

CADAVER WATER TEST AND RE-CERTIFICATION TEST **TYPE 3 RESOURCE FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

Appendix "C"

WATER SEARCH REQUIREMENTS & EVALUATION

The following guidelines are provided to help evaluators attain consistency in evaluating the skills for the preliminary handler, the dog, and the team, and to reduce the number of variables encountered. It is obvious that in actual search situations, the subject may often be further from shore or in deeper water than allowed in the following guidelines and handlers are encouraged to train for a variety of scenarios. All participants shall wear personal flotation devices (PFD's) at all times when on or near the water. The only exception would be a person wearing a complete wet suit. Water search team evaluators should be familiar with training canines and or water searching. Evaluators need to be able to properly evaluate a team's performance under the conditions at the time the evaluation is given. The team should be certified in wilderness discipline.

Boats

Boats must have an approved capacity to accommodate the number of people who will be on board. Each dog counts as one person. Water conditions permitting, boats should be low to the water. While an electric trolling motor is the ultimate for water searching, any well-maintained motor is acceptable. Manually powered boats and canoes may also be used. If the boat is an inflatable, it must have floorboards to prevent the dog's toenails from puncturing the floor.

Scent Sources

The scent source for all signoffs and testing shall be cadaver scent. Live divers, if used at all, should be used only in initial training sessions. In any body of water that is part of a water system providing drinking water at the end of the line, only hair, Pseudo-drown, or a combination of both, should be used. Other scent sources may be used only after careful consideration of possible water contamination. Hair or hair combined with Pseudo-drown has been demonstrated to be a long lasting scent source. The scent source is to be submerged and invisible to the dog and handler. It is recommended the scent source be at least two feet below the surface but no more than five feet below the surface, especially for testing purposes. Using these depths will help reduce the problem of thermo clines and other variables. Retrieval of the scent source may be accomplished by running a weighted line from the scent source to shore or to a marker buoy outside the search area.

Handler Skills

1. Lecture. The boating and swift water safety lecture should include at least the following topics:
 - Loading and unloading from small boats such as canoes, inflatable, motor boats and pontoon boats. Weight placement is important.
 - Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's) advantages and disadvantages of each type. Lecture should urge use of PFD at all times around water.
 - Dog safety on boats and near bodies of water: Retrieval of dog overboard, hazards of leashes and collars, especially around propellers, etc.
 - Flowing water hazards such as currents, whirlpools, eddies, strainers, low head dams, rocks, etc.
 - Discussion of techniques for wading/crossing streams, etc.
1. Extrication of handler and dog from immersion in rapid/flowing water.

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2. Marking alerts. The handler can choose three methods of marking alerts from the following four methods: stake triangulation, compass triangulation, marker buoys, and GPS. The handler must arrange for the equipment and any additional personnel needed to demonstrate proficiency. In addition to demonstrating the technique, the handler is to explain the technique and its advantages and disadvantages to the evaluator.
3. Scent discussion. The handler will discuss the listed topics with an evaluator. This discussion can consist of a question/answer format, analyzing scenarios, discussion/lecture at a unit training, etc.
4. Equipment. Just as wilderness certification requires ownership of a day pack and a flight pack, water search teams must own a Coast Guard approved PFD (Life Jacket), appropriate footwear (wet suit booties, tennis shoes, boating shoes, etc.), compass, marker buoys, stakes, and optional GPS. The handler must also have a safety harness to assist in retrieving the dog from the water in the event of an emergency.

Dog Requirements

5. Walking on dock. The dock shall be a floating dock that is somewhat unstable (rocky, bouncy). The purpose is for the dog to demonstrate the willingness to walk on an unstable surface. Some floating docks are like walking on land. These are not to be used for this signoff. The handler may have the dog on or off leash but if on leash, the leash is to be loose, not tight. The dog should proceed on its own will, and is not to be dragged, pushed or pulled onto the dock. The dog should not rush off the dock.
6. 100 Foot Swim. Because water search teams are more likely to encounter the need for swimming ability, the swim requirement is greater for this signoff than for the basic wilderness signoff. The dog should demonstrate to ability to swim 100 feet confidently and without panic. This can be accomplished by throwing toys, having the handler swim in the water, calling the dog from across a pond, etc. Dogs should not be encouraged to learn to jump from a boat.
7. Shoreline alert. The scent source should be off shore and so placed that the dog cannot wade directly over the scent source, but must alert at least a few feet from the source and then localize the scent source. The scent source may be submerged along docks, along shore, etc. The scent source should not be more than 10 to 15 feet from shore. The handler should not know the location of the scent source, but following the dog's alert, be able to tell the evaluator the area to be searched by divers as if this were a real search. The handler should factor in wind, water, and shoreline considerations.
8. Boat alert. Any suitable type of boat may be used. The scent source should be offshore, submerged and invisible to both handler and dog. The handler should inform the evaluator of the location of the dog's alerts and indicate where the dog had the strongest alert. The handler should combine the dog's behavior with the existing wind and water conditions in recommending the area to be searched by divers as if this were a real search.
9. Flowing water alert. Creeks, streams, rivers, dam outflows, etc., can all be used for purposes of this sign off. The scent source should be submerged and invisible to both handler and dog. The handler should inform the evaluator of the location of the dog's alerts and indicate where the dog had the strongest alert. The handler should combine the dog's behavior with the existing wind and water conditions in recommending the area to be searched by divers as if this were a real search.

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10. Distractions. The dog will demonstrate the ability to work and perform an alert in the presence of distractions. This may be demonstrated by having the dog work on the shore in close proximity to other dogs, non-involved people making noise, or wandering wildlife. It may also be demonstrated by having the dog work simultaneously with another dog on a boat. It is not expected the dog will totally ignore all such distractions. If the dog should take note of, or be temporarily distracted by the distraction, the dog should return to working the problem and perform a satisfactory alert.

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Team Requirements

11. Participation in two water-training sessions. At least one training session must be an official unit monthly regional water training. The other training session can be a local water training set up under the supervision of an evaluator. These training sessions can be before or after the handler becomes mission ready in wilderness.
12. Loading and unloading from a boat. The handler and dog shall both demonstrate, as a team, the ability to safely load and unload from a small boat. The boat used for this signoff shall not be a highly stable craft such as a pontoon boat, but rather a boat, which could capsize if loaded or unloaded in an unsafe manner.
13. The team is at ease in a boat. Neither the dog nor the handler should exhibit fear or appear ill at ease in a small boat. The handler should have control of the dog and neither the handler nor dog shall behave in a manner that endangers any person’s safety or puts the boat at risk. The boat used for this signoff shall not be a highly stable craft such as a pontoon boat, but rather a boat, which could capsize due to unsafe boating conduct.

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WATER SEARCH TEAM REQUIREMENTS SIGN OFF SHEET

HANDLER: _____ DOG: _____

For all sign off and testing activities on or near water, the handler must wear a personal floatation device (PFD) and appropriate footwear.

Handler Skills

1. The handler has attended a boating and swift water safety lecture.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

2. The handler must document practice/experience in at least three methods of marking alerts, and discuss with an evaluator the advantages and disadvantages of each method:

- a) Stake Triangulation
- b) Compass Triangulation
- c) Marker Buoy
- d) GPS

Date: _____ Signed: _____

3. The handler will discuss the following topics with an evaluator:

- a) Search strategy - moving water.
- b) Search strategy - quiet water.
- c) An alert pattern in relation to probable location of victim.
- d) Scent under the following conditions:

- 1) Eddy current
- 2) Dams
- 3) Rivers

Date: _____ Signed: _____

4. Equipment:

- A. PFD
- B. Footgear
- C. Triangulation Stakes (4 minimum)
- D. Compass
- E. Marker Buoys (2 minimum)
- F. Dog Safety Harness
- G. GPS (Optional)

Date: _____ Signed: _____

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Dog Requirements

5. The dog must demonstrate walking safely on a floating dock.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

6. The dog must demonstrate the ability to swim 100 feet in a confident manner.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

7. The dog must demonstrate shoreline alert on submerged scent in quiet water. If the dog eats, picks up or urinates on the scent source, the dog will FAIL this sign off.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

8. The dog must demonstrate boat alert on submerged scent in quiet water.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

9. The dog must demonstrate an alert on submerged scent in flowing water. This may be done from a boat or the shoreline. If the dog eats, picks up or urinates on the scent source, the dog will FAIL this sign off.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

10. The dog must demonstrate the ability to work and perform and alert in the presence of distractions on shore or with a second dog working simultaneously on board a boat.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Team Requirements

11. The handler/dog team must participate in at least two (2) water-training workouts.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

Date: _____ Signed: _____

12. The handler/dog team must demonstrate skill in boarding and unloading safely from boat/raft.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

13. The handler/dog team appears at ease in a boat.

Date: _____ Signed: _____

All preliminary requirements have been completed

Date: _____ Signed: _____

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WATER SEARCH TEAM MISSION READY TEST

When all of the preliminary requirements have been completed and signed off, the handler will take a mission-ready test. All participants in the test shall wear personal floatation devices (PFDs) at all times when on or near the water. The only exception would be a person wearing a complete wet suit.

Evaluators must have the requisite experience needed to determine the accuracy of the team's performance. Both evaluators must be water certified. Both evaluators must have worked a dog on at least three actual, documented water searches with assigned CAL OES numbers.

When setting up the test, evaluators should ensure the boat operator is experienced in the expected types of weather/water conditions. The handler/dog team will not be penalized for boat operator errors as long as the team otherwise meets all the requirements of this test. Evaluators must keep the role of the water search handler/dog team in mind, i.e. to be able to define a relatively small area or direction for the divers to search. Thus a precise location of the scent source is not required and often is not possible. The handler should be able to interpret the dog's alert, significantly narrow down the search area, and recommend the area in which the divers should be deployed.

To determine the validity of the test, evaluators should be prepared to have an experienced water search team repeat the test. This should be done in all cases in which a team fails the test because the dog did not alert. This is not required if the test is failed because the handler fails to read the dog, ignores safety, or does not use an appropriate search strategy. If the experienced team is not able to satisfactorily alert on the scent source, another test may be set up and given on the same day. The handler should demonstrate safe techniques at all times. The handler should not give cues to the dog as to expected alert locations.

The handler will not know the location of the scent sources. The handler should not see other teams working the same test. The scent items/containers should be placed a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the test. To ensure the submerged scent will last until the completion of the test, it is recommended Pseudo-drown not be used by itself but instead is combined with hair, etc. (See the discussion of scent sources for further requirements). The handler will select a method to mark/record the location of the alert(s). The handler must provide the equipment/personnel needed to carry out the chosen method of marking/recording the location of the alerts. Either the boat search or shoreline search may be taken first. Both elements of the test (boat and shoreline) are to be completed on the same day, but may be separated into morning and afternoon, and may even be at different locations or separate bodies of water. Each test element, boat or shore, may be taken only once on a given day. However, evaluators have the option to abort and start the test over if weather/water conditions dictate. For example, a rainsquall, which jeopardizes safety, would dictate aborting a boat test. The test may then be started again after the squall clears.

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I. Boat Search Element

The search area should be approximately 1/2 acre, or 2,420 square yards. For example, search areas of 40 yards by 60 yards, or 50 yards by 50 yards will yield a half-acre test site. The perimeter of the search area may be marked but this is not required. Care should be taken to ensure the scent source is not near a buoy or other item of visual interest to the dog.

From a boat, the handler/dog team will locate and mark the general area in which the submerged scent is located in a lake or pond. It is the handler's responsibility to select an appropriate search strategy. The handler should brief the boat operator on the strategy to be used and direct the boat operator while in the search area. The handler will tell the evaluators when the dog is alerting and give directions to the boat operator to assist the dog in localizing the scent. When the handler is satisfied that the location of the scent source has been determined adequately, the handler will mark the alert(s). The handler will then accurately document the alert(s) and tell the evaluators where divers should be deployed to follow up the alert. The handler should be able to narrow the search area down to approximately 25% the size of the original 1/2 acre search area. Evaluators are to take into account the weather and water conditions to determine what degree of precision is feasible for a given test.

At least one evaluator must be on the boat during the test. If this evaluator is a skilled boat operator, the evaluator may also function as boat operator. It is recommended the second evaluator take a position on shore. It is much easier to evaluate the handler's coverage of the search area from shore than from the boat.

The boat search test is allowed a maximum time of one hour, exclusive of one break, to be taken at the handler's discretion, of no more than fifteen minutes. This break is optional and left to the handler's discretion; however, a handler who continues searching when the dog has obviously lost its concentration and stopped searching would fail the test.

II. Shore Search Element

Working along the shore, the handler/dog team will locate and mark the general area in which the submerged scent is located. The designated search area should be 100 to 125 yards in length. If there is a hazardous or impassable area, the length of the search area may be split into no more than two sections, with the handler being advised of the area not included in the test. Evaluators should ensure that the problem is set up according to existing/expected wind conditions so that the problem is solvable by a competent water search team. The scent source should be inaccessible to the dog and should be within 10 feet of the shoreline. The dog may or may not enter the water from the shoreline. The shoreline search test is allowed a maximum time of 30 minutes. The handler should indicate the direction of the scent source based on the dog's alerts, narrowing the line to be searched to a width of no more than 30 to 35 feet.

Evaluators are to take into account the weather and water conditions to determine what degree of precision is feasible for a given test.

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WATER SEARCH TEAM MISSION-READY CERTIFICATION TEST EVALUATION SHEET

Handler: _____ Date: _____
 Dog: _____ Location: _____
 (Boat)____ (Shore)____ Boat Search Duration: _____ Shore Search _____ Duration: ____
 Pass: _____ Fail: _____
 Scent Source: _____ Weather: _____
 Air Temperature: _____ Water Temperature: _____

I. Mandatory Prerequisites

- No. Mandatory Prerequisite (Must be checked prior to performing test) _____
- M1 Handler has required water search team equipment _____
- M2 Has completed preliminary requirement _____

The following will be used to assess and report the tested team's performance: YES, NO, N/A (for not applicable/not observed). If N/A is marked, be sure to include an explanation of the circumstances. Any assessment item, which receives a "NO" rating by one or both evaluators, will result in failure of the test.

Boat Search

No.	Boat Search Requirement	YES	NO	N/A
B1	The handler demonstrates appropriate safety precautions; Wearing a PFD			
B2	The handler is at ease in a boat.			
B3	The handler utilizes an appropriate strategy for existing conditions.			
B4	The handler gives adequate directions to the boat operator.			
B5	The handler reads dogs alert(s).			
B6	The handler does not give cues to dog.			
B7	The handler properly marks the strongest alert.			
B8	The handler properly documents the dog's alert(s).			
B9	The handler gives an adequate debriefing.			
B10	The dog is at ease in the boat.			
B11	The dog is not readily distracted.			
B12	The dog performs a readable alert.			

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Shoreline Search

No.	Shore Search Requirement	YES	NO	N/A
S1	The handler has the required water search team equipment.			
S2	The handler demonstrates appropriate safety precautions; wearing a PFD.			
S3	The handler utilizes an appropriate strategy for existing conditions.			
S4	The handler reads dog's alert(s).			
S5	The handler does not give cues to dog.			
S6	The handler properly marks the strongest alert.			
S7	The handler properly documents the dog's alert(s).			
S8	The handler gives an adequate debriefing.			
S9	The dog is not readily distracted.			
S10	The dog performs a readable alert. If the dog eats, picks up or urinates on the scent source, the dog will FAIL this sign off.			

Comments: (please reference by number)

Evaluator: _____ **Co-Evaluator:** _____

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WATER SEARCH RECERTIFICATION

This test applies to those teams that are currently water search certified. The evaluation shall be conducted by an individual who has experience with training canines or who meets the evaluator guidelines set forth in the Mutual Aid Guidelines for SAR Dogs. The re-certification test for Water Search Teams should consist of either the Boat Search Element or the Shore Search Element as defined in the Water Search Team Mission Ready Test.

**WATER SEARCH TEAM MISSION-READY RECERTIFICATION TEST
EVALUATION SHEET**

Handler: _____ Date: _____

Dog: _____ Location: _____

Check one: Boat Search _____ OR Shore Search _____

Start Time: _____ End Time: _____ Pass: _____ Fail: _____

Scent Source: _____ Weather: _____

Air Temperature: _____ Water Temperature: _____

No.	Mandatory Prerequisite (Must be checked prior to performing Test)	Y=Yes N= No
M1	Currently Water Search Certified	

The following will be used to assess and report the tested team's performance: YES, NO, N/A (for not applicable/not observed). If N/A is marked, be sure to include an explanation of the circumstances. Any assessment item, which receives a "NO" rating by one or both evaluators, will result in failure of the test.

II. Boat Search

No.	Boat Search Requirement	YES	NO	N/A
B1	The handler demonstrates appropriate safety precautions; Wearing a PFD			
B2	The handler is at ease in a boat.			
B3	The handler utilizes an appropriate strategy for existing conditions.			
B4	The handler gives adequate directions to the boat operator.			
B5	The handler reads dogs alert(s).			
B6	The handler does not give cues to dog.			
B7	The handler properly marks the strongest alert.			
B8	The handler properly documents the dog's alert(s).			
B9	The handler gives an adequate debriefing.			
B10	The dog is at ease in the boat.			
B11	The dog is not readily distracted.			
B12	The dog performs a readable alert.			

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III. Shoreline Search

No.	Shore Search Requirement	YES	NO	N/A
S1	The handler has the required water search team equipment.			
S2	The handler demonstrates appropriate safety precautions; wearing a PFD.			
S3	The handler utilizes an appropriate strategy for existing conditions.			
S4	The handler reads dog's alert(s).			
S5	The handler does not give cues to dog.			
S6	The handler properly marks the strongest alert.			
S7	The handler properly documents the dog's alert(s).			
S8	The handler gives an adequate debriefing.			
S9	The dog is not readily distracted.			
S10	The dog performs a readable alert. If the dog eats, picks up or urinates on the scent source, the dog will FAIL this sign off.			

Comments: (please reference by number)

Evaluator: _____ **Co-Evaluator:** _____