



Recognition Standards for a SAR Air-Scent Team

1. **Administrative Standards:** The group must meet all the administrative standards set in the section General Administrative Recognition Standards for All Teams.

2. **Training Standards:** the group must submit written training standards or provide documentation that all recognition standards are met or exceeded.
 - a. **Call-out qualification:** A written standard must be provided that explains the qualifications and training required before a group member is allowed to respond to a search.

 - b. *The callout qualification level at a minimum should include:*
 - i. A minimum age requirement of 16.
 - ii. Equipment each member should have in their possession on every incident.
 - (1) Appropriate clothing and footgear for both fair and foul weather.
 - (2) Water container of 1-2 liter capacity
 - (3) Day pack or fanny pack.
 - (4) Five large, heavy-duty plastic trash bags
 - (5) Food for 24 hours
 - (6) Flashlight
 - (7) Lighter, matches and candle, or equivalent fire source.
 - (8) Pocket knife or type tool.
 - (9) Compass
 - (10) Waterproofed pen/pencil and paper.
 - (11) Whistle
 - (12) Two pairs plastic examination gloves
 - (13) Personal First-aid kit containing at least
 - (a) sterile gauze pads
 - (b) medical tape
 - (c) roller gauze
 - (d) moleskin
 - (e) topical disinfected

- iii. Receive training in
 - (1) Search policies and procedures
 - (2) Search professionalism
 - (3) Use of personal equipment
 - (4) Short-term survival and emergency signaling
 - (5) Search tactics overview
 - (6) Personal safety
 - iv. Demonstrate the ability and maturity to function as an effective member on an uncomplicated task during a search.
 - v. Completed a group application for membership.
- c. Operational Dog-Handler: Every recognized team must have established a training level called Operational Dog-Handler. The group must ensure that certified individuals meet or exceed the following requirements: **(See Appendix A- Virginia Department of Emergency Services Air-Scent Dog Standards)**
- i. Posses a minimum age of 18.
 - ii. The training standards meet or exceed the knowledge and performance standards set in Section III of the Virginia Department of Emergency Services Air-Scent Dog Handler standards.
 - iii. **On Site Group Review:** In order to ensure a group is conducting training that fosters growth and ensures maintainment of operational capability the group will be evaluated during a group training session. The selected site will be mutually agreeable to both the group and VASARCO evaluation team, but will be a site the group as not used previously for training. All group members must be prepared to show individual training logs and for operational members, evaluation forms. In addition, the group must submit a group training schedule. If serious deficiencies are noted, the operational handlers may be asked to perform a 40 acre problem, in accordance with state testing standards. The structure of the training session is left to the discretion of the evaluated group but must allow sufficient evaluation of the following points.
 - (1) Review of individual training logs and evaluation forms.
 - (2) Review of group training schedule.
 - (3) Plan of instruction for session. (May be presented orally)
 - (4) Properly conducted dog obedience session
 - (5) Aggression from dogs dealt with in an appropriate manner.
 - (6) Proper environment provided for training
 - (a) Dogs tied to a car are properly supervised
 - (b) Plenty of water is provided for dogs
 - (c) Safe environment for both dogs and handlers
 - (d) Trainee=s have appropriate equipment and clothing for the training event.
 - (e) Operational dog handlers have proper equipment as established by state training standards.

- (7) Proper supervision of the training event by session training coordinator. (The session training coordinator does not have to be the groups training officer).
 - (a) Handlers are given proper positive reinforcement and a hostile environment is not established.
 - (b) Dogs are given proper positive reinforcement.
 - (c) Proper balance of activities for both operational handlers and trainees.
 - (d) Newer trainees receive adequate direct supervision from experienced handlers.
 - (8) Land navigation is demonstrated by route or area finding and/or the ability to state the area the dog worked on a 7.5 minute topographical map for operational dog handlers.
 - (9) Dog Handling. Operational dog handlers should not demonstrate any serious deficiencies from state training standards. If serious deficiencies are found and agreed upon by both evaluators then the operational dog team may be asked to perform a 40 acre problem in accordance with the state air-scent dog standards.
 - (10) Debriefing of the training session.
- iv. The group training officer should assure applicants possess the maturity and professionalism appropriate for a field team member.

3. **Training officer:**

- a. Each group will develop a system in accordance with state standards to ensure its applicants meet or exceed the training and performance standards and are able to document the process.

4. **Medical standard:** Group standards require a current American Red Cross Standard First-Aid card, or equivalent, or higher for operational dog-handler or higher.

List for New Teams

5. **Minimum personal:** In order to both successfully train and carry out the objectives of a Ground Wilderness Air-Scent Group the following minimum numbers of personal shall be listed on the group roster.
 - a. 2 Operational Dog Handlers
 - b. *2 Operational Dog Handlers in training*

6. **Minimum Group equipment:** The following equipment should be owned by the group, owned by the sponsoring agency and controlled by the group, or owned by chapters within the group.
 - a. **Operations kit (see Appendix C for form samples)**
 - i. Lost person report (VASARCO)
 - ii. Task assignment forms (VASARCO)
 - iii. Shift summary report (DES)
 - iv. After action report (DES)
 - v. SAR unit personnel register (DES)
 - vi. Vehicle register (DES)
 - vii. Volunteer register (DES)
 - viii. Guidelines for SAR coordination through the DES
 - ix. ASRC Grid overlay templates
 - x. State highway map
 - xi. Paper tablet
 - xii. Colored hi-lighters
 - xiii. Pencils
 - xiv. Pens

 - b. **Hand held Radio=s** Two hand held radios, which should be in good working condition, should be capable of operating on at least four channels within the Special emergency 155 MHZ band. These radios should be configured to operate in simplex mode at the following frequencies: 155.160, 155.205, and 155.280 MHZ. These radios shall be capable of 5 watt transmit power. Each radio should have a spare battery. Any handheld radio owned by the team or used by the team during a search must be FCC type accepted.

 - c. **Mobile radio.** A mobile radio, in good working condition, capable of operating on at least four channels within the Special emergency 155 MHZ band. The radio should be configured to operate in a simplex mode at the following three frequencies: 155.160, 155.205, and 155.280 MHZ. The mobile radio should have a minimum transmit power of 20 watts. Any mobile radio owned by the team or used by the team during a search must be FCC type accepted.

 - d. **Radio License.** *A group should have a radio license or a written working agreement with a license holder for the channels withing the Special Emergency 155 MHZ band.*