
 - 5.6.8. Location of certification
- 5.7. Proficiency assessment records kept by the handler and organization or department may include but not be limited to the following data:
 - 5.7.1. Name of handler and canine.
 - 5.7.2. Name of individual conducting assessment.
 - 5.7.3. Time and date of assessment.
 - 5.7.4. Location and environmental conditions of assessment.
 - 5.7.5. Assessment design (single-blind or double-blind).
 - 5.7.6. Description of targets.
 - 5.7.7. Location of targets.
 - 5.7.8. Set time.
 - 5.7.9. Size of search area.
 - 5.7.10. Proficiency assessment results.
 - 5.7.11. Other information required by department or organization.
- 5.8. Supervisory review of all records is recommended.
- 5.9. Digitally formatted records are recommended to facilitate compiling and analyzing data.
- 5.10. Records may be discoverable in court proceedings and may become evidence of the canine team's reliability. Record retention policy shall be determined by department or organization guidelines.
- 5.11. Training records are necessary to illustrate the type and amount of training that the team has experienced before and after certification.
- 5.12. Confirmed operational outcomes can be used as a factor in determining capability.
- 5.13. Unconfirmed operational outcomes shall not be used as a factor in determining capability in that they do not correctly evaluate a canine/handler team's proficiency.
- 5.14. Veterinary Records.
 - 5.14.1. Veterinary records shall be maintained in a manner such as they are accessible to the handler and department or organization.

5.14.2. Vaccinations required by state or local law should be documented in the veterinary record of the canine.