

MAINE ASSOCIATION FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE

Search Dog Team Certification Standard Appendix G

Certification Tests: Wilderness Land Human Remains Detection

I. Application

- A. These tests apply to a Type II, Kind C, search dog team which searches for human remains on land in wilderness locations (per ASTM F1848-98, "Standard Classification for Search and Rescue Dog Crew/Teams).
- B. Dog teams currently certified by other agencies or organizations may request certification under this standard:
 - 1. The MASAR Standards Committee will review the standard under which the team was certified.
 - 2. If the standard's field evaluation requirements meet or exceed those defined below, the dog team may be certified as a Wilderness Land Human Remains Detection team.
 - 3. However, if the Standards Committee has any reservations it may require that a team shall pass one or all of the tests defined below.
- C. A dog team certified as having met the requirements of the IPWDA (International Police Work Dog Association) Land Human Remains Search Test, shall be certified as a Wilderness Land Human Remains Detection team.

II. Preliminary Requirements

A dog team that wishes to be certified under this standard must meet all of the following before scheduling the certification test in Part III.

- A. General
 - 1. Meet all requirements in Part IV of the Search Dog Team Certification Standard.
 - 2. Meet all requirements in Part V, Section A, of the Search Dog Team Certification Standard.
- B. Preliminary Certification Test

A dog team must demonstrate that it has the ability to detect human remains by successfully performing the following test. Failure of any testing requirement means failure of the entire test.

 - 1. Test Area and Conditions
 - i. The test area shall be 5 acres of moderate terrain and varied ground cover.
 - ii. The test area shall have clear geographic boundaries, or shall be well marked with flagging tape.
 - iii. The test area shall be contaminated by at least one person after the scent source is placed.
 - iv. The test area shall not contain any false hides of scent material.
 - v. The test shall be performed during daylight hours.

- vi. No food reward may be provided to the dog within 6 feet of the scent source.
 - vii. All of Part V, Section B, subsection 1 (as suitable), Search Dog Team Certification Standard applies to this test.
 - viii. All of Section VI of the Search Dog Team Certification Standard applies to this test.
2. Scent Source Definition
- i. The scent source shall consist of 120 cubic centimeters (1/2 cup) or more of one of the following:
 - 1) Decayed human blood.
 - 2) Decayed human tissue.
 - 3) Aged human body fluids.
 - 4) Clothing soaked with aged human body fluids.
 - 5) Soil samples soaked with aged human body fluids.
 - ii. The scent source shall not consist of any of the following:
 - 1) Dry or bleached bone alone
 - 2) Human ashes
 - 3) Artificial scent
 - 4) Teeth or hair alone
 - iii. The scent source shall not be provided by the dog team to be tested.
3. Scent Source Placement
- i. One scent source shall be placed in the test area, a minimum of 1 hour prior to testing.
 - ii. The scent source shall be hidden under light cover.
 - iii. The scent source shall be located no more than three feet above the ground.
 - iv. The scent source itself shall not be accessible to the dog or humans.
 - v. The scent source container shall protect the surrounding area from contamination with scent.
4. Testing Requirements
- i. The dog team shall locate the scent source¹ in 30 minutes or less.
 - ii. The dog team shall make no false indications.
 - iii. The dog must offer a trained indication near the scent source.
 - iv. If the canine picks up or moves the scent source the handler shall immediately command that it stop. If the dog does not immediately cease this behavior upon command, or if it is slow to comply, the team has failed this test.
 - v. If the canine defecates, urinates, or rolls on the scent source the team has failed this test.
 - vi. At the conclusion of the test the handler shall correctly identify the location of the scent source.

¹ Throughout this document, except where otherwise stated the term “scent source” refers to human remains scent.

- vii. During the test the dog team shall fulfill all of the applicable requirements in Part V, Section B, subsection 2, of the Search Dog Team Certification Standard.

III. Certification Requirements

- A. To be certified as a Wilderness Land Human Remains Detection Team, a dog team must meet all of the testing requirements below.
- B. Testing Requirements
 1. The dog team shall search the entire area and locate all scent sources in 1 hour or less.
 2. Before each test, the dog handler shall describe the dog's trained indication or final response to human remains.
 3. Before each test, the handler shall describe the search strategy he or she will use to cover the area.
 4. At the conclusion of the test the handler shall correctly identify the locations and number of all scent sources present. Identifying animal remains or blank soil disturbances as a source of human remains scent shall result in failure of the test.
 5. The dog must offer a trained indication of surface or buried scent sources within a reasonable distance (generally ~3 feet).
 6. If the canine does not pinpoint a elevated scent source the handler must be able to interpret the canine's actions to the satisfaction of the evaluators.
 7. The dog team shall fulfill all of the applicable requirements in Part V, Section B, subsection 2, of the Search Dog Team Certification Standard.
- C. Test conditions are listed in Section IV.

IV. Test Conditions

- A. Test Area
 1. The test area shall be approximately 2 acres in size, of moderate terrain, and varied ground cover.
 2. The test area shall have clear geographic boundaries, or shall be well marked with flagging tape.
 3. The test area shall be contaminated with human scent.
 4. The test area shall contain animal remains
 5. The test area shall contain at least 3 blank soil disturbances.
 6. The search area shall be selected to provide multiple locations for elevated scent.
- B. Restrictions
 1. The test shall be performed during daylight hours.
 2. No food reward may be provided to the dog within 6 feet of a scent source.
 3. Handlers rewarding their dogs during testing must not unduly disturb or contaminate the area.
 4. Part V, Section B, subsection 2, of the Search Dog Team Certification

Standard applies to this test, with the exception of paragraphs (b) and (c).

5. All of Section VI of the Search Dog Team Certification Standard applies to this test.
- C. Scent Source Definition
1. The scent source shall consist of 2 cubic centimeters (0.4 tsp) or more of the following:
 - i. Decayed human blood.
 - ii. Decayed human tissue.
 - iii. Aged human body fluids.
 - iv. Clothing soaked with aged human body fluids.
 - v. Soil samples soaked with aged human body fluids.
 2. The scent source shall not consist of any of the following:
 - i. Dry or bleached bone alone
 - ii. Human ashes
 - iii. Artificial scent
 - iv. Teeth or hair alone
 3. The scent source will be of adequate size to provide detectable scent for the dog based on environmental conditions and the opinion(s) of the evaluators(s).
 4. The scent source shall not be provided by the dog team to be tested.
- D. Scent Source Placement
1. Scent sources shall be placed at least 1 hour prior to the start of the test.
 2. The scent sources may be above ground, on the surface, or buried.
 3. There shall be 1 or 2 scent sources in the test area. If 2 sources are used, at least 1 must be elevated or on the surface.
 4. Each scent source shall be hidden from sight using natural materials.
 5. The scent itself shall not be accessible to the dog or humans.
 6. The scent source container shall protect the surrounding area from contamination with scent.
 7. If at all possible, scent sources shall be placed so that scent cones from different sources do not overlap.
 8. If buried, the scent source shall be covered with 6-18 inches of loose soil. It should also be covered with vegetation so that the area immediately around blends in with its surroundings.
 9. Elevated scent sources shall be placed 2-6 feet above the ground.

V. Evaluator Requirements

- A. Each test evaluator shall meet the criteria of Section VI of the current MASAR Search Dog Certification Standard.
- B. Each test evaluator shall be certified as either a Wilderness or Non-Wilderness Land Human Remains Detection Team handler under the MASAR certification standard, or its equivalent.
- C. The same evaluator may not conduct the first recertification of a team he or she evaluated for the team's initial certification.

VI. Recertification Requirements

- A. Wilderness Land Human Remains Detection dog teams must be recertified every two years.
- B. To be recertified, a dog team must do one of the following:
 - 1. Successfully meet all of the Certification Requirements listed in Section III above.
 - 2. Provide proof of a successful human remains find within the past two years. This method of recertification is subject to the approval of two currently certified Wilderness or Non-Wilderness Land Human Remains Detection team handlers.