

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY

MANAGEMENT

SEARCH AND RESCUE PROGRAM

STANDARDS FOR VIRGINIA

WATER CANINE TEAMS

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PEREQUISITES

In order to be eligible to test to become a certified "Virginia Water Canine Team" the handler shall:

- a) Be 18 years of age.
- b) Be an active member in good standing with a Canine Search and Rescue group currently operating under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Department of Emergency Management in the Commonwealth of Virginia, or be a member of a team that has an application pending for a canine MOU with the Department of Emergency Management in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- c) Have no felony convictions.
- d) Provide current canine team training log.
- e) Provide documentation of current canine immunizations.
- f) Canine teams seeking Type II level certification only must have obtained certification in another canine discipline recognized by DEM. This need not be a current certification.

TERMINOLOGY

The definitions listed here are for the purpose of these standards only. They may or may not reflect the definitions used by other individuals, groups, or agencies.

- 1) **Air scent dog** - A canine that will detect airborne human scent.
- 2) **Aggressive Canine Behavior** - Canine aggression is an attempted or actual unprovoked attack on another canine or person. A canine may also be evaluated as aggressive if it exhibits significant warning signs of imminent unprovoked attack (continuous growling, snarling, fear-barking, etc.).
- 3) **Alert** - The canine's natural response, recognizable to the handler, to its detection of human scent.
- 4) **Area search** - Search of a specific geographical area. The area could be urban, suburban, rural, or wilderness.
- 5) **Article search** - Search for any object or article that may contain human scent which may be above or below ground.
- 6) **Cadaver search** - Search for human remains, bodily fluids, articles, or the areas on which they may have rested.
- 7) **Cadaver Canine** - A canine that will detect and indicate on human remains including human decomposition scent.
- 8) **Critical Incident Stress**- Natural emotional reaction to destruction, injury and death related to a disaster environment.
- 9) **Canine team** – One (1) trained handler with one (1) trained dog certified together as a team.
- 10) **Distracting Scent**- Any scent source other than cadaver scent.
- 11) **Event** - Training, mission, test or other activity, where search teams may gather.
- 12) **Good Samaritan Law** - Any person who, in good faith, renders emergency medical care or assistance to an injured person at the scene of an accident or other emergency without the expectation of receiving, or intending to receive compensation for such injured person, shall not be liable in civil damages for any act or omission, not constituting gross negligence, in the course of such care or assistance. Good Samaritan Laws do not prevent subjects from filing civil suits and do not take the burden of proof off of the responder.
- 13) **Handler** - The person who controls and directs the canine during a search.
- 14) **Heeling** - The canine walking with the handler, on command, at the handler's side, either on or off lead.

- 15) **Indication** - Canine's trained method of communicating to the handler that the subject or scent source has been found.
- 16) **MOU** - Memorandum of Understanding.
- 17) **Operational Team** – One trained handler and one trained canine that together have passed all requirements set forth by these standards and have been issued a certification by Virginia Department of Emergency Management.
- 18) **Probability of Detection (POD)** - The percentage of probability that if a subject were actually in the search area that he would have been located (detected) by the search effort.
- 19) **Refind** - When the canine has made a find, it returns to the handler and directs the handler back to the subject or article.
- 20) **Rural** - Country often given to farming or to woodland and sparsely to moderately populated.
- 21) **SAR**- Search and Rescue.
- 22) **SAR Dog Standards Committee** - A committee of representatives of each search dog unit that has an MOU with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. Each canine unit may have up to two voting members on the committee.
- 23) **Scent discriminating dog** - A canine that will locate the scent of a specific individual.
- 24) **Type I Water Canine Team** – Canine team is qualified to search from the shoreline and from a boat.
- 25) **Type II Water Canine Team** - Canine team is qualified to search from the shoreline only.
- 26) **Unit** - The organization that a team represents.
- 27) **Urban or Suburban** - Moderately to heavily populated areas given primarily to business and residential development.
- 28) **VDEM** – Virginia Department of Emergency Management.
- 29) **Water search** - Search for human scent or deceased persons under or along water, such as a drowned victim.
- 30) **Wilderness** - An area generally uncultivated and uninhabited, and often inaccessible by road.

SCOPE

- a) These standards are intended to define minimum qualification requirements for area search by a Water Canine Team. Teams may choose to do boat or shoreline.
- b) Teams doing boat evaluation must also do shoreline. This team will be a Type 1 Water Canine Team.
- c) Teams may choose to just do shorelines and will be known as a Type 2 Water Canine Team. They will not be required to take the boat evaluation or complete skills related to boat handling. However this team will be required to know the same material as a team doing the boat evaluation.
- d) The Water Canine Team should be able to perform the following functions in the general environment of the Commonwealth of Virginia:
 1. Search for deceased persons in or under water using air-scent techniques.
 2. Assist with the evaluation, organization of a water search.
- e) The team should be capable of performing these functions any time of the year, day or night, and in all weather conditions experienced in the Commonwealth. The team may work with a variety of individuals and organizations, including law enforcement, fire and rescue, casual volunteers and family members of the missing subject(s). In order to do this the handler should be able to:
 1. Understand the search and rescue system used in the Commonwealth.
 2. Understand the theory of deceased person searches in or around water.
 3. Plan, execute, debrief and document a variety of dog search tasks.
 4. Navigate accurately on land and water.
 5. Survive an unexpected emergency.
- f) These standards do not address any particular breed of canine since many breeds can be trained to do search work. However, it is important that the canine have the stamina for long hours of searching in all kinds of weather. In addition, the canine must be sociable and controllable in situations involving crowds, noise, other canines, and a variety of distractions.

HANDLER KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION

Handler will demonstrate knowledge of the items listed under each subject and the ability to perform the skills listed. Specific tests designed for some items are described in “TEST METHODS”, and are included as part of these standards.

1) SAR Operations

- a) Understand how state missions are originated.
- b) List several resources that might be utilized during a SAR event.
- c) Demonstrate the ability to develop basic search dog assignments for a search incident and provide appropriate recommendations for additional resource support to the incident.
- d) Understand the functions of these field team positions.
 - 1) Field Team Member
 - 2) Field Team Leader
- e) Understand proper searcher conduct as it relates to law enforcement, the family of the missing subject(s), and the media.
- f) Understand general safety considerations in SAR operations, including dealing with critical incident stress.
- g) Understand the provisions of the Virginia Search and Rescue Council’s “Standard Operating Procedures”.

2) Legal Aspects of Search and Rescue

- a) Understand SAR responsibilities at the state level.
- b) Understand several methods of reducing liability exposure.
- c) Understand the circumstances when entry upon private property may be justified.

3) Survival

- a) Understand the basic principals of clothing and equipment selection for the search environment.
 - 1) Choice of clothing material
 - 2) Waterproof / windproof
 - 3) Layering
 - 4) PFDs
- b) Bivouac overnight in the out-of doors. (**Not required if already completed as a wilderness or cadaver team.**)
See APPENDIX M for guidelines for the overnight bivouac.

See APPENDIX N for guidelines for a personal equipment list.

4) **Scent Transport Theory - understand the following concepts as they apply in water and air**

- 1) Lofting
- 2) Pluming
- 3) Fumigating
- 4) Coning
- 5) Looping
- 6) Fanning
- 7) Pooling
- 8) Thermo cline

5) **Land Navigation**

- a) Define the following terms or concepts:
 - 1) True north and magnetic north
 - 2) Declination
- b) Read and interpret topographic map border information, colors, and symbols.
- c) Demonstrate the ability to use a compass to plot a course on a map.
- d) Draw a map of an area searched.
- e) Perform the following navigational functions:
 - 1) Obtain and follow a simple compass bearing.
 - 2) Determine a reciprocal.
 - 3) Navigate around obstacles.
 - 4) Measure distance by pacing.
 - 5) Determine position by terrain feature identification.
 - 6) Determine position using UTM coordinates on a map.
- f) Describe how to use these land navigation concepts.
 - 1) Catching features
 - 2) Collecting features
 - 3) Aiming off

6) Search Skills

- a) Demonstrate an understanding of these search tactics:
 - 1) Contour Search
 - 2) Drainage search
 - 3) Grid Search
- b) Given a search dog task, discuss and demonstrate the ability to plan the task considering wind direction and other weather conditions, visibility, terrain characteristics, time of day, vegetation density, safety, and desired POD.
- c) Perform the task planned above.
- d) Translate field activity onto a map, including route taken, areas searched and not searched, alerts, clues located, wind direction, times for all of the above, and estimated POD for the task.
- e) Demonstrate the ability to accurately debrief the task, providing the debriefer with all of the information listed in (6 a-d).

7) Clue and Site Procedures

- a) Describe the proper way to approach clues, articles, or victim.
- b) Describe methods to preserve and secure a site.
- c) Explain the importance of accurate documentation of clues and of victim's location.

8) Helicopter Operations

- a) Understand the hazards to ground personnel working around a helicopter.
- b) Understand the proper approach to a helicopter, including direction of approach and communication with the crew.

9) Field Communications

- a) Define the common problems associated with the field use of portable radios and list some possible solutions.
- b) Describe basic Virginia SAR Council radio procedures.

10) Water skills

- a) Demonstrate the ability to retrieve canine from the water into one of the following boats:
 - 1) Canoe
 - 2) John boat
 - 3) Power boat
- b) Be able to safely navigate a boat in calm water.
- c) Demonstrate knowledge of the following safe boating procedures:
 - 1) Entering boat
 - 2) Exiting boat
 - 3) Loading boat
- d) Describe how scent works in water (still and moving) and how it is affected by wind.
- e) Demonstrate knowledge of water safety.
- f) Handler will demonstrate the ability to swim with canine 100 feet in calm water.
- g) Demonstrate knowledge of common water hazards.

11) First Aid**Human**

- a) The handler must have current Basic First Aid or higher certification.
- b) The handler must have current CPR certification

Canine

- a) The handler must recognize and, if possible, know how to treat the following:
 - 1) Excessive bleeding
 - 2) Hypothermia
 - 3) Hyperthermia
 - 4) Bloat
 - 5) Shock
 - 6) Dehydration
- b) The handler must know which human medications carried in his pack may be shared with the canine and which may not.

12) Additional required training

- a) Field Team Member or state approved equivalent.
- b) Virginia approved crime scene preservation class.
- c) Water safety course. (Acceptable examples of courses would be those put on by the Red Cross, Coast Guard, Canoe/Kayak groups, search and rescue groups etc.)

CANINE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The objectives of the behavior, obedience and agility evaluations are to help ensure that both the canine and the handler can work together as a team safely, efficiently and in conjunction with other teams and personnel.

The canine will demonstrate compliance with the expectations of this section. Specific tests designed for this purpose are described in “TEST METHODS”, and are included as part of these standards.

1. Behavior

Aggression:

Each handler shall be responsible for assuring his or her canine does not exhibit aggressive canine behavior, or the canine shall not be eligible for certification.

Policy:

- a) Aggressive canine behavior toward people or other canines shall not be considered acceptable behavior.

- b) A canine must allow another person to move it to a different location in the absence of its owner. The canine must not show aggression.

Repercussions:

Following an unprovoked attack on a person or controlled canine, the offending canine will be removed from the event area and will not be allowed to participate in any future events outside their own team training, until such time as a state evaluator reviews the incident and deems the canine fit to continue.

All such unprovoked attacks must be documented. Documentation shall include the date and time of the incident, a description of what happened including all parties and animals involved, and signatures by at least one witness and the person filing the report.

2. Obedience:

The canine must be under the control of the handler at all times, capable of heeling through crowds; non-aggressive to both people and other canines; must be responsive to an emergency stop command; and a long stay with distractions

3) Agility:

The canine must demonstrate the ability to negotiate obstacles, jump onto and off of an elevated surface, walk across an elevated surface, and go through a tunnel.

4) Indication:

The canine's indication must be clear enough that the handler is not likely to miss or mistake it.

5) Search Skills:

The canine must demonstrate the ability and stamina to search an assigned area effectively.

6) Water Skills:

- a) The canine will demonstrate the ability to swim with handler 100 feet in calm water.
- b) The canine will travel calmly and under the handler's control in one of the following watercraft:
 1. Canoe
 2. John boat
 3. Power boat

TEST METHODS

The following testing procedures are designed to provide a representative evaluation of the expectations listed in Handler Knowledge and Performance Expectations, and Canine Performance Expectations.

Required Tests:

Handler Written Evaluation

Canine Behavior Evaluation

Canine Obedience Evaluation

Canine Agility Evaluation

20-Acre Evaluation

Shoreline Evaluation

Boat Evaluation

Overnight Bivouac

Must complete handler skills. (Appendix G)

If testing a current operational Wilderness, or Cadaver team, obedience, agility, bivouac, 20-acre tests do not need to be repeated.

If testing a previously operational Wilderness, Trailing, or Cadaver handler, bivouac and 20-acre tests do not need to be repeated.

HANDLER WRITTEN EVALUATION

- a) The handler will complete a comprehensive written test and must achieve a score of at least 80%.
- b) The test of 100 multiple choice questions will be provided by VDEM that will be randomly selected from questions supplied by the SAR Dog Water Standards Committee.
- c) A state evaluator will administer the test, and copies of the results will be given to the unit's Training Officer, certifying handler and VDEM.

EVALUATOR INFORMATION

- a) Field evaluations will be conducted on an individual team basis. Each team test will be observed by a minimum of two (2) evaluators, one of which is a state evaluator. At least one of the evaluators must be an operational water team handler.
- b) Each evaluator will have a checklist for scoring each of the field teams. At the conclusion of each test, the evaluators will compare their scoring.
- c) Performance will be rated as either "Pass" or "Fail". Both evaluators must agree on the rating for the test to be valid.
- d) In the event there are conflicting ratings that the evaluators cannot resolve, the handler may be given a "NO TEST" rating and asked to repeat that test following procedures under "Retesting".
- e) If any one of the field tests is scored "Fail" by both evaluators, the procedures described under "Retesting" will apply.
- f) Tests should be set up and conducted following the Evaluator instructions.

Retesting

- a) If the score on any test is below the passing score, the handler may arrange for a retest. A retest may not be repeated on the same day as the original test.
- b) In the case of retesting a field evaluation because of a "Fail" rating, at least one of the evaluators that originally tested the team must participate in the retest.
- c) If, after receiving a failed rating on a retest, the candidate feels that he/she is being unfairly rated, he/she may request a retest with two different evaluators. The evaluators who rated the team "fail" must be notified and may observe the retest, but will have no input on the evaluation results. This request for retest must be submitted by the candidate, in writing, to any of the unit's officers.

Method of Conducting State Recognized Evaluations

Groups whose internal evaluation procedures meet or exceed these standards may use those procedures for certification testing provided the following conditions are met:

- 1) The evaluations are observed and scored by at least one state authorized evaluator.
- 2) The SAR Dog Standards Committee approves the checklist/evaluation form used by that group.

The approved checklist/evaluation form is completed and signed by both evaluators for each field evaluation.

CANINE BEHAVIOR EVALUATION

For evaluation form see appendix A

Requirement:

- a) The canine and handler will load into the back of a vehicle along with at least two other canine teams. The vehicle will then be driven for a distance of at least one mile during which time the canine must not display aggressive or uncontrolled behavior.
- b) The handler will stand with the canine in the heeling position. A stranger will approach and engage the handler in conversation. The canine must not show aggressive behavior toward the stranger.
- c) The canine will be tethered to a stationary object by a 6-foot lead. Another handler, with a canine at heel, will walk within 10 feet of the point where the canine is tied. The canine will show no aggressive behavior.
- d) The canine search team will complete a Figure "8" around two team handlers with their canines on lead, sitting at their sides positioned about eight feet apart. The testing team shall complete the pattern, on loose lead, passing within two feet of each of the post teams. The post teams will remain still and not interfere with the testing team.
- e) The canine and handler are loaded into a boat. The boat is driven for a distance of at least 100 yards without canine showing undue stress.
- f) Handler sits with the canine in the boat while a stranger approaches and boards the boat. Canine shows no aggressive behavior toward stranger.

CANINE OBEDIENCE EVALUATION

For evaluation form see Appendix B

Requirements:

The canine must respond appropriately to handler commands.

The canine must demonstrate the ability to walk with the handler in the heeling position, maintain a sit-stay or a down-stay, even when the handler is not present, and return to the handler when called.

- a) Heeling - The canine will heel on command through a straight walk, a right turn, a left turn, and a 180-degree turn. The canine will sit or stand in the heeling position when the handler stops. The canine can be off lead or on a loose lead.
- b) Stay - The canine may be placed next to the handler's pack and at least 10 feet away from any other person or canine. Upon direction from the evaluator, the handler shall give the canine the stay/wait command and the handler will move a minimum of 50 feet away. Time starts when the evaluator states "leave the canine". The canine may sit, stand or shift position, but shall not move more than a body length in any direction from where the canine was placed. Distractions will be present. After five (5) minutes, the evaluator will direct the handler to return to the canine. Handlers may signal the canine to stay, if needed, while returning. The exercise is complete when the handler has returned to his/her canine and the evaluator states, "exercise complete". No rewarding will be allowed until the exercise is complete.
- c) Stop on recall - The canine shall be placed on a stay/wait command a minimum of 40 feet from the handler and the evaluator. Upon direction from the evaluator, the handler shall call his/her canine. The handler will then stop the canine when directed by the evaluator. Once the stop command has been given, an immediate change in gait is required and the canine must then come to a stop within 20 feet. The canine may drop, sit, or stand. The handler may give multiple commands. The canine shall remain stationary until handler returns to canine or is recalled by the handler, at the direction of the evaluator.

CANINE AGILITY EVALUATION

For evaluation form see Appendix C

Requirements: The canine must demonstrate the ability to negotiate obstacles and walk on elevated surfaces.

The canine must demonstrate the ability to jump onto and off of elevated surfaces.

- a) The canine will jump onto and off of an object having a height equal to the canine's withers.
- b) The canine will walk across a board that is at least 12 feet long, no more than 12 inches wide, and is at least 3 feet above the ground and stable.
- c) The canine will go through a 36" diameter tunnel at least 8 feet long.
- d) The canine will perform steps (a) through (c) physically unaided, but may be on a loose lead.

20-Acre NAVIGATION EVALUATION

For evaluation form see Appendix D

Purpose:

The navigation course will demonstrate the handler's ability to traverse unfamiliar areas by using map and compass skills.

Handler Skills:

- a. Be familiar with the use of a map and compass and how to use each in conjunction with one another.
- b. Demonstrate the ability to provide accurate coordinates of a specific location to within four digits. (i.e. 1234/5678)
- c. Be able to measure distance in paces, state distance in meters and relate it on a map.
- d. Identify terrain features.

Evaluation:

- a) The evaluators shall choose the 20-acre site. The area shall consist of a variety of terrain features in order for handler to effectively use the map & compass. The area will be drawn on the base map and the handler must be able to transfer the area to their map. The evaluators will determine a path of travel, which the handler will follow. The handler will have 15 minutes to assess the map and proposed path of travel.
- b) The handler will then walk the area without their canine, identify and describe terrain features within sight as requested by evaluator. The evaluators will pick four points within the search area and mark them on the handlers map. The handler must navigate to all four points and then return to base. Time limit is 1.5 hours for this step.

SHORELINE EVALUATION

For evaluation form see Appendix E

Purpose:

The objective of the Shoreline Evaluation is to assess the ability of the team to search for deceased persons including human decomposition scent along the edge of still or moving bodies of water.

Handler Skills:

- a) Assess the scenario provided by the evaluators and ask appropriate questions to aid in the formulation of a search strategy.
- b) Outline and carry out an effective search strategy based on the scenario, the search area, wind conditions, time of day, etc.
- c) Describe the canine's alert or indication prior to the test and advise the evaluators when the canine alerts or indicates during the test.
- d) Handler must be able to communicate a defined search area and scent boundaries based on the dogs indication.
- e) Follow and adhere to Virginia crime scene preservation methods.
- f) Accurately mark on a map the direction of travel, wind direction, clues, alerts, and finds.
- g) Demonstrate proper radio skills.
- h) The handler must debrief at the end of the task and give a POD of the search area.

Canine Skills:

- a) Canine must locate all scent sources.
- b) Canine may search on or off lead.
- c) Canine should move out in front of (away from) the handler and should not be consistently behind or close to the handler.
- d) Canine must be focused during the search and should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment. Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.

- e) Must give a recognizable alert or indication to the handler.
- f) After finding each scent source, the canine must give the previously described alert or indication of a find, even if unable to pinpoint the exact location of the source. Based on the canine's alerts or indications, the handler must identify the scent source locations within a radius of ten (10) feet.
- g) The canine shall not indicate on the distracting scent. Doing so shall result in failure of the test.

Test Procedure:

- a) The handler being tested shall not provide the sources. The following definitions for scent material shall be used but is not limited to.
 - 1. Scent sources may include:
 - a) Soil sample from where a body has decomposed.
 - b) Cloth from a decomposed body.
 - c) Bone with tissue.
 - d) Tissue
 - e) Decomposing blood.
 - f) Hair or teeth mixed with other approved scent source material.
 - 2. Scent sources may not include:
 - a) Dry, bleached bone only
 - b) Ashes
 - c) Synthetic scent
 - d) Teeth only
 - e) Hair only
- b) The evaluators shall locate a shoreline for the test. Area shall have clearly delineated boundaries or be marked by flagging. The site should include shorelines that have a variety of vegetation and terrain features.
- c) The site shall be divided into three 15' x 150' sectors. Each sector shall be separated by 100'. One sector shall contain no scent source. One sector shall contain one scent source and the remaining sector may or may not contain a scent source at the discretion of the evaluators. All scent sources will be placed a minimum of 1 hour and a maximum of 4 hours prior to the test. All sources will be placed out of plain sight. The scent sources shall be placed in the water at least two (2) feet from the shore, but not more than ten (10) feet. The depth of the scent source water cannot exceed five feet. One sector may contain one distracting scent source. Scent sources shall be placed in such a manner as to not contaminate any other sector.

- d) The handler will be given a brief scenario, at which time the handler can ask questions, which may aid in the location of the scent sources.
- e) There will be a twenty-minute time limit to search each sector with a 10-minute rest period between. Handler will debrief each sector, including estimation of POD, prior to proceeding to the next sector.
- f) The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the canine and handler as a team in searching an area and in locating scent sources. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the written comments on the evaluation form.
- g) Should the canine not find all sources, the handler has the right to request a demonstration of the validity of the scent sources using an operational water recovery canine. Canine should be available within 15 minutes or a no-test will be declared.
- h) A team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in failure of the test. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the test. If either dog or handler fails, both must be retested.

BOAT EVALUATION

For evaluation form see Appendix F

Purpose:

The objective of the Boat Evaluation is to assess the ability of the team to search for cadaver scent from a boat, in water.

Handler Skills:

- a) Assess the scenario provided by the evaluators and ask appropriate questions to aid in the formulation of a search strategy.
- b) Outline and carry out an effective search strategy based on the scenario, the search area, wind conditions, time of day, etc.
- c) Be able to communicate with boat operator desired navigation in accordance with outlined search strategy.
- d) Describe the canine's alert and indication prior to the test and shall advise the evaluators when the canine alerts and indicates during the test.
- e) Handler must be able to communicate a defined search area and scent boundaries based on the dogs indication.
- f) Follow and adhere to Virginia crime scene preservation methods.
- g) Accurately mark on a map the direction of travel, wind direction, clues, alerts, and finds. May use a GPS.
- h) Demonstrate proper radio skills.
- i) The handler must debrief at the end of the task and give a POD of the search area.

Canine Skills:

- a) Canine must locate scent source.
- b) Canine must be focused during the search and should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment. Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.

- c) Must give a recognizable alert or indication to the handler.
- d) After finding each scent source, the canine must give the previously described alert or indication of a find, even if unable to pinpoint the exact location of the source. Based on the canine's alerts or indications, the handler must identify the scent source locations within a radius of thirty (30) feet.

Test Procedure:

- a) To pass the evaluation, the dog must alert or indicate on the scent source and the handler must be able to communicate a defined scent boundary based on the dog's alert or indication.
- b) The handler being tested shall not provide the sources. The following definitions for scent material shall be used but is not limited to.
 - 1. Scent sources may include:
 - a) Soil sample from where a body has decomposed.
 - b) Cloth from a decomposed body.
 - c) Bone with tissue.
 - d) Tissue
 - e) Decomposing blood.
 - f) Hair or teeth mixed with other approved scent source material.
 - 2. Scent sources may not include:
 - a) Dry, bleached bone only
 - b) Ashes
 - c) Synthetic scent
 - d) Teeth only
 - e) Hair only
- c) The evaluators shall locate a body of still water at least three (3) acres but not more than four (4) acres for the test. Area shall have clearly delineated boundaries.
- d) The scent source shall be placed a minimum of 2 hours and a maximum of 4 hours prior to the test. Source shall be placed in the water at least four (4) feet deep, but not more than eight (8) feet.
- e) The handler will be given a brief scenario, at which time the handler can ask questions, which may aid in the location of the scent sources.

- f) A team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in failure of the test. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the test. If either dog or handler fails, both must be retested.
- g) There will be a two-hour time limit to search the sector. Upon completion, the handler will debrief the sector, including estimation of POD.
- h) The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the canine and handler as a team in searching an area and in locating human remains scent sources. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the written comments on the evaluation form.
- i) Should the canine not find the scent source, the handler has the right to request a demonstration of the validity of the scent source using an operational water recovery canine. Canine should be available within 15 minutes or a no-test will be declared.

RECERTIFICATION PROCEDURE

- a) Each team must recertify every 2 years.
- b) The team must be considered an active member in good standing within his/her organization/unit.
- c) Take, and successfully complete the Recertification Field Evaluation within six months before or after the anniversary date. (See APPENDIX J for evaluation criteria for shoreline and APPENDIX K for just boat).
- d) An officer of the team's unit, and the evaluators must complete the Application for Recertification, APPENDIX L and submit it to Virginia Department of Emergency Management within four months of the team passing his/her recertification.
- e) Upon receipt of the form requesting recertification, Virginia Department of Emergency Management will renew the team's certification for two additional years at which time "conditions of certification" described in Certification Procedures will apply.

Failure To Recertify

If a team fails to recertify within six (6) months of the expiration date, the certification is dropped and the candidate will be required to complete the entire application and testing process for certification again.

FTM recertification will not be required for operational handlers.

Recertification Evaluation for just Shoreline

Purpose:

The objective of the Shoreline Recertification Evaluation is to assess the ability of the team to continue to search for human remains including human decomposition scent.

Method:

Recertification follows method outlined under original certification for shoreline evaluation

Recertification Evaluation for Boat

Purpose:

The objective of the water Recertification Evaluation is to ensure that the team has maintained the skills necessary to be an effective water recovery search team.

Method:

Recertification follows method outlined under original certification for boat evaluation

EVALUATOR INSTRUCTIONS

- a) The SAR Dog Standards Committee is responsible for maintaining and updating testing material. All test materials are confidential, and security is the responsibility of the state evaluator(s) to whom it is issued.
- b) All tests and evaluations will be scored on forms approved by the SAR Dog Standards Committee and will be signed by the evaluator(s).
- c) The objectives of the behavior, obedience, and agility evaluations are to help ensure that both the canine and the handler can work together as a team safely, efficiently and in conjunction with other teams and personnel.
- d) The handler being tested shall not provide the sources. The following definitions for scent material shall be used but is not limited to.
 1. Scent sources may include:
 - a) Soil sample from where a body has decomposed.
 - b) Cloth from a decomposed body.
 - c) Bone with tissue.
 - d) Tissue
 - e) Decomposing blood.
 - f) Hair or teeth mixed with other approved scent source material.
 2. Scent sources may not include:
 - a) Dry, bleached bone only
 - b) Ashes
 - c) Synthetic scent
 - d) Teeth only
 - e) Hair only
- e) The objectives of field evaluations on the shoreline, in a boat on still water are to evaluate safety, planning ability, search techniques and team stamina.
- f) Boat used can be a flat bottom or v-shape bow design. The boat should be of sufficient size as to not crowd the dog, handler, evaluator and oarsmen, but not be more than 18 feet in length.
- g) Secure test location. Effort should be made to choose a location that is unfamiliar to testing handler.
- h) The scent sources should be placed for the shoreline evaluation far enough apart that the team must search a substantial portion of the search areas before all of the scent sources are located.
- i) In the event of a validity challenge, it is the evaluator's responsibility to provide an operational water canine within 15 minutes.

- j) Secure scent sources, evaluate safety, planning and technique.
- k) The team being evaluated must pass 80% of the evaluation criteria and must pass all starred (required) items on the evaluation form.
- l) As scent sources are located, they should be left in place until the exercise is completed.
- m) At the discretion of the evaluators, the time may be extended due to the variability of test search sites, provided the team is actively working.

CRITERIA FOR WATER CANINE TEAM EVALUATORS

In order to evaluate canine teams to these Virginia Water Canine Team Standards, the evaluator must participate in a mandatory statewide evaluators' seminar and satisfy one of the two following criteria:

1. Shall be a wilderness evaluator of a canine SAR group currently operating under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Emergency Management in the Commonwealth of Virginia.
2. Shall be an operational Water team for a minimum of two years and be a member in good standing of a Canine SAR Group currently operating under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Emergency Management in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

APPENDIX A
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Water Canine Behavior Evaluation Form

Canine Handler _____ **(Date)** _____
Location _____ **Canine** _____
Evaluators _____ **and** _____

Behavior

- 1.) The canine and handler are loaded into the back of a vehicle with at least two other canine teams. The vehicle was driven for a distance of _____ mile(s). (Must be at least one mile. Pass Fail

- 2.) Handler stands with the canine in the heeling position. A stranger approaches and engages the handler in conversation. Canine remains in the heel position. Pass Fail

- 3.) Canine is secured to a stationary object by a 6-foot lead. The handler moves out of sight of the canine. Another handler, with his/her canine at heel will walk past the canine being tested. This handler and canine will be 10 feet from the point where the canine being tested is tethered. Pass Fail

- 4.) The team will complete a Figure “8” around two team handlers with their canines on lead, sitting at their sides positioned about eight feet apart. The testing team shall complete the pattern, on loose lead, passing within two feet of each of the post teams. The post teams will remain still and not interfere with the testing team. Pass Fail

- 5.) The canine and handler are loaded into a boat. The boat was driven for a distance of at least 100 yards without canine showing undue stress Pass Fail

- 6.) Handler sits with the canine in the boat while a stranger approaches and boards the boat. Pass Fail

All skills must be passed

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

APPENDIX B
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Water Canine Obedience Evaluation Form

Canine Handler _____ **(Date)** _____
Location _____ **Canine** _____
Evaluators _____ **and** _____

1) Heel:

The canine must heel on command within arms length of handler, on a loose lead or off-lead.

- a) Walk straight line
- b) Right turn
- c) Left turn
- d) 180 degree turn
- e) Stop/Halt

Pass Fail

2) Stay:

The canine remained in place without correction for a minimum of five minutes with the handler at least 50 feet away. The canine may sit, stand or shift position, but shall not move more than a body length in any direction from where the canine was placed. Distractions will be present.

Pass Fail

3) Stop in Motion:

While the canine was in motion, it was given a stop/halt command.

Canine responded appropriately to command.

Pass Fail

Remained in position until release.

Pass Fail

All skills must be passed

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

**** Requirement satisfied via operational Wilderness, or
Cadaver status (Date) _____**

APPENDIX C
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Water Canine Agility Evaluation Form

Canine Handler _____ (Date) _____
Location _____ Canine _____
Evaluators _____ and _____

1.) On command, the canine jumped onto an object having a height equal to the canine’s withers.

Pass Fail

2.) On command, the canine walked across a board that was at least 12 feet long, no more than 12 inches wide and at least 3 feet above the ground.

Pass Fail

3.) On command, the canine went through a 36” diameter tunnel at least 8 feet long.

Pass Fail

All skills must be passed

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

**** Requirement satisfied via operational Wilderness, or
Cadaver status (Date) _____**

APPENDIX D
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Twenty-Acre Navigation Evaluation Form

Handler_____ Canine_____
(Date)_____ Location_____
Weather Conditions_____
Time Started_____ Time Completed_____

***Starred items denote skills, which must receive a passing score.**

- a) Handler was adequately attired and equipped for conditions.
Pass Fail
- b) Handler demonstrated good land navigational field skills using map and compass. Pass Fail
- c) Handler accurately measured the distance from two points, as directed by the evaluators. Pass Fail
- d) Handler located all four points marked on the test map.
Pass Fail
- e) Handler demonstrated basic Virginia SAR Council radio procedures. Pass Fail
- f) * Handler demonstrated the ability to provide accurate coordinates of a specific location to within four digits. Pass Fail

Overall Score: Passed_____ Failed_____

Comments_____

Evaluator Signature_____ (Date)_____

Evaluator Signature_____ (Date)_____

**** Requirement satisfied via operational Wilderness, Trailing, or Cadaver status (Date)_____**

APPENDIX E
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Shoreline Water Evaluation Form

Handler _____ Canine _____ (Date) _____
 Location _____ Weather Conditions _____
 Time Started _____ Time Completed _____ Site No. _____
 Type of Scent Source Used _____ Distracting Scent _____

This form must be completed for each sector

*** Starred items denote skills, which must receive a passing score.**

Handler Skills

	Pass	Fail
1. *Handler was adequately attired and equipped for conditions.	Pass	Fail
2. Handler demonstrated the ability to obtain enough information from the briefing to adequately plan a strategy.	Pass	Fail
3. Handler developed an appropriate strategy based on information acquired in the interview including terrain, current conditions, time of day, etc.	Pass	Fail
4. Handler followed strategy.	Pass	Fail
5. Handler adjusted strategy appropriately based on new information.	Pass	Fail
6. Handler articulated canine's alerts.	Pass	Fail
7. Handler informed the evaluator each time they saw canine alert.	Pass	Fail
8. Handler articulated the dog's indication.	Pass	Fail
9. Handler demonstrated good land navigation skills.	Pass	Fail
11. Handler covered area adequately.	Pass	Fail
12. Handler mapped area with appropriate pertinent information.	Pass	Fail
13. *Handler accurately debriefed the task.	Pass	Fail
14. Handler demonstrated Virginia SAR Council radio procedures.	Pass	Fail
15. Handler was in tune with canine's needs.	Pass	Fail
16. *Handler had adequate control over the canine.	Pass	Fail

Canine Skills

1. Canine stayed focused on search.	Pass	Fail
2. Canine was refocused after being distracted.	Pass	Fail
3. Canine was willing to leave the handler to follow up a scent.	Pass	Fail
4. Canine searched effectively.	Pass	Fail
5. *Canine made a self-directed find on each scent source.	Pass	Fail
6. *Canine gave trained indication to the handler that it had found each scent source.	Pass	Fail

Overall Score: Passed _____ Failed _____

Shoreline Water Evaluation Form Back Page

Comments from Evaluators

Comments from Handler

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____



APPENDIX F
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Boat Water Evaluation Form

Handler _____ Canine _____ (Date) _____

Location _____ Weather Conditions _____

Time Started _____ Time Completed _____ Still or Moving water _____

One of these must be filled out for each sector

*** Starred items denote skills, which must receive a passing score.**

Handler Skills

	Pass	Fail
1. *Handler was adequately attired and equipped for conditions.	Pass	Fail
2. Handler demonstrated the ability to obtain enough information from the briefing to adequately plan a strategy.	Pass	Fail
3. Handler developed an appropriate strategy based on information acquired in the interview including water conditions, time of day, etc.	Pass	Fail
4. Handler followed strategy.	Pass	Fail
5. Handler adjusted strategy appropriately based on new information.	Pass	Fail
6. Handler articulated canine's alerts.	Pass	Fail
7. Handler informed the evaluator each time they saw canine alert.	Pass	Fail
8. Handler articulated the dog's indication.	Pass	Fail
9. Handler ensured boat operator navigated according to search strategy.	Pass	Fail
10. Handler covered area adequately.	Pass	Fail
11. Handler marked map with appropriate pertinent information.	Pass	Fail
12. *Handler accurately debriefed the task.	Pass	Fail
13. Handler demonstrated Virginia SAR Council radio procedures.	Pass	Fail
14. Handler was in tune with canine's needs.	Pass	Fail
15. *Handler had adequate control over the canine.	Pass	Fail

Canine Skills

1. Canine stayed focused while on search.	Pass	Fail
2. Canine was refocused after being distracted.	Pass	Fail
3. Canine searched effectively.	Pass	Fail
4. *Canine independently indicated to the handler that it found the scent.	Pass	Fail

Overall Score: Passed _____ Failed _____

Boat Water Evaluation Form Back Page

Comments from Evaluators

Comments from Handler

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

APPENDIX G
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Handler and Canine Skills Form

Canine Handler _____ Canine _____

Skill	(Date)	Observer
Handler swam 100 feet in calm water		
Handler safely navigated a boat in calm water		
Handler retrieved dog into boat		
Handler demonstrated ability to throw rope		
Handler demonstrated ability to direct divers to scent area		
Canine swam 100 feet in calm water		

Training Officer _____ **(Date)** _____

APPENDIX H

CERTIFICATION PROCEDURES

Prerequisites

The applicant must have satisfactorily completed all of the written and practical evaluations described in TEST METHODS.

Team Certification Application Instructions

- a) The applicant, a state evaluator, and a unit officer must sign the application for certification found in Appendix I and submit to the office of the State SAR Coordinator.
- b) Upon receipt of the above documentation of requirements, the State SAR Coordinator will send confirmation of certification to the individual canine handler.
- c) Upon completion of all of the requirements outlined in this document, the certified team is eligible to respond as a “Virginia Water Canine Team”, on a State Mission with a valid mission number designation, as a representative of the unit holding the MOU.

Conditions of Certification

- a) Provided that all requirements are met, the team will be issued a certification by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management as a certified “Virginia Water Canine Team”
- b) This certification does not constitute a license to practice the skills tested, but signifies only that the team holding the certificate has met an established basic standard of knowledge and performance and has demonstrated competency.
- c) The certification will be for the handler and canine (team) that completed the testing together. If the handler wishes to certify as a team with another canine, the entire testing procedure, with the exception of the written test, must be repeated with the new dog.
- d) The certification will be valid as long as the organization’s “Memorandum Of Understanding” with the state is in good standing, and as long as the team is in good standing and meets the requirement of the parent organization.
- e) The parent unit must promptly notify Virginia Department of Emergency Management of a change of status of any operational team member.

APPENDIX I
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
 SAR Dog Standards Committee
APPLICATION CERTIFICATION

Commonwealth of Virginia Water Canine Team

Handler's Name _____ Canine's Name _____

Unit Affiliation _____ (Date) _____ Boat _____ Shoreline _____

Type of Test	Date Passed	Evaluator(s) Present
Written		
Behavior		
Obedience		
Agility		
Navigation		
Shoreline		
Boat		

The team above successfully completed the Boat _____ Shoreline _____ search on _____

The handler has the following: First Aid _____ Water Safety Course _____

FTM or Equivalent _____ Crime Scene Preservation Class _____

Does canine have all immunizations required by his/her unit current _____

Applicant Signature _____ (Date) _____

Unit Officer Signature _____ Title _____ (Date) _____

The team listed above qualifies as a Virginia Water Canine Team under these standards in knowledge and ability. Therefore, we recommend that the team be allowed to participate on searches as a state resource in the capacity of a Virginia Water Canine Team of their prospective category.

State Evaluator _____ (Date) _____

Team Evaluator _____ (Date) _____

APPENDIX J
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Recertification Evaluation form for Shoreline

Handler _____ Canine _____ (Date) _____
 Location _____ Weather Conditions _____
 Time Started _____ Time Completed _____ Sector No. _____

One of these must be filled out for each sector

*** Starred items denote skills, which must receive a passing score.**

Handler Skills

	Pass	Fail
1. *Handler was adequately attired and equipped for conditions.	Pass	Fail
2. Handler demonstrated the ability to obtain enough information from the briefing to adequately plan a strategy.	Pass	Fail
3. Handler developed an appropriate strategy based on information acquired in the interview including terrain, current conditions, time of day, etc.	Pass	Fail
4. Handler followed strategy.	Pass	Fail
5. Handler adjusted strategy appropriately based on new information.	Pass	Fail
6. Handler articulated canine's alerts.	Pass	Fail
7. Handler informed the evaluator each time they saw canine alert.	Pass	Fail
8. Handler articulated the dog's indication.	Pass	Fail
9. Handler demonstrated good land navigation skills.	Pass	Fail
11. Handler covered area adequately.	Pass	Fail
12. Handler mapped area with appropriate pertinent information.	Pass	Fail
13. *Handler accurately debriefed the task.	Pass	Fail
14. Handler demonstrated Virginia SAR Council radio procedures.	Pass	Fail
15. Handler was in tune with canine's needs.	Pass	Fail
16. *Handler had adequate control over the canine.	Pass	Fail

Canine Skills

1. Canine stayed focused on search.	Pass	Fail
2. Canine was refocused after being distracted.	Pass	Fail
3. Canine was willing to leave the handler to follow up a scent.	Pass	Fail
4. Canine searched effectively.	Pass	Fail
5. *Canine made a self-directed find on each scent source.	Pass	Fail
6. *Canine gave trained indication to the handler that it had found each scent source.	Pass	Fail

Score: Passed _____ Failed _____

Shoreline Evaluation Form Back Page

Comments from Evaluators

Comments from Handler

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

APPENDIX K
Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee

Recertification Evaluation Form for Boats

Handler _____ Canine _____ (Date) _____
 Location _____ Weather Conditions _____
 Time Started _____ Time Completed _____ Still or Moving water _____

One of these must be filled out for each sector

*** Starred items denote skills, which must receive a passing score.**

Handler Skills

	Pass	Fail
1. *Handler was adequately attired and equipped for conditions.	Pass	Fail
2. Handler demonstrated the ability to obtain enough information from the briefing to adequately plan a strategy.	Pass	Fail
3. Handler developed an appropriate strategy based on information acquired in the interview including water conditions, time of day, etc.	Pass	Fail
4. Handler followed strategy.	Pass	Fail
5. Handler adjusted strategy appropriately based on new information.	Pass	Fail
6. Handler articulated canine's alerts.	Pass	Fail
7. Handler informed the evaluator each time they saw canine alert.	Pass	Fail
8. Handler articulated the dog's indication.	Pass	Fail
9. Handler ensured boat operator navigated according to search strategy.	Pass	Fail
10. Handler covered area adequately.	Pass	Fail
11. Handler marked map with appropriate pertinent information.	Pass	Fail
12. *Handler accurately debriefed the task.	Pass	Fail
13. Handler demonstrated Virginia SAR Council radio procedures.	Pass	Fail
14. Handler was in tune with canine's needs.	Pass	Fail
15. *Handler had adequate control over the canine.	Pass	Fail

Canine Skills

1. Canine stayed focused while on search.	Pass	Fail
2. Canine was refocused after being distracted.	Pass	Fail
3. Canine searched effectively.	Pass	Fail
4. *Canine independently indicated to the handler that it found the scent.	Pass	Fail

Overall Score: Passed _____ Failed _____

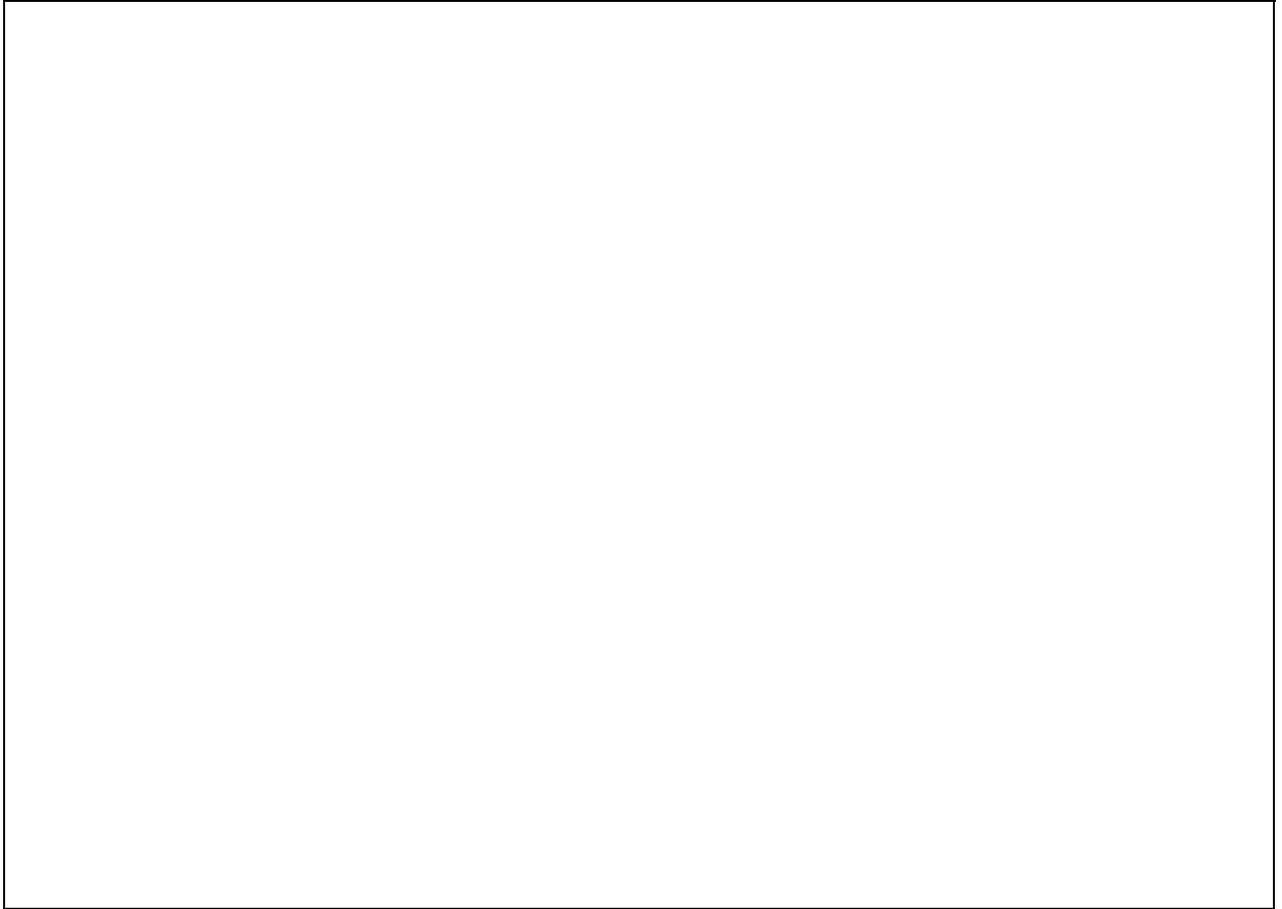
Boat Evaluation Form Back Page

Comments from Evaluators

Comments from Handler

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____

Evaluator Signature _____ (Date) _____



APPENDIX L

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Search and Rescue Council
SAR Dog Standards Committee**

APPLICATION FOR RECERTIFICATION

Commonwealth of Virginia Water Canine Team

Handler Name _____ **Dog Name** _____

Unit Affiliation _____ **(Date)** _____

The team above successfully completed the recertification evaluation on

((Date)) _____ for Boat _____ Shoreline _____

The state evaluators were _____ & _____

The handler has the following first aid: _____

Does canine have all immunizations required by his/her unit current _____

Applicant Signature _____ (Date) _____

Unit Officer Signature _____ Title _____ (Date) _____

The team listed above has re-qualified as a Virginia Water Canine Team under these standards in knowledge and ability. Therefore, we recommend that the team be recertified as a state resource in the capacity of a Virginia Water Canine Team of their prospective category.

State Evaluator _____ (Date) _____

Team Evaluator _____ (Date) _____

APPENDIX M
PERSONAL EQUIPMENT

This list contains items that you are required to have to go into the field on a search.

1. PFD
2. Compass and/or GPS
3. Water
4. Whistle

Due to constant changes in technology a suggested list of clothing and equipment is provided below.

- 1) Flashlight - with extra batteries.
- 2) Trash bags
- 3) First aid kit
- 4) Fire starter
- 5) Sealable plastic bags
- 6) Nylon cord or equivalent
- 7) Knife
- 8) Food - At least a day's supply for handler and canine.
- 9) Paper and pencil
- 10) Surgical gloves
- 11) Wind shell jacket with hood
- 12) Water resistant jacket or parka with hood. - A Gore-Tex or similar jacket can serve for both items 1 and 2
- 13) Rain pants or rain chaps - add gaiters for winter
- 14) Heavy *wool shirts or sweaters as required
- 15) Wool pants
- 16) Long underwear of *wool, silk, polypro or other suitable synthetic material - cotton thermal underwear is not acceptable
- 17) *Wool stocking cap or balaclava - a scarf is recommended if a stocking cap is used
- 18) Heavy *wool socks with lightweight liner socks
- 19) Leather gloves with *wool liners - mittens suggested for extremely cold weather
- 20) Backpacking or mountaineering boots appropriate to the terrain and conditions
- 21) Storm shelter: Tube tent, space blanket, lightweight tarp
- 22) Sleeping bag or similar sleeping pad, and a suitable shelter
- 23) Throw Rope
- 24) Disposable camera

*Wool or a comparable fabric that retains insulating properties when wet. Down is not acceptable.

APPENDIX N
WATER CANINE TEAM GUIDELINES
FOR OVERNIGHT BIVOUAC

- a) The purpose of the overnight bivouac is to test the individual team's ability to spend the night in the out-of-doors in a bivouac and still be able to function adequately the next day.
- b) The reason for this requirement is that search and rescue people may find themselves in a situation in the field where they are forced to spend the night with whatever equipment they happen to have with them.
- c) In order to simulate this situation for an evaluation, the following guidelines should apply:
 - 1) The individual's equipment should be restricted to what they normally carry in a "day pack" during an actual search.
 - 2) The bivouac area should be typical terrain found in searches and far enough from roads and vehicles to create some sense of realism.
 - 3) Access to vehicles and equipment caches during the bivouac should be denied.
 - 4) The individual must demonstrate the ability to build a fire and shelter.
- d) The bivouac should not become an exercise in raw survival. The evaluators should inspect each team's equipment and help ensure that it is at least minimally adequate for the environment.
- e) Safety is of paramount importance. The participating individuals should be monitored carefully during the night to ensure that problems such as hypothermia do not develop. The evaluators should have a contingency plan for such emergencies.

****Requirement satisfied via operational wilderness, water or cadaver status (date)_____**

Evaluator Signature _____(Date) _____

Evaluator Signature _____(Date) _____

APPENDIX O

REFERANCE MATERIAL

APPENDIX P

IMPLEMENTATION

Unit Recognition: Upon implementation of these standards, the units initially recognized as being state authorized organizations qualified to field state authorized canine handlers are:

- a) Blue & Gray Search and Rescue Dogs, Inc.
- b) Dogs-East, Inc.
- c) Greater Atlantic Rescue Dogs, Inc.
- d) K-9 Alert Search and Rescue Dogs, Inc.
- e) Mid-Atlantic D.O.G.S., Inc.
- f) Virginia Search and Rescue Dog Association, Inc.

Team Recognition:

Upon implementation of these standards, for each of the identified organizations above, each individual canine team that has met their unit's requirement for operational status will be recognized as Virginia Water Canine Team. From the effective date of these standards, each of the teams will recertify as required by these standards and their organizations.

In order for groups to be considered as Agents of the Commonwealth, all persons within a group working in this discipline, must at the very least, adhere to these minimum standards and are encouraged to go above and beyond this level of training.

**The Virginia Department of Emergency Management Operations Department
will maintain these Standards**

Committee

These standards were completed on 9/17/2006

They were approved by the Virginia Search and Rescue

Council on _____ and sign off by

the Virginia Department of Emergency Management on

_____.

The committee for these standards is:

Kim Bidwell

Kathleen Connor

Lisa Harper

Sharon Jones

Kristine Mackie

John Suitt (Chairman)

David Wyttenbach