SWGDOG SC 3 – SELECTION OF SERVICEABLE DOGS AND REPLACEMENT SYSTEMS

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Items in "track changes" are previously approved and being modified after required two year review.

1. APTITUDE AND TEMPERAMENT

1.1. Evaluating potential detector dogs:
When submitting a dog for evaluation, the supplier should provide any available documentation in paragraph 1.1.4. below to allow the evaluator to carry out a basic assessment of the medical history. It is normal for a full veterinary exam to be carried out on completion of a successful evaluation.

  1.1.1. Due to the importance of the initial selection evaluations, they should only be carried out by a competent evaluator.

  1.1.2. It is considered a best practice to conduct business with suppliers equitably, fairly and according to appropriate legal and contractual agreements.

  1.1.3. During evaluation it is considered a best practice to care for all dogs in the same manner as privately-owned dogs.

  1.1.4. Before carrying out a temperament and evaluation test, the dog's basic medical condition and physical health could be assessed to eliminate those animals which are fundamentally unsuitable for the task. This assessment should include hip and elbow x-rays and current vaccination records. Acceptance of a dog should normally be on a 30 day return policy from arrival at the training center.

1.2. Potential detector dog definition:
A potential detector dog is one that is untrained on any specific odor and the evaluation is designed to establish the dog has the essential behaviors and temperament to be a successful detection dog.

1.3. Temperament Standards:
A primary consideration in selecting a detector dog is that it should have a suitable temperament for the role.

  1.3.1. A potential detector dog should be even-tempered and demonstrate a confident outgoing investigative attitude.

  1.3.2. The canines temperament is directly connected to the canines intent, motivation, attitude, performance, response and reaction.Examples of temperament flaws include:

    1.3.2.1. A variety of fears.

    1.3.2.2. Traumatic past experiences from which the dog has not recovered.

    1.3.2.3. Unwarranted aggression.

    1.3.2.4. Shyness.

1.3.2.5. An over or under reaction to external stimuli.
1.3.3. Dogs must be able to tolerate a variety of work conditions appropriate to the task.

1.4. Evaluation Methods
1.4.1. In general, evaluation of adult dogs should take place between 12 and 36 months of age because this is usually when dogs become behaviorally and socially mature.
1.4.2. Evaluation should be conducted by the buyer or their representative and be carried out in an environment unfamiliar to the dog, but similar to the type where the dog will be operating after training. The supplier should not normally be present during the evaluation.

1.5. Environmental soundness evaluation:
The environmental soundness evaluation is designed to assess the dog's normal reactions to commonly encountered environments.
1.5.1. The evaluator looks for the dog to demonstrate confidence when facing commonly encountered environmental stimuli or for the dog to demonstrate markedly improved confidence after several exposures to the stimuli.
1.5.2. The evaluator also looks for independence and continuity of focus without constant handler reinforcement, demonstrating levels of concentration.
1.5.3. The dog should be walked through an environmental conditioning area which contains different examples of :
1.5.3.1. Flooring and footing (e.g., carpet, wood, ceramic tile).
1.5.3.2. Open and closed stairs.
1.5.3.3. Varying temperatures.
1.5.3.4. Varying light levels (from bright light to total darkness).
1.5.3.5. Open and confined areas, with and without obstacles.
1.5.3.6. Various noise distracters.

1.6. Search and retrieve/food drive evaluation:
This evaluation assesses the dog's ability to hunt and its retrieve/food drive in different environmental conditions. Evaluations may include:
1.6.1. Throwing a reward item for recovery on grass, solid wood floor, steel decking, or open stairs.
1.6.2. Indoor evaluations are done in full light to complete darkness.
1.6.3. Evaluate the dog by having the evaluator fake a throw, so the dog thinks that the item has been thrown when it has not. This evaluates the hunt drive.
1.6.4. Further evaluation of the hunt drive should be conducted outside where the item is thrown into long grass and also both upwind and downwind.
1.6.5. The evaluator should be assessing the dog's change in behavior when the dog can see the reward and is able to anticipate the hunt, the speed with which the dog goes out for the reward as well as the speed of approach and of the strike (pick up).
1.6.6. The dog should be assessed for its determination to retain the reward after recovery.

1.6.7. This evaluation is the measurement of the dog's drive and desire to obtain its reward in variable conditions. The dog's performance is graded on the intensity to obtain the reward (speed and possession; persistence to obtain the reward).

1.7. Sociability Evaluation:
The purpose of this evaluation is to study the dog's reaction to people, dogs and other animals. It's meant to assesses abnormal aggression, submission, fear and potential for distraction. Since dogs (like all animals) react to fearful situations with a fight, flight or sometimes freeze response, it is important to evaluate for signs of fear in addition to aggression.

1.7.1. This evaluation should be done with and without the dog's expected detection reward (ball, Kong, towel, food).

1.7.2. Potential evaluation scenarios include the following:
The dog is led by its handler through a minimum of two people. The dog should move between the people without overt response, without showing avoidance behavior or aggression. Curious sniffing is evaluated as a completely natural social behavior and therefore is considered as harmless as ignoring the passive person group. Any avoidance behavior and any fearful or aggressive responses have to be judged as negative.

1.7.2.1. Signs of fear that may be missed include:

1.7.2.1.1. An overall lowering of the dog's body posture
1.7.2.1.2. A lowering of the head with the ears out to the side or back
1.7.2.1.3. The tail held below the spine
1.7.2.1.4. Reapeatedly licking the lips
1.7.2.1.5. Yawning
1.7.2.1.6. Heavily shedding coat
1.7.2.1.7. Sweating of the foot pads
1.7.2.1.8. Slower than normal responses to commands
1.7.2.1.9. Moving in slow motion
1.7.2.1.10. Urinating or defecating

1.7.2.2. More overt signs that may signal an aggressive response is imminent include:

1.7.2.2.1. Lifting the lip to expose teeth.
1.7.2.2.2. Growling.
1.7.2.2.3. Barking.
1.7.2.2.4. Lunging.

1.7.2.3. The evaluation should be repeated to assess the dog's ability to recover its primary reward (ball, Kong, towel, food) in and around the people. The reward should be thrown within a few feet near them and the evaluator will assess the dog's ability not to be distracted by the people standing round the reward.

1.8. Tracking Evaluations:

This test determines whether or not the dog has any natural tracking ability or any previous training. It measures his desire/ability to use his nose, his interest level, his desire to pursue the track and his tenacity to stay with it to the end. Evaluations may contain the following components:

    1.8.2. Lay track in an open field free from distractions and with grass up to six inches in height.

    1.8.3. The quarry will walk in a straight line, downwind, for approximately 200 feet.

    1.8.4. Lay a ball at the end and return to the start, double laying the track.

    1.8.5. The track can be marked by scuffing it but the handler must know where the track is.

    1.8.6. Age the track 10 minutes.

    1.8.7. The dog is cast over the track without encouragement to see if he will indicate and pursue it on his own.

    1.8.8. If the dog does not pursue the track then some direction can be given.

    1.8.9. Once he has indicated the track, observe his level of interest, if he stays with it or distracts and if he is happy working the track.

    1.8.10. This test is merely a measure of what there is to work with and is not a pass/fail situation.

1.9. Desirable evaluation outcomes include but are not limited to:

    1.9.2. A dog who is stable and outgoing in any environment.

    1.9.3. A dog with an excellent retrieve/hunt drive on a thrown or hidden object.

    1.9.4. Concentration and maintenance of focus over time with the dog's attention on the object, regardless of area and other distractions.

    1.9.5. The dog should maintain strong drive throughout the entire evaluation.

    1.9.6. The dog should demonstrate independent sniffing behavior.

    1.9.7. The dog should demonstrate independent searching behavior.

1.10. Undesirable evaluation outcomes may include but are not limited to:

    1.10.2. Dog chases but does not search for the object.

    1.10.3. Dog will not search/hunt for the object.

    1.10.4. Dog gives up the search easily.

    1.10.5. Dog will not chase a moving object.

    1.10.6. Dog chases but leaves for distractions, such as animal contamination (e.g., urine/feces) or other people or casual items in area (e.g., piece of paper on ground).

    1.10.7. Dog is distracted/overwhelmed by the environmental conditions.

    1.10.8. Dog behaves in a shy manner.

    1.10.9. Dog behaves in a nervous manner.

    1.10.10. Dog behaves in an overly aggressive manner.

    1.10.11. Dog fails to search.

    1.10.12. Dog fails to hunt for the odor/object.

    1.10.13. Dog fails to find the odor/object.

1.10.14. Dog shows a lack of search intensity.
1.10.15. Dog shows a lack of stamina.
1.10.16. Dog demonstrates a diminishing interest in the reward during the evaluation.
1.10.17. Dog is overly aggressive and unable to work around people.
1.10.18. Dog is overly aggressive and unable to work around other dogs
1.10.19. Dog exhibits excessive panting that is not due to heat or exercise.
1.10.20. Dog has low drive.
1.10.21. Dog does not have the desire to complete the task.
1.10.22. Dog is easily distracted by noise, people or other dogs.

1.11. Evaluation structure and method
1.11.2. Examples of detailed evaluation assessment and scoring system are at Annex A.

2. PHYSICAL AND MEDICAL

2.7. Physical evaluation
2.7.2. To ensure proper identification, all dogs submitted for evaluation must have a collar or harness with the dog's name affixed to it.
2.7.3. The collar or harness must be strong enough to restrain the dog.
2.7.4. It is considered a best practice to ensure that a computer microchip (or tattoo) for identification purposes is implanted in each dog.

2.8. Breed, sex, age, weight and height requirements
2.8.2. Breeds historically selected for detection purposes come from the sporting, herding, hound and working categories.
2.8.3. Dogs should be 12 to 36 months of age at time of the evaluation.
2.8.4. Dogs of either sex have shown good ability in detection work. A female in estrus should be deferred until a minimum of 4 – 6 weeks post estrus.
2.8.5. Weight must be proportional to the dog's frame and skeletal size. An objective rating system to measure body condition (weight for frame) should be used. (Development and Validation of body condition score system for dogs: a clinical tool. La Flamme Canine practice 1997 Vol 22 pages 10-15.)
2.8.6. Any color hair coat that is typical for the breed is acceptable.

2.9. Medical requirements
- 2.9.2. Dogs must be in excellent health, structurally sound and medically able to enter training.
- 2.9.3. Immunization records required for evaluation and procurement at minimum, must include evidence of Rabies vaccination (essential) or proof of a titer showing that a particular vaccination was not needed within the previous 12 months for :
  - 2.9.3.3. Rabies vaccination in accordance with state and local laws.
  - 2.9.3.4. Canine distemper (CDV).
  - 2.9.3.5. Canine adenovirus (type 2) (CAV-2) (Canine Hepatitis).
  - 2.9.3.6. Parvovirus (CPV-2)
  - 2.9.3.7. Leptospirosis .
  - 2.9.3.8. There may be particular regional/national immunization requirements which must be considered. The most current AAHA (American Animal Hospital Association) guidelines should be consulted.
  - 2.9.3.9. A vaccination/titer certificate issued by a veterinarian with individual dog identification (name, tattoo, brand or microchip #) must be provided for all dogs.
- 2.9.4. Dogs should be well-socialized to humans and should be able to tolerate medical examination procedures.
- 2.9.5. All medical records should include at minimum the following pieces of signalment data:
  - 2.9.5.3. Dog identification.
  - 2.9.5.4. Name.
  - 2.9.5.5. Tattoo number or
  - 2.9.5.6. Microchip number.
  - 2.9.5.7. Whelping date (or age at time of examination if whelping date not
  - 2.9.5.8. known).
  - 2.9.5.9. Date of examination or entry.
  - 2.9.5.10. Name and signature of examining veterinarian.
- 2.9.6. The following data should appear at least once in the medical record:
  - 2.9.6.3. Sex and reproductive status.
  - 2.9.6.4. Breed.
  - 2.9.6.5. Color pattern .
  - 2.9.6.6. Contact information for owner.
  - 2.9.6.7. Contact information for examining veterinarian.
- 2.9.7. Minimum medical examination database: Conducting the following evaluations during a complete physical examination constitutes the best practice:
  - 2.9.7.3. Gait. The gait should be assessed at the walk, trot and run.
  - 2.9.7.4. Skin and coat must be healthy in appearance.
  - 2.9.7.5. **Assess o**ral cavity for dentition and sign of disease.
  - 2.9.7.6. Heart and lungs:
    - 2.9.7.6.1. Heart sounds.
    - 2.9.7.6.2. Heart rate.
    - 2.9.7.6.3. Heart rhythm.

2.9.7.6.4. Lung sounds.
          2.9.7.6.5. Cardiovascular system at rest.
          2.9.7.6.6. Cardiovascular system upon exercise.
          2.9.7.6.7. Respiratory system at rest.
          2.9.7.6.8. Respiratory system on exercise.
      2.9.7.7. Musculoskeletal system.
      2.9.7.8. Nervous system and senses, and sensory organs.
          2.9.7.8.1. Nervous system.
          2.9.7.8.2. Eyes and adenexa oculi.
          2.9.7.8.3. Functional vision.
          2.9.7.8.4. Anatomy of ears.
          2.9.7.8.5. Functional hearing.
          2.9.7.8.6. Nose and nasopharynx.
          2.9.7.8.7. Demonstrated olfactory ability.
      2.9.7.9. Reproductive system.
          2.9.7.9.1. Intact or neutered reproductive system. Document
                      monorchidism or cryptorchidism.
      2.9.7.10. Urinary tract anatomy.
          2.9.7.10.1. Urinary tract function.
  2.9.8. Laboratory minimum database.
      2.9.8.3. Hematology and blood chemistry.
      2.9.8.4. Collection of blood sample for routine testing.
      2.9.8.5. Blood chemistry. Complete blood count.
      2.9.8.6. Serology.
      2.9.8.7. Canine heartworm testing.
      2.9.8.8. Urinalysis.
          2.9.8.8.1. Collection of urine sample for routine testing.
          2.9.8.8.2. Urine specific gravity.
      2.9.8.9. Fecal examination.
          2.9.8.9.1. Collection of fecal sample for routine testing.
  2.9.9. Skeletal radiology.
      2.9.9.3. Depending on the planned use of the dog, it may be that early signs of
                degenerative joint disease would make the dog unacceptable.
      2.9.9.4. It is considered a best practice to acquire diagnostic elbow and hip
                radiographs for evaluation of conformation and have these reviewed
                by an independent board certified veterinary radiologist.
      2.9.9.5. It is a best practice to ensure that the minimum patient data are
                projected or imprinted ("flashed") permanently on the radiograph at
                the time of exposure.
      2.9.9.6. If further evaluation is warranted, evaluations may be completed at the
                discretion of the veterinarian or the dog may be deemed unacceptable.
  2.9.10. Genetic testing.
      2.9.10.3. It is considered a best practice to acquire currently available genetic
                screening.
      2.9.10.4. Use DNA testing for medical conditions, such as, but not limited to:
          2.9.10.4.1. Myelopathy.

2.9.10.4.2. Exercise induced collapse.
2.9.10.4.3. Progressive retinal atrophy (PRA).

3. *REPLACEMENT SYSTEMS:*

3.7. Retirement or end of service: There are numerous reasons or causes that will end a service dog's career, e.g., agency directed, health, performance and/or age. It is a best practice to evaluate a dog's condition and performance on a regular basis (reference SC2 and SC4). The following are recognized replacement sources:

3.7.2. Procurement of adult dogs.
   3.7.2.3. See the evaluation and medical requirements stated earlier in this document for the selection/replacement of adult dogs.
3.7.3. Procurement of juvenile dogs.
   3.7.3.3. See applicable points from list below.
3.7.4. Selective breeding programs.
   3.7.4.3. Important criteria must be taken into account when developing a best practice based selective breeding program. Some considerations include:
      3.7.4.3.1. Animal welfare.
      3.7.4.3.2. Program documentation.
      3.7.4.3.3. Facilities infrastructure, planning, and distribution.
      3.7.4.3.4. Geographical location (considerations of climatic conditions of deployment areas, i.e., deployed in the cold, raised in the heat)
      3.7.4.3.5. Mission task.
      3.7.4.3.6. Breed type(s).
      3.7.4.3.7. Scope (number of dogs required, i.e., growth and replacement).
      3.7.4.3.8. Breeding plan (frequency of mating, longevity of the program, etc.).
      3.7.4.3.9. Reproduction strategy (natural mating versus artificial insemination).
      3.7.4.3.10. Gene pool integrity (inbreeding coefficients, outcross availability).
      3.7.4.3.11. Genetic and phenotypic selection of breeding animals.
      3.7.4.3.12. Rearing environment (e.g., kennel raised, prisons, in home).
      3.7.4.3.13. Development strategy (type and amount of conditioning, enrichment, evaluation processes, performance recording, reward selection and task specific training).
      3.7.4.3.14. Veterinary considerations (mass or detailed screening processes, genetic screening, congenital diseases, control of infectious diseases, and nutrition).
      3.7.4.3.15. Repurposing/rehoming strategy (unsuitable and/or excess animals).

   3.7.4.3.16. Suitable human resources (availability, experience and staff training).

   3.7.4.3.17. Collaborative technical support, including scientific research, mentoring, genetic networking.

   3.7.4.3.18. Though not all inclusive, this list was compiled from several successful breeding programs from around the world.

4. Note: Put the considerations of developing a selective breeding program into groupings (logistics, more organization, etc.)