

SWGDOG SC 9 – HUMAN SCENT DOGS

Pre-Scented Canine - Aged Trail Search

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Pre-scented canine aged trail searches use a canine team to search for and follow aged trails of a specific person's (target) scent over different surface types. Prior to the start of the search, the canine is "scented" on an object (scent article) containing the target's scent. The canine works from an article to either a person or a location associated with that person. The goal is for the canine to detect and use a specific person's scent on a scent article to either search for and follow a matching scent trail to this specific person or a location associated with this person while discriminating from all non-matching scent trails, or to correctly demonstrate the absence of a matching scent trail. Canines used in this discipline are typically deployed in search and rescue and forensic investigative functions, and typically not in immediate apprehension functions.

Statement of purpose: To provide recommended guidelines for training, certification and documentation pertaining to pre-scented canines.

1. INITIAL TRAINING

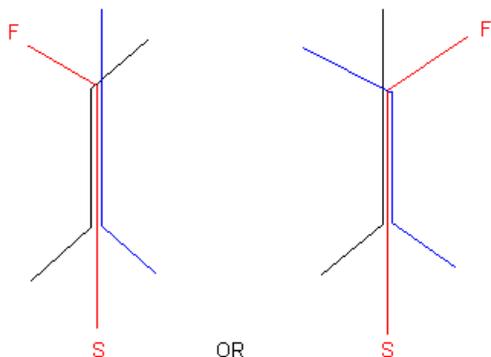
- 1.1. The handler training shall be conducted by a competent trainer from an entity that utilizes a structured curriculum with specific training and learning objectives.
- 1.2. The canine training shall be conducted by a competent canine trainer from an entity that utilizes a structured curriculum with specific training and learning objectives.
- 1.3. Initial training shall include sufficient obedience training to ensure the canine will operate effectively based on mission requirements.
- 1.4. The canine shall be trained to perform an effective and controlled search.
- 1.5. The initial training of the canine shall include training of a determined specific final response (an active or passive alert).
- 1.6. Initial training shall include exposing the canine team to a variety of locations, expected situations and searches.
- 1.7. The training shall be structured to meet the typical mission requirements of the canine team's department or organization.
- 1.8. The canine team's training shall be continued to achieve a level of operational proficiency until certification evaluation.

- 1.9. Training shall progressively include scent articles, aged scent, trail distances, locations and environmental conditions typically expected in an operational search.
- 1.10. Handler training shall include techniques for collecting human scent evidence.
- 1.11. Handler training shall include human scent behavior, relevant canine case law and legal preparation, including court testimony.

2. CANINE TEAM ASSESSMENTS

- 2.1. Assessments are part of certification, maintenance training 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. Scent recognition assessments that evaluate the following skills:
 - 2.3.1.1. The ability of the canine to detect and use a specific person’s scent on a scent article to follow the matching scent trail to this specific person while discriminating from non-matching scent trails. The ability of the canine to demonstrate the absence of a matching scent trail.
 - 2.3.1.2. The canine’s alert.
 - 2.3.1.3. The handler’s interpretation of the canine’s alert.
 - 2.3.2. The scent recognition assessment shall consist of four individual assessments with the following components and parameters:
 - 2.3.2.1. For each scent recognition assessment, one human target and two human distractors are utilized to lay human scent trails in an environment similar to where the canine usually works (e.g., urban, suburban or rural environment).
 - 2.3.2.2. Each scent recognition assessment shall be between 90 m - 183 m (≈100 - 200 yds) in length with a single split turn¹ involving one human target and two human distractors.

¹ Diagram single split turn: S is starting point human target, F is finishing point



- 2.3.2.3. The target trail and one human distractor trail shall be aged a minimum of 1 hour, and one distractor trail shall be aged a maximum of 30 minutes.
- 2.3.2.4. Prior to the assessment, the start of the scent trail shall be marked by the assessing agency.
- 2.3.2.5. The handler shall be directed to the start marker, but not given the target's direction of travel.
- 2.3.2.6. The handler shall be provided a scent article from the target or a non-matching scent article as a negative control.
- 2.3.2.7. The handler shall specify the type of scent article his or her canine used in training sessions prior to the assessment.
- 2.3.2.8. At least half, but not all of the scent recognition assessments shall be conducted with non-matching scents to demonstrate the absence of a matching scent trail.
- 2.3.2.9. The order of the matching and non-matching scent recognition assessments shall be randomized.
- 2.3.2.10. The assessor shall know the correct outcome of each assessment.
- 2.3.2.11. The handler shall not know the correct outcome of any assessment.
- 2.3.2.12. A successful completion of the scent recognition assessment is the ability to find the correct direction of travel and follow the scent trail beyond the turn or to correctly demonstrate the absence of a matching scent trail.
- 2.3.2.13. The assessor may take into consideration the environmental influences on the scent in determining whether or not the canine team has successfully completed the scent recognition assessment.
- 2.3.2.14. The canine team shall properly scent discriminate in at least 75 % of the assessments.
- 2.3.2. Comprehensive assessments test the following canine team skills:
 - 2.3.2.1. The ability of the canine team to follow a specific person's scent trail along surface types appropriate to the canine team's operational requirements and to identify a specific person or location at the conclusion of the assessment.
 - 2.3.2.2. The handler's interpretation of the canine's behavior.
 - 2.3.2.3. The canine's response.
 - 2.3.2.4. The handler's interpretation of the canine's response.
- 2.3.4. Comprehensive assessments shall incorporate the following components and parameters:
 - 2.3.4.1. One or more different potential target trails shall be approximately 1.6 km (\approx 1 mile) in length in an environment similar to where the canine usually works.
 - 2.3.4.2. Each target trail shall be aged in accordance with mission requirements for a minimum of 12 hours.
 - 2.3.4.3. Each target trail shall contain a minimum of ten turns.
 - 2.3.4.4. Multiple human distractors, either placed or regularly occurring in the assessment area shall be present along the distance of the target trail.
 - 2.3.4.5. The assessment location shall be unfamiliar to the handler.

- 2.3.4.6. The targets and distractors shall not be ones normally utilized in the training of the canine team.
- 2.3.4.7. The handler shall be informed of the start location.
- 2.3.4.8. The handler shall be provided a scent article from the target.
- 2.3.4.9. The handler shall specify the type of scent article prior to the assessment.
- 2.3.4.10. The assessment should be completed in less than 60 minutes.
- 2.3.4.11. The assessor shall know the correct layout of each assessment.
- 2.3.4.12. The handler shall not know the correct layout of each assessment.
- 2.3.4.13. The handler shall articulate the canine's final response prior to the start of the assessment.
- 2.3.4.14. The canine shall demonstrate an alert, which should include the final response. This must be communicated by the handler to the assessor.
- 2.3.4.15. A successful conclusion of the assessment shall be defined by the certifying agency.
- 2.3.4.16. The canine team shall be required to successfully complete the assessment.
- 2.3.4.17. Any team that is determined by the assessor to be more than 46 m (\approx 50yd) off the target's trail may be failed. However, the assessor may take into consideration environmental influences on the scent in determining whether or not a canine team is still on trail.
- 2.3.4.18. Identifying a human distractor shall be considered a failure.
- 2.3.3. Double –blind assessment
 - 2.3.3.1. The double-blind assessment may only be used to fulfill a handler's operational certification if it meets or exceeds the standards in the comprehensive assessment.
 - 2.3.3.2. Any double-blind assessment may be used for proficiency testing.
 - 2.3.3.3. This assessment demonstrates the proficiency of the canine team in an operational setting.
 - 2.3.3.4. The handler will be advised of the start location.
 - 2.3.3.5. The handler shall not know the location of the end point, nor the number of turns to be conducted.
 - 2.3.3.6. The canine team shall be required to successfully complete the assessment as defined by the certifying agency.
 - 2.3.3.7. The handler shall articulate the canine's final response prior to the start of the assessment.
 - 2.3.3.8. Identifying a human distractor will be considered a failure.
 - 2.3.3.9. No individual present, including the handler and assessor, shall know the correct outcome of any portion of the assessment.
 - 2.3.3.10. The assessment may or may not be timed.
 - 2.3.3.11. The assessor, if present, 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 official(s) 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.
- 3.6. Certification shall consist of a number of assessments that together form the full test.
- 3.7. Each assessment is the evaluation of a search.
- 3.8. Targets used in the certification process shall not have been used in the day to day training activities of the team being certified.
- 3.9. The certification shall be comprised of a scent recognition assessment together with either a comprehensive assessment or a double-blind assessment, or both.
- 3.10. A canine team which fails the certification process shall complete a corrective action plan before making another attempt to certify.
- 3.11. Any competent individual or entity may enhance the recommended SWGDOG guidelines in order to make the requirements more stringent.

4. MAINTENANCE TRAINING

- 4.1. The canine team shall conduct regular objective-oriented training that includes :
 - 4.1.1. Enhancing the proficiency level of the team.
 - 4.1.2. Correcting identified deficiencies or weaknesses.
 - 4.1.3. A variety of locations, environmental conditions and search area sizes.
 - 4.1.4. A varied duration of search times at a variety of times of day.
 - 4.1.5. A variety of blank search areas.
 - 4.1.6. A variety of search areas that contain non-matching scent trails.
 - 4.1.7. A variety of distractions in the search area.
 - 4.1.8. A variety of set times.
 - 4.1.9. A variety of targets and scent articles.
 - 4.1.10. A variety of methods of concealment.

- 4.2. Routine training conducted solely by the handler to maintain the canine's proficiency is acceptable but shall be combined with supervised training on a regular basis.
- 4.3. Supervised training is conducted by a qualified trainer or instructor other than the handler, in order to improve performance, identify and correct training deficiencies and perform proficiency assessments.
- 4.4. 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.
- 4.5. The canine team shall perform periodic proficiency assessments throughout the certification period as outlined in Section 2 - Canine Team Assessments, including a variety of scent recognition assessments, comprehensive assessments and double-blind assessments.

5. RECORDS AND DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

- 5.1. The handler and department or organization shall keep regular maintenance training, seizure, and deployment or utilization records.
- 5.2. Proficiency assessments and training records may be combined or separate documents.
- 5.3. Deployment or utilization and seizure records shall be separated from training, proficiency assessment, and certification records.
- 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 individuals 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. Length of trail.
 - 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 the canine team's 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. Location of certification.
- 5.7. Proficiency assessment records kept by the handler, organization and/or department may include but are not limited to the following data:
 - 5.7.1. Name of handler and canine.
 - 5.7.2. Names of individuals 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. Length of trail.
 - 5.7.10. Proficiency assessment results.
 - 5.7.11. Other information required by the canine team's 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 the canine team's departmental or organizational 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.
 - 5.12.1. Unconfirmed operational outcomes shall not be used as a factor in determining capability in that they do not correctly evaluate a canine team's proficiency.
- 5.13. Veterinary Records
 - 5.13.1. Veterinary records shall be maintained in a manner such as they are accessible to the handler/department/organization.
 - 5.13.2. Vaccinations required by state or local law should be documented in the veterinary record of the canine.