



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA SEARCH & RESCUE STANDARD 7800

TRACKING EVALUATOR

VASARCO Tracking Standards Committee chaired by Rob Speiden & Theresa Crossland

**APPROVED BY THE VIRGINIA SEARCH AND RESCUE COUNCIL and
THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

2016

This is the final document approved in 2016. It presents the certification standard for credentialing as a Tracking Evaluator. It is accompanied by COVSAR Tracking Standards 7000 - 7900.

COVSAR Standard 7800 - Tracking Evaluator

7800 This standard establishes a certification named "Tracking Evaluator" (herein called Evaluator) and outlines all applicable requirements for achieving this certification.

7801 **Scope:** These standards were developed to define the minimum qualification requirements necessary for certification as a Tracking Evaluator by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Search and Rescue program.

The certification issued under these standards is a requirement only for those personnel who wish to voluntarily participate in the search and rescue program of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management at the level indicated in this standard.

7802 **Purpose:** Outlined in the following standard are all the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) expected at the Evaluator certification level.

7803 **General:**

- 7803.1 The Evaluator is willing to safely perform the following functions in the general environment of the Commonwealth of Virginia any time of the year, day or night, and in most weather conditions and terrain experienced in the Commonwealth of Virginia. In order to accomplish this, the Evaluator will be able to:
- 7803.2 Demonstrate familiarity with the COVSAR tracking standards by completing the Tracking Evaluator Quiz with a minimum score of 90%.
- 7803.3 Set up evaluation stations according to COVSAR Tracking standard 7300,
- 7803.4 Evaluate and debrief candidate trackers as lead or assistant evaluator for a particular evaluation station;
- 7803.5 Interface with and instruct other searchers, search staff and local agencies on the abilities of Trackers, and tracking team tactics that might be utilized;
- 7803.6 Demonstrate the ability to explain to other searchers and staff on being clue, sign and track aware and the importance of each;
- 7803.7 Perform other activities which may be required based upon the Evaluators knowledge, skills, abilities, training and experience.

7804 **Definitions:** The definitions used by this standard are listed and defined in COVSAR Standard 7200 – Foundations for Awareness, Signcutting & Tracking. They may or may not reflect the definitions used by other individuals, groups, agencies or publications.

7805 **Prerequisites:**

- 7805.1 Evaluators must be at least 21 years of age or older.
- 7805.2 Applicants must be currently VDEM certified as a Search Team Leader (STL), or an equivalent as recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Emergency Management Search and Rescue Program. Proof of such certification must be presented along with the applicant's application for certification as an Evaluator.
- 7805.3 Applicants must be currently VDEM certified as a Type 2 – Tracking Technician or higher as recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Emergency Management Search and Rescue Program. Proof of such certification must be presented along with the applicant's application for certification as an Evaluator.
- 7805.4 Applicants must agree to allow the VDEM or the applicant's member group to perform a background check within three (3) years.

7806 Requirements:

An Evaluator candidate must, at a minimum, complete each of these steps, in order, before being certified to evaluate each particular station. These steps must be followed during the day for an evaluator to be certified to evaluate a particular station during the day. These steps must be followed at night for an evaluator to be certified to evaluate a particular station at night.

- 7806.1 Complete the station with the appropriate minimum score as determined for each station Listed in Table 1;
- 7806.2 Watch the station be set up and conducted by an Evaluator with tracker candidates;
- 7806.3 Set up and conduct the station under the supervision of an Evaluator; then
- 7806.4 Receive written approval from an Evaluator that the Evaluator Candidate is approved to conduct that particular station.

7807 Forms:

- 7807.1 Application for Certification: Tracking Evaluator
- 7807.2 Tracking Evaluator Station approval form

7808 Certification / Recertification / Reciprocity:

- 7808.1 Initial certification and recertification will be accomplished by completing all prerequisites and requirements outlined in this standard.
- 7808.2 Certification will be for a period of three (3) years.
- 7808.3 Reciprocity – There will be no reciprocity with other programs outside of the COVSAR program for the role of Tracking Evaluator.
- 7808.4 Original members of the Tracking Standards Committee that developed the original set of COVSAR tracking standards approved by VDEM in 2014 will serve as the initial Tracking Evaluators through 2017. After 2017, all Tracking Evaluators must be current with this standard.

7809 Testing & Certification:

- 7809.1 The Evaluator candidate must demonstrate a working understanding of the items listed under each subject and must be able to demonstrate the ability to perform and/or discuss the skills delineated in Tracking Standard 7200. Specific written and field tests have been designed to evaluate the candidate's knowledge and performance skills.
- 7809.2 Testing will include practical exam stations and will be conducted within the scope of the knowledge, skills and abilities conveyed in the Foundations for Awareness, Signcutting and Tracking Training Standard 7200.
- 7809.3 Each candidate will be individually evaluated on the field evaluation station for which she or he endeavors to become an Evaluator: (7409.3.1 Tracking Tools Station, 7409.3.2 Sign Squares Station, 7409.3.3 Signcutting Station, 7409.3.4 Sign Interpretation Station, 7409.3.5 Aging Station, 7409.3.6 Known / Unknown Station, 7409.3.7 Point Last Seen / Last Known Point (PLS/LKP) Station)
- 7809.4 Candidates will be evaluated on ten (10) categories (with subcategories) as delineated in Table 1.

Table 1. Category list of Knowledge, Skills and Abilities assessed for a Tracking Evaluator certification and associated minimum score for respective categories in each evaluation station.

CATEGORY	PLS/LKP	Tools	Sign Squares	Sign Cutting	Sign Interpret	Known Unknown	Aging
1.0 TOOLS	5	5					
2.0 INTERVIEWING	4						
3.0 PLS /LKP	4						
4 DETECTION / AWARENESS							
4.1 TRACK DETECTION	4		4	4		4.5	
4.2 CLUE AWARENESS	4			4			
5 INTERPRETATION							
5.1 HUMANIMAL	4			4	4.5		
5.2 IDENTIFICATION	4					4	
5.3 AGING	4						3
5.4 DIRECTION OF TRAVEL	4		4	4			
6 RECORDING/DOCUMENTATION							
6.1 PHOTOGRAPHING	4					4	
6.2 DRAWING	4					4	
6.3 CASTING	4						
6.4 REPORTING							
7.0 TRAILING	4						
8.0 CLUE MANAGEMENT	4						
9.0 PROFESSIONALISM	4	5					
10.0 COMMUNICATION	4	5		5			

- 7809.5 Scores from each evaluation station will be considered for the station in which the Evaluator endeavors to be certified.
- 7809.6 All field tests must be completed within twenty-four (24) months of certification/recertification submission date.
- 7809.7 Any time a candidate completes an evaluation station, the score achieved in the latest station that s/he completed for evaluation will be the score on record for that person.

7810 Disclaimer:

It is the expectation of the tracking standards committee and the tracking evaluators that each and every candidate that participates in each and every tracking evaluation station is responsible to know, and be familiar with, all of the procedures, techniques, scoring methods and criteria used by the evaluators to assess a candidate's tracking skills. It is NOT the responsibility of the tracking evaluator to ensure that the candidate is aware of evaluation criteria.