



K9 Certification Standards

Standards of Operation & Qualification

Handler and K-9

The failure of a dog team (consisting of one dog and handler), to make a find in their assigned area can result in the loss of life of the subject. These standards & certifications are designed to assure all K-9 units, will be professional, uniform and competent in their performance.

A search and rescue dog need not be of a specific breed, but be of sufficient size and strength to manage working in the many different terrains encountered in search operations. It is recommended that the dog will be double coated so that it will be well protected against the elements. The dog must be of suitable temperament, non-aggressive, and be able to be controlled by the handler at all times. The dog must graduate from a suitable basic obedience class, preferably obtain a Canine Good Citizen test.

Each K-9 team will be expected to train in order to be search ready and available to respond to search calls. Each team will maintain a log of training and searches. This log will be reviewed once a year at least and before promotions of the team to operational, full operational, advanced operational, cadaver operational, and water search operational. Each handler must provide current vaccination certifications and carry a copy of these to be reviewed by Federation Officers at any and all trainings, meetings, searches, etc. All handlers must keep K-9 in good health along with appearance that is suitable to that particular breed or said K-9 will not be allowed at Federation functions unless permission is given by the K9 Liaison Officer. Each handler must fill out proper documentation for each training session. At testing time the handler will make these forms available to the tester.

The following team characteristics will be evaluated at all times:

1. The team shall show a mutual liking and respect of each other and enjoy playing together as well as working.
2. The handler will give appropriate praise and encouragement to the dog in a timely manner.
3. The handler will be able to recognize when the dog is alerting (natural and/or trained) on human scent. The handler will have to describe his/her dog's alerts (natural and trained) for human scent on land and/or water.
4. The handler must demonstrate an ability to work and control the dog effectively in all search activities.
5. The ability to plan the search of an area for the best use of the wind for efficient coverage of the area.
6. The ability to judge sweeps in the area in accord with the prevailing conditions and subtle air flow conditions.
7. The ability to recognize when either team member is working inefficiently and take action to remedy or compensate for the situation.
8. The dog must be willing to find and approach strangers.
9. The dog must be able to perform a re-find on the subject.
10. The dog will not miss obvious scent even when tired.
11. The dog must be able to find the subject in a contaminated area.
12. The dog must be able to work effectively with an additional person with the team.
13. The handler must have achieved searcher qualification or above as stated in their individual team standards.

The handler must have read the following books to have an understanding of SAR and dog working relationship before beginning any training or qualifying of any certifications: Search and Rescue Dogs - Training the K-9 Hero by ARDA, Training Steps for Search and Rescue Dogs by William G. Syrotuck, Scent and the Scenting Dog by William G. Syrotuck, and Ready! by Susan Bulanda.

Standards of Operation & Qualification (cont.)

Handler and K-9

Operational Levels and Certifications

There are three levels of operational certification in which a K-9 team may qualify, which include certification standards to reach that particular level. All K-9 teams must complete the level of Operational first, in order to be allowed to proceed to any other certification or level of certification. Once a K-9 team is certified as Operational they may challenge any of the levels of operational certifications in either Full or Advanced and the certifications for Cadaver or Water Search. However, for a K-9 team to be certified at a particular level, said K-9 team must qualify in all the certification standards in that level.

Qualification of Tester

See IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NYS FEDERATION OF SAR TEAMS K9 STANDARDS

The tester will be objective and fair when setting up, testing, and evaluating certifications. All certifications will be properly set up to qualify or pass a K-9 Team candidate. The K-9 team will pass or fail a certification on their own merit, not because the certification failed them.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to search an area of 1/2 to one square mile with light brush or trees interspersed with open areas. Up to 3 persons (number known to handler) will be hidden out of sight and found primarily by air scenting, within a reasonable time given the area, weather and scent conditions.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to be able to find missing / lost person / persons who are down or motionless in a large area that they are assigned. The dog / handler team is to demonstrate their ability to plan a systematic search of the area by using both a hasty (a rapid, quick check of overall search area), and sector search (systematic sweeps) to locate the subject.

The subject is to remain down, (not moving) in a specific location making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. He / she is not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification which will include a variety of vegetation, (forested with trees, grasses, bush, etc. and terrain features (to include, hills, ridges, streams, ravines, trails and roads), and some form of confinement, either natural or manmade.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories that are in **bold** print will result in an automatic failure of this certification. Any categories in *italic* marked **NO**, will be reviewed by the K9 Standards Committee from the evaluation of this certification and previous performances of documented training. It is understood that a decision not to reverse a **No**, will also result in a failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide map, the location and boundary of area to be searched, and the number of subjects to be found. All subjects will have been placed in the area (locations known to the tester), at least 1/2 hour prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to search an area of 1/2 to one square mile with light brush or trees interspersed with open areas. Up to 3 persons (number known to handler) will be hidden out of sight and found primarily by air scenting, within a reasonable time given the area, weather and scent conditions.

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | |
|-----|-------------------|------------------|---|
| 1. | () | () | Handler identifies the assigned area from a topographical map to the field in which he/she will be working by stating the size, terrain, and location. |
| 2. | () | () | <i>Handler is properly equipped, (i.e. daypack, clothing, SAR gear, etc.).</i> |
| 3. | () | () | <i>Handler prepares dog for search activity, (outfitted with proper identifying vest, etc., is watered, and is excited to go to work).</i> |
| 4. | () | () | Handler checks and states / notes wind direction and mph once at area from the Beaufort Scale. |
| 5. | () | () | Handler states / notes hasty patterns, (either manmade or natural boundaries / confinements), in the area that are symbolic on the map or are visible once at the area if any are present.
Note: it will be up to the handler whether or not to work hasty patterns. |
| 6. | () | () | <i>Handler properly starts dog, (find em or similar command given, with verbal excitement being transferred to the dog).</i> |
| 7. | () | () | Dog eagerly leaves handler to find em. |
| 8. | () | () | Dog ranges out in front of handler a distance suitable to the terrain and vegetation, (dog in sight but not under foot).
Note: It is understood that while working, the dog is occasionally not in sight. |
| 9. | () | () | Dog works under handler's control, (dog will move & range in direction that handler directs). |
| 10. | () | () | Handler search patterns (sweeps, hasty patterns) are suitable to working / covering area, (wind shifts, terrain, and vegetation influencing scent are stated / noted). |
| 11. | () | () | Dog working with motivation to find throughout the period of problem. |
| 12. | () | () | <i>Handler takes timely breaks to rest and water dog, (weather will influence handler's decision).</i> |
| 13. | () | () | Handler will state / note area covered on map upon request, (not to interfere with handler / dog working). |
| 14. | () | () | Handler will state / note position in field and on map upon request, (not to interfere with handler / dog working). |
| 15. | () | () | Dog makes find and re-find, (handler to walk away to get re-find). |
| 16. | () | () | <i>Handler gives praise / encouragement to dog in a timely fashion.</i> |
| 17. | () | () | Handler recognizes the alert (natural and/or trained) on human scent. |
| 18. | () | () | <i>Handler is physically capable of working search area.</i> |

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find one subject hidden out of sight in an area of at least 30 acres (1,140 x 1,140 feet) of heavy brush.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to be able to find missing / lost person who is down or motionless. The dog / handler team are to demonstrate their ability to enter, cover, and clear the area as one sector by using systematic sweeps. Hasty patterns (a rapid, quick check of overall search area) are not to be used during this certification.

The subject is to remain down, (not moving) in a specific location, making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. He / she is not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester.

The tester is to provide an area that has vegetation thick enough to, block any visual find, be at a height of over the dogs back, and be physically passable with moderate to difficult resistance without having to crawl. The area's boundaries will be defined and recognized by some form of confinement, either natural or manmade. The wind direction will determine which end of the area for the team to start.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories that are in **bold** print will result in an automatic failure of this certification. Any categories in *italic* marked **NO**, will be reviewed by the K9 Standards Committee from the evaluation of this certification and previous performances of documented training. It is understood that a decision not to reverse a **No**, will also result in a failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide map, the location and boundary of area to be searched. The subject will have been placed in the area (locations known to the tester), at least 1/2 hour prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find one subject hidden out of sight in an area of at least 30 acres (1,140 x 1,140 feet) of heavy brush.

YES NO

1. () () **Dog is easily motivated to enter thick vegetation to search.**
2. () () **Dog can be recalled from any situation (i.e. wild game, etc.).**
3. () () **Dog ranges out in front of handler a distance suitable to the terrain and vegetation, (dog in sight but not under foot).**
Note: It is understood that while working, the dog is occasionally not in sight.
4. () () *Dog's alert is the same as described to tester by the handler, (description of the dog's alert is to be known to tester before entering the field).*
5. () () **Dog works scent cone to find subject, (i.e. a find by sight is unacceptable).**
6. () () **Dog finds subject without resweeping same area.**
7. () () **Dog makes a refind, (handler to walk away to get refind).**

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find one subject at night in an area of approximately 40 acres (1,320 x 1,320 feet), within reasonable time given the terrain, weather and scent conditions. Exact size of area will depend on terrain.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to be able to find missing / lost person who is down in an area that they are assigned at night, versus daytime. The dog / handler team is to demonstrate their ability to systematically cover the area by using either, or both, a sector search, (systematic sweeps), and a hasty (a rapid quick check of overall search area), to locate the subject.

The subject is to remain down, (not moving) in a specific location, making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. He / she is not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification which will include a variety of vegetation, (forested with trees, grasses, bush, etc.), and some form of confinement, either natural or manmade to be recognizable as the area's boundaries.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories will result in an automatic failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide map, the location and boundary of area to be searched. The subject will have been placed in the area (location known to the tester), at least 1/2 hour prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find one subject at night in an area of approximately 40 acres (1,320 x 1,320 feet), within reasonable time given the terrain, weather and scent conditions. Exact size of area will depend on terrain.

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | |
|----|------------|-----------|---|
| 1. | () | () | Handler is properly equipped, (i.e. flashlight and / or headlight with a spare, and extra batteries). |
| 2. | () | () | Dog is properly identifiable at night, (vest to have a bright color, with a <u>reflective</u> search dog in print, or <i>stripes</i> , or <i>light</i>). |
| 3. | () | () | Dog can be recalled from any situation, (i.e. wild game, etc.). |
| 4. | () | () | Dog ranges out in front of handler a distance suitable to the terrain and vegetation, (dog in sight, with light source, but not under foot).
Note: It is understood that while working, the dog occasionally not in sight. |
| 5. | () | () | Handler will state / note position in field and on map upon request, (not to interfere with handler / dog working). |
| 6. | () | () | Dog works scent cone to find subject, (i.e. a find by sight is unacceptable). |
| 7. | () | () | K-9 team covers area systematically, (use of hasty or sector sweep patterns). |
| 8. | () | () | Dog makes refind, (handler to walk away to get refind). |

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find and continue to lead handler to a subject who is walking.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to be able to find missing / lost person who is moving in an area that they are assigned, versus the subject or subjects who are usually down or motionless. This certification is not designed to clear the area, but to qualify the dog / handler for the find and refind of a moving subject.

The subject is to remain in a specific location while moving (walking), the area not exceed 1 acre (208 x 208 feet). The subject is to make the utmost effort to remain unseen by the dog. When the subject is found by the dog, he / she is to walk in the opposite direction of that which the dog goes in when returning to the handler. The subject is to remain walking until the dog leads the handler to him / her, completing the refind.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification by defining the boundaries to the handler in a manner that will provide a scent cone for the dog within 2 to 3 sweeps. The area should be confined to approximately 20 acres, (933 x 933 feet).

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories that are in **bold** print will result in an automatic failure of this certification. Any categories in *italic* marked **NO**, will be reviewed by the K9 Standards Committee from the evaluation of this certification and previous performances of documented training. It is understood that a decision not to reverse a **No**, will also result in a failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide map, the location and boundary of area to be searched. The subject will have been placed in the area (locations known to the tester), at least 1/2 hour prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find and continue to lead handler to a subject who is walking.

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | |
|----|------------|-----------|--|
| 1. | () | () | Dog finds subject, (it is understood that the dog may alert on sight or sound before the scent cone).
Note: Subject is to be moving (walking) before dog finds. |
| 2. | () | () | Dog makes refind, (continuous to lead handler to the moving subject).
Note: Subject is to be walking away from dog after find. |
| 3. | () | () | Handler recognizes the alert (natural and/or trained). |
| 4. | () | () | Handler recognizes the refind. |
| 5. | () | () | <i>Handler gives praise / encouragement to dog in a timely fashion.</i> |

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to follow a trail, 1/2 to 3/4 mile long, and locate a subject off the trail 30 feet.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to demonstrate their ability to locate a missing / lost person who is off a trail using a hasty pattern, (a rapid, quick check), to locate the subject. The dog should show a willingness to leave the “beaten path” when human scent is present, (natural alert), and the handler must demonstrate his / her ability to read and encourage the dog to “work it out”, (clear the immediate area), to find the subject. This is an air scent certification for a dog / handler team, not to be confused as a track / trail problem. The word trail is a descriptive as a form of confinement.

The subject is to remain down, (not moving) in a specific location, making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. He / she is not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester. He / she is to enter the trail perpendicularly, cross it, and put him / her self down 30 feet from the trail. Do not walk down / up the trail. If there is a wind equal / greater than 8 mph, (leaves and small twigs in motion; wind extends surveyor’s tape), the subject is to place themselves upwind of trail. If the wind is equal / less than 7 mph (wind felt on face; leaves rustle) the subject can place themselves on either side of the trail.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification which will consist of vegetation (brush, shrubs, trees) on both sides of the trail. The direction and mph of the wind must also be checked to insure that scent is present on the trail confinement, (this is a hasty, not a segment search, or clearing of area pattern). Remember, the purpose is for the dog to leave the “beaten path” once scent is detected from a trail, not to clear the area. Only after the dog alerts (natural alert) should the team clear that immediate area from which scent is present.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories that are in **bold** print will result in an automatic failure of this certification. Any categories in *italic* marked **NO**, will be reviewed by the K9 Standards Committee from the evaluation of this certification and previous performances of documented training. It is understood that a decision not to reverse a **No**, will also result in a failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide map, the location and boundary of area to be searched. The subject will have been placed in the area (location known to the tester), at least 1/2 hour prior to the K-9 team’s arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to follow a trail, 1/2 to 3/4 mile long, and locate a subject off the trail 30 feet.

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | |
|----|------------|-----------|---|
| 1. | () | () | Dog works trail with / without direction and control from handler. |
| 2. | () | () | Handler recognizes alert (natural) on human scent, (will state that dog is alerting).
Note: If an article contaminated with human scent is located by the dog, the handler is to acknowledge it and restart the dog to find the subject. |
| 3. | () | () | Handler encourages dog to “work it out”, (clear the area that the dog is alerting on). |
| 4. | () | () | Dog works scent cone to find subject, (i.e. a find by sight is unacceptable).
Note: Subject is to be hidden out of sight from trail. |
| 5. | () | () | <i>Dog makes refind, (it is understood that given the short distance from the trail to the subject, that a refind will / may not be well defined).</i> |

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find three of five articles in an area of 150 feet x 150 feet in a wooded area with light brush. The dog / handler team will use a systematic sector search of area and are allowed to make only one series of sweeps in the area, (no repeating of previously searched areas).

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to demonstrate their ability to clear a small area by using a sector search pattern (systematic sweeps), to locate articles contaminated with human scent.

The articles are to be placed in the area at least two hours prior to the certification hidden from sight (not buried), and on or near the ground (placement off the ground will not exceed a height of one foot). The articles are to be of the following; two clothing (no larger than a tee shirt), one metal (keys, or a watch, etc.), one paper (3" x 5" note pad, or envelope, etc.), one leather (wallet or belt, etc.). All articles are / will have been worn or carried a minimum of one hour with contact to human skin prior to placement.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification as described above, with well defined boundaries (flagged if no other confinement). The wind will be no more than 10 mph (i.e. dust and loose paper raised off the ground is over 10 mph). Only one person will enter the area when placing the articles.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be full operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories that are in **bold** print will result in an automatic failure of this certification. Any categories in *italic* marked **NO**, will be reviewed by the K9 Standards Committee from the evaluation of this certification and previous performances of documented training. It is understood that a decision not to reverse a **No**, will also result in a failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide the location and boundary of area to be searched. All articles will have been placed in the area (locations known to the tester), at least 2 hours prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find three of five articles in an area of 150 feet x 150 feet in a wooded area with light brush. The dog / handler team will use a systematic sector search of area and are allowed to make only one series of sweeps in the area, (no repeating of previously searched areas).

YES NO

1. () () *Dog is motivated to find articles through out problem, (at least three of the five).*
2. () () **K-9 team covers area systematically.**
3. () () **Dog finds three of the five articles placed for this certification without resweeping areas.**
Note: If dog finds an article adjacent to a sweep because of a coning of scent from an article, that area will not be considered to have been swept systematically.
4. () () **Handler recognizes the dogs alerts and interests in finds of articles.**
Note: The tester will acknowledge each article as presented to him / her by the handler, as those which were placed.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find a subject hidden above ground in a tree (tree stand, etc.), no higher than 12 feet off the ground in a wooded area approximately 20 acres (933 x 933 feet).

The purpose of this certification is for the dog to alert and work out the problem of locating the source with encouragement from the handler, not for the handler to find / see the subject and draw the dog's attention to the source. The dog / handler team is to demonstrate their ability to find a subject above ground simulating a hanging or hiding, etc., by using either a hasty (a rapid, quick check) or a sector search (systematic sweeps) to locate the subject. It is understood that it will be impossible for the dog to have direct contact with the subject, and there for the find will be described as that in which the dog's alerts narrows the location of the subject when working the scent cone and scent pooling by indicating that the source is up above, this direct attention of the scent source by the dog will be recognizable as either / or jumping, standing up on hind legs, barking, whining, trying to climb the tree, staring up at tree. This recognizable behavior by the dog should draw the handlers attention to look up and see the subject, thus the find is complete.

The subject is to remain motionless in a tree no higher than twelve feet off the ground, making the utmost effort not to be seen or hear. It is understood that it will be difficult to be unseen, however the subject will wear clothing that will not advertise their presence (fluorescent orange, red, etc.), but colors that will come close to that of the environment. He / she is not to give any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester. The subject will use a safety line to secure him / her self from a fall.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification as described above, with well defined boundaries (flagged if no other confinement) that is forested with trees that will be safe to hold a subject at a height described above.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be full operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories will result in an automatic failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide map, the location and boundary of area to be searched. The subject will have been placed in the area (location known to the tester), at least 1/2 hour prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find a subject hidden above ground in a tree (tree stand, etc.), no higher than 12 feet off the ground in a wooded area approximately 20 acres (933 x 933 feet).

YES NO

1. () () **K-9 team covers area systematically.**
2. () () **Dog's alert (natural and/or trained) leads handler to the location of subject.**
3. () () **Dog's indication (trained) of the scent source is recognizable, (as either and / or jumping, standing up on hind legs, barking, whining, trying to climb the tree, etc.).**
4. () () **Handler recognizes the alert (natural) and the indication (trained).**

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to locate a subject hidden under snow (a minimum of 24 inches unpacked).

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to demonstrate their ability to systematically search (sector sweep) the area for the source of human scent coming from a subject buried under snow and locate the subject by the dog sniffing, clawing the snow, etc.

The subject is to remain down, (not moving) in a specific location, making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. He / she is not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester. The subject must have radio communication with a safety man during the entire certification. It is important that the subject remain covered up until the handler, tester, or the safety person give an OK to uncover, thus preventing the subject from being clawed by the dog digging to get him or her.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification which will have enough snow, and some form of confinement (natural or manmade) to narrow the amount of time needed for the dog to locate the subject. No subject is to remain buried more than 10 minutes. Communications will be maintained by a safety man through out the entire exercise. The safety man will make any / all decisions to abort the certification if the safety of the buried subject is in jeopardy at any time. Both the tester and safety man will know the location of the subject.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be full operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories will result in an automatic failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide map, the location and boundary of area to be searched. The subject will have been placed in the area (location known to the tester) prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to locate a subject hidden under snow (a minimum of 24 inches unpacked).

YES **NO**

1. () () **K-9 team covers area systematically.**
2. () () **Dog alerts (natural alert) on scent cone and / or pooling and follows to location of buried subject.**
3. () () **Dog is motivated to reach subject by digging (trained alert).**
4. () () **Handler encourages and praises dog for digging to subject.**

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to search a building and indicate a person present in the building in an identifiable manner.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to demonstrate their ability to thoroughly search a building and indicate a find of a hidden subject in an obvious and identifiable manner (barking, whining, pawing, etc.). The handler may / should encourage the dog with commands and praise during the search to cover the assigned area effectively.

The subject is to remain motionless in a specific location, making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. He / she is not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester. The subject is not to place him / her self in any sealed (air tight) container.

The tester will designate the area of the building suitable for this certification. The tester will know the entire layout of the building by having done a walk through prior to the certification. He / she will accompany the dog / handler team through out the entire search and will make every effort not to interfere with the team. The tester will inform the handler not to open any door without first receiving permission to do so, and that if the dog indicates that the subject is behind a closed door, the handler must inform the tester. The tester will give the team a reasonable amount of time based upon the contents and internal structure of the building, and inform the handler of the time allotted.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be full operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories that are in **bold** print will result in an automatic failure of this certification. Any categories in *italic* marked **NO**, will be reviewed by the K9 Standards Committee from the evaluation of this certification and previous performances of documented training. It is understood that a decision not to reverse a **NO**, will also result in a failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide the handler information on the assigned building area to be searched. The subject will have been placed in the building (location known to the tester), at least 10 minutes prior to the K-9 team's entering the building.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to search a building and indicate a person present in the building in an identifiable manner.

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | |
|----|-------------------|------------------|---|
| 1. | () | () | K-9 team covers area systematically. |
| 2. | () | () | Dog works area with / without direction from handler. |
| 3. | () | () | Dog follows handler's directions to overcome any hesitation because of contents and structure. |
| 4. | () | () | Dog's indicates subject's location in an identifiable manner. |
| 5. | () | () | <i>Handler praises and encourages dog in a timely manner.</i> |

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to locate a subject hidden under natural or manmade debris and indicate the subject's location in an identifiable manner (natural and trained).

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to demonstrate their ability to thoroughly search an area which includes a pile of debris (anything natural or manmade, i.e. construction debris from a small building, or trees / logs / brush / earth in a pile, and is large enough to place a subject inside) and indicate the location of a subject hidden inside, in an obvious / identifiable manner (barking, whining, pawing, etc.). The handler may / should encourage the dog with commands and praise during the search and the indication. This certification is not to be confused with that of a disaster search qualification, in which a large building or earthen area have collapsed, and specialty teams and equipment are employed to recover or rescue human beings. However, this certification does qualify the dog / handler team to locate live human scent in a search area that includes a debris pile as previously described.

The subject is to remain motionless in a specific and safe location in the pile, making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. He / she is not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester. the subject must have radio communication with a safety man during the entire certification.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification which will have a debris pile in it as described above. The tester will point out the boundary of the area to be searched to the handler prior to the certification. The size of the search area should be small enough (10 acres or 660 x 660 feet, recommended) to minimize the time spent clearing the area surrounding the debris pile.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be full operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories will result in an automatic failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide the handler information on the assigned area to be searched. The subject will have been placed in the debris pile (location known to the tester), at least 1/2 hour prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for FULL OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to locate a subject hidden under natural or manmade debris and indicate the subject's location in an identifiable manner (natural and trained).

YES **NO**

1. () () **K-9 team covers area systematically.**
2. () () **Dog alerts (natural alert) on scent cone and / or pooling and follows to location of debris pile.**
3. () () **Dog's indication of subject's location is identifiable (trained alert).**
4. () () **Handler encourages and praises dog for indication.**

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for ADVANCED OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

With three persons hidden in a 100 acre area, approximately (2,100 x 2,100 feet), be given the scent of one by a scent article and find that person by air scenting.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog demonstrate a find through discrimination in an area of contamination present with other human scents, using a hasty (a rapid, quick check) or a sector search (systematic sweeps) to locate the subject. Acknowledgment of the other two persons by the dog is acceptable, however, the dog is to work the scent (cone) and re-find only on the subject that the dog was given scented to find.

The subject is to place personnel scent material into a (uncontaminated) clear plastic sealed bag provided by and then given back to the tester. The subject and the two people (placed to contaminate the area) are to remain down, (not moving) in a specific location, making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. They are not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification, which will include a variety of vegetation (forested with trees, grasses, bush, etc.) and terrain (hills, ravines, streams, etc.), and some form of confinement, either natural or manmade. The tester will be responsible for the tracklayer's scent material, and will be the only one to handle the bag before giving it to the handler to work this certification.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be advanced operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories will result in an automatic failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide the location and boundary of areas to be searched. All subjects will have been placed in the area (locations known to the tester), at least 2 hours prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for ADVANCED OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

With three persons hidden in a 100 acre area, approximately (2,100 x 2,100 feet), be given the scent of one by a scent article and find that person by air scenting.

YES **NO**

1. () () **Handler uses proper care of scent articles.**
2. () () **Dog accepts scent article (the dog sniffs, licks, mouths, article when handler presents it).**
3. () () **K-9 team covers area systematically.**
4. () () **Dog does not re-find persons placed to contaminate area.**
5. () () **Dog finds subject for which it was scented.**

TRACK/TRAIL CERTIFICATION for ADVANCED OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find a subject by track / trail a distance of 1/2 to 1 mile long, over a minimum of three different surfaces (grass, dirt, asphalt, concrete, woods), with two cross tracks, three 90 degree turns, indicate three of five articles left by tracklayer and be at least two hours old from the start of track layer.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to discriminate a track / trail over three surfaces, with three 90 degree turns, that has been contaminated by two different people crossing the trail. The dog must also indicate at least three articles dropped by the tracklayer. The handler will scent his / her dog with material from the tracklayer.

The tracklayer is to place personal scent material into a (uncontaminated) clear plastic sealed bag provided by and than given back to the tester. He / she is to carry personal scent material and drop them along the trail, insuring that he / she is the only person to have handled them prior to the drops. The tracklayer will follow a route previously planned out by the tester and have radio contact through out the certification with the tester to insure that; three surfaces are crossed or walked through, there are three 90 degree turns, and that all five articles are dropped prior to the end of the trail (the last article will be dropped at least 300 feet before the trail ends). The people cross tracking the track / trail will also follow a planned route and have radio contact with the tester to insure they cross the track layer and than move on out of the area. The tracklayer is to remain down (motionless) making the utmost effort not to be seen or heard. He / she is not to give the dog any recognition until told to do so by the handler and / or the tester.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification which will include three different surfaces as previously described. The tester will prepare the tracklayer and cross track people by providing maps of the area previously marked to show the track / trail for the tracklayer, where to drop the articles, and the route and point at which the cross track people will enter the area and cross the track / trail walked by the tracklayer. the tester will be responsible for the tracklayer's scent material, and will be the only one to handle the bag before giving it to the handler to work this certification. If articles are not present on trail, (a passerby picked them up) the tester will use sound judgment as to the validity of this certification based ion the performance of the dog and handler.

It is understood by the handler that this is only one of the certifications needed to be advanced operational as stated in the Standards of Operations & Qualification for Canine Teams, and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories will result in an automatic failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide the location of the track layers starting point. The track layer and articles will have been placed in the area (locations known to the tester), at least 2 hours prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

TRACK/TRAIL CERTIFICATION for ADVANCED OPERATIONAL

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to find a subject by track / trail a distance of 1/2 to 1 mile long, over a minimum of three different surfaces (grass, dirt, asphalt, concrete, woods), with two cross tracks, three 90 degree turns, indicate three of five articles left by tracklayer and be at least two hours old from the start of track layer.

YES NO

1. () () **Handler uses proper care of scent article.**
2. () () **Dog accepts scent material (sniffs, bites, at material).**
3. () () **Dog tracks / trails in direction that tracklayer traveled.**
4. () () **Handler recognizes that dog is working tracklayer's trail.**
5. () () **Dog tracks / trails across three different surfaces.**
6. () () **Dog works through cross tracks (acknowledgment is not a failure).**
7. () () **Dog indicates dropped articles of the tracklayer (sniff, paw, bite).**
8. () () **Dog finds tracklayer by track / trailing (discretion must be used with the understanding that the dog may air scent at the very end because of a scent cone or scent pooling).**

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for CADAVER

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

With corpse scented material placed in a 10 acre area (660 x 660 feet), the dog will find one placed on the ground and locate one buried 6 to 10 inches under unpacked dirt and / or vegetation, in an identifiable manner (natural and trained) without resweeping the area.

The purpose of this certification is for the dog to find and / or indicate corpse scented material in an identifiable manner both on the ground and buried in a shallow grave in a sector search. The dog / handler team are to clear the area by using systematic sweeps.

The corpse scented material will be that of which was in contact and soiled with a human corpse as free of any contamination (live human scent) as possible when being handled for placement. Care should also be taken when placing the material so not to disturb the natural habitat, thus preventing a find by sight versus scent.

The tester is to provide an area that is suitable for the purpose of this certification which will include a forested area of trees, light brush, and grasses. The area will be well confined, by natural or manmade (flagging) boundaries.

It is understood by the handler that he / she and the dog must be at least operational to qualify to take this certification for cadaver and that all characteristics of page two will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories will result in an automatic failure of this certification.

The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide the location and boundary of area to be searched, and the number of placements. All material will have been placed in the area (locations known to the tester), at least 24 hours prior to the K-9 team's arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for CADAVER

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

With corpse scented material placed in a 10 acre area (660 x 660 feet), the dog will find one placed on the ground and locate one buried 6 to 10 inches under unpacked dirt and / or vegetation, in an identifiable manner (natural and trained) without resweeping the area.

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | |
|----|-------------------|------------------|---|
| 1. | () | () | Dog / handler team sector search area using systematic sweeps without resweeping area. |
| 2. | () | () | Dog locates / finds corpse material placed on the ground by scent, (a find by sight is a failure). |
| 3. | () | () | Dog locates / indicates corpse material buried in ground by scent, (a find by sight is a failure). |
| 4. | () | () | Dog's alert (natural) and indication (trained) are identifiable when finding / locating both the materials (one placed on the ground, one buried in ground). |

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for WATER SEARCH

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to alert (natural alert) and give an indication (trained alert) in an identifiable manner from a boat to a known scent cone released below the surface by; a diver (live scent) and a canine training aid (corpse scent).

The purpose of this certification is for the dog / handler team to locate an area that human scent is present on the surface of water for a live scent (recent drowning) and corpse scent (late drowning). The dog is to give an alert (natural) that is readable (head up and extended into the wind, nose / head pointed into wind toward surface of water, etc.) by the handler, to lead the boat to the source of sent, and give an indication (trained) in an identifiable manner (dog trying to get into the water, biting the water, pawing the water, barking, whining, putting nose or head into the water, etc.) where this scent surfaces from the water and becomes airborne.

The subject is to be under water at a minimum depth of 10 feet for at least five minutes and remain in one location prior to the dog / handler teams arrival to the water area to be searched.

The canine training aid is to be under water at a minimum depth of 10 feet. The amount of time for the training aid to remain underwater prior to the dog / handler team's arrival will be decided upon by the tester.

The tester is to provide an area and equipment that is suitable for the purpose of this certification, which will include a safe environment for all people involved who are near, on, or in the water. the tester will have communications with the dive team, the safety man, boat man, spotter, and the handler at all times. **The tester will be an experienced handler who has been trained, certified, and actually worked a water search mission.**

It is understood by the handler that he / she and the dog must be at least operational to qualify to take this certification for water search and that all characteristics will be evaluated at all times during the certification.

It is further understood by the handler that a **NO** in any of the following categories will result in an automatic failure of this certification. The tester may not advise the handler with any information in relation to categories listed below at time of certification, but will advise handler on matters in the field when safety of the K-9 team is in jeopardy. The tester will provide the location and boundary of area to be searched. The diver and the canine training aid will have been placed in the area (location known to the tester), prior to the K-9 teams arrival to be tested.

AIR SCENT CERTIFICATION for WATER SEARCH

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Be able to alert (natural alert) and give an indication (trained) in an identifiable manner from a boat to a known scent cone released below the surface by; a diver (live scent) and a canine training aid (corpse scent).

- | | <u>YES</u> | <u>NO</u> | |
|----|-------------------|------------------|--|
| 1. | () | () | Dog and handler can swim (this has been witnessed by tester at a previous time). |
| 2. | () | () | Dog enters and rides in boat with confidence and direction from handler when needed. |
| 3. | () | () | Handler directs boat properly to follow dogs alert. |
| 4. | () | () | Dog alerts in an identifiable manner (natural alert) on live scent (diver), before interest on bubbles. |
| 5. | () | () | Dog gives an identifiable indication (trained alert) on scent source at diver's location. |
| 6. | () | () | Dog alerts in an identifiable manner (natural alert) on corpse scent (released from a canine training aid). |
| 7. | () | () | Dog gives an identifiable indication (trained alert) of scent source at location of canine training aid. |

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NYS FEDERATION OF SAR TEAMS K9 STANDARDS

The Standard for Operational handlers call for 5 different tests to be run for certification:

1. 30 feet off the trail (1/2- 3/4mile long)
2. Walking subject (20 acres)
3. 30 acres heavy brush
4. 40 acres night
5. 160 acres

Tests 1 through 3 should be administered by the applicant's team or if so desired by another team. Testers should be at least Operational handlers.

FEDERATION K9 TESTERS.

To ensure consistent, quality testing, Federation Testers testing the 40 acres night and the 160 should be Operational handlers, with at least a two year experience as K9 handlers at the Operational level. Such testers should also have participated with their K9 in at least 3 searches where they have been deployed in the field and actively searched.

In addition such testers should have tested tests 1 through 3 at least five times, and have tested all three tests.

Testers testing the 160 should, in addition, have tested a 40 acres night exercise at least twice before testing for the 160.

Full Operational handlers are to be considered as Federation Testers. The above requirements are ONLY for Operational handlers.

To ensure a logical sequence of testing and adequate preparation the 40 acres night test should be administered BEFORE the 160.

Testers will complete a testing report within the time frame mandated by the Standards. A copy of each such test, whether successful or a failure shall be sent/mailed to the K9 Standards Committee for follow up purposes.

TEST FAILURES:

As specified in the Standards, a **NO** to any of the bold faced categories means an automatic, non-reviewable failure but a NO in a category in *italics* needs to be reviewed by the Standards Committee and can be reversed by that Committee.

After a first failure:

1. If it just happens to be a day, where the subject was hidden in such a position that the scent cone did not develop much and the find (which was not made) could only have been made at close distance by closely gridding large areas, thus making the effort to be less productive than a ground team, the candidate should be failed without prejudice, meaning a re-test can be given anytime thereafter. This includes flawed tests where the subject ended up not in the area or in a location other than the one specified, safety concerns due to subject bad placement or dangerous threatening weather etc.
2. If it is a handler mistake, mostly bad search strategy, not following up on dog's natural alerts or navigation, a re-test may only be given after remedial work was done by the team, field work or theoretical, reading or lecture whatever is needed and documented by the team.
3. If it is a serious K9 training issue, such as but not restricted to a lack of re-find, crittering/deer chasing etc. a 1-6 months (depending on tester's assessment and recommendation) no-test time period during which the applicant would work on the problem with his team and bring written records and team documentation showing the improvement before being fielded for the next test. The no-test period can be reduced upon subsequent recommendation by the tester, such recommendation stemming from having reviewed the dog's progress in training and team assessment of that progress.
4. Testers should issue a recommendation if a problem occurred that did not fit the above, such as medical condition, etc.

After the third attempt:

Needs to be approved by the K9 Standard Committee, upon recommendation of the tester. If so approved, the candidate gets a third test. But before a candidate is turned down, washed out, the Committee should get, either verbally or in writing, recommendations from the applicant's team and the applicant him/herself, then make a **FINAL** decision.

Failures in tests 1-3 should be dealt with at the discretion of the applicant's team, with recommendation to follow procedures similar to the above.

RECERTIFICATIONS.

Should be done on a two year base. 40 acres day exercise, same testing characteristics as the 160. During the FIRST re-certification on any K9, the handler MUST use map and compass for navigation. Subsequently GPS etc. will be allowed. Rationale: Basic skills will continue to be practiced.

Handlers on their second SAR dog and beyond.

Handlers whose SAR dog had been certified by these Federation Standards can upon training a new dog opt to use GPS as navigation tool in their testing, other than their FIRST re-certification with that new K9. Rationale: to encourage experienced handler to become proficient in newer navigation techniques.

GRANDFATHERING OF CURRENTLY WORKING K9S:

Each handler will be asked to supply copies of the tests s/he and his/her K9 passed, or the team can provide a certification document specifying the tests passed. These tests that should meet or exceed the Federation Standards.

Trailing dogs:

The Standard has some provision for trailing in the Advanced Operational part. We are not here to change the Standards. They have been accepted as is and for the time being we ought to make them work as is. Perhaps the Committee should decide that for the time being the Advanced Operational test is adequate for trailing dogs and currently team certified handlers should present documentation to have completed a similar certification, either in-team or outside the team. That could be an interim position and a sub-committee of trailing dog handlers could recommend a different standard at some point in the future if it should be needed.

Beyond Operational tests:

Full Operational, Advanced Operational, Water search and Cadaver tests should be administered by Federation Testers.