

VIRGINIA POLICE WORK DOG ASSOCIATION

SEARCH and RESCUE AREA SEARCH TEST

This test is designed to test the K-9 team's ability and proficiency in searching designated areas to locate a lost or missing person. **Any display of aggression by the K9 during any part of this test will constitute a failure.**

This certification test will be open to current VPWDA Regular and Associate members. Any accredited full Utility Master Trainer who has either provided to the VPWDA secretary written documentation showing that he/she has successfully completed a formal Land Navigation class or who has attended the approved VPWDA Land Navigation class (which includes the administration of this test), may conduct this certification test if they so desire.

It is required that the K9 team passes the following SAR OBEDIENCE phases prior to testing for the search and rescue phase.

HEELING PHASE:

The heeling phase of this test will consist of the following exercises:

- 1.) Normal pace
- 2.) Fast pace or double time
- 3.) Slow pace or half step
- 4.) A minimum of two (2) right turns; two (2) left turns: two (2) about turns.

Each leg of the above must be a minimum of thirty (30) feet long. The different phases may be conducted on any leg.

WALKING PHASE:

This phase is off leash. The handler and dog will begin from the "Finish" position and walk forward together. At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler will place their dog in a stay position, (sit or down), and continue walking. This is to be done without breaking stride. At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler, while continuing to walk away from his/her dog, will command his/her dog to heel. The Master Trainer will instruct the team to "About Turn" and then to walk forward. At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler will stay his/her dog, (sit or down), and without breaking stride, will continue walking. At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler will turn and retrieve his/her dog and return to place of origin.

DISTANCE PHASE:

This phase is off leash. At a point designated by the Master Trainer, the handler will leave his/her dog in a "Stay". At a distance of no less than ten (10) feet, nor more than thirty (30) feet the handler will be directed to turn and face his/her dog. At the direction of the Master Trainer the handler will complete the following commands. Order of commands will be at the direction of the Master Trainer:

"Sit and Down" (by VOICE)

"Sit and Down" (by HAND)

The Master Trainer will then instruct the handler to recall his/her dog by hand or by voice. At a point prior to reaching the handler, the Master Trainer will order the handler to stop his/her dog by voice or by signal. (Note: Stopping the dog may be either by a down or sit command). Upon completion of the "Stop", the Master Trainer will direct the handler to recall his/her dog to the "Finish" (heel) position by voice or signal command.

SOCIABILITY PHASE:

This phase is on leash. While in a heel position with the handler, a neutral stranger will approach the handler and the K9 and engage in conversation with the handler, but ignore the K9. Following this the stranger will make non-threatening physical and verbal contact with the K9.

While walking with a loose leash the handler and K9 shall complete a figure eight (8) heeling pattern around two (2) handlers, spaced eight (8) feet apart, with their K9's on lead and sitting at their side. The handler and K9 shall complete the pattern passing within two (2) feet of each team. This test phase may be conducted as a group exercise if multiple teams are present.

All handlers who wish to test must have a current certificate from the American Red Cross in Basic First Aid and CPR.

Land Navigation Testing:

All handlers must successfully complete Land Navigation Testing to the satisfaction of the Master Trainer prior to performing any field testing. The handler is required to supply the following:

- I. Compass.
- II. Protractor.
- III. A Topographical Map.

The Master Trainer will require the handler to perform the following tasks:

- 1.) Utilizing the compass, shoot a bearing to a distance landmark selected by the Master Trainer.
- 2.) Utilizing the compass, orient the map.
- 3.) Give the declination of the map.
- 4.) Name a minimum of three (3) terrain features on the map selected by the Master Trainer.
- 5.) Given a compass (magnetic) azimuth, give the grid (map) azimuth for the map being utilized.
- 6.) Given a ten-digit UTM grid coordinate, find this point on the map.
- 7.) For a point given on the map, give the ten-digit UTM grid coordinate.
- 8.) Plot a bearing from the point in task #6 to the point task #7.
- 9.) Give the compass (magnetic) azimuth to be followed for the bearing in task #8.
- 10.) Give the approximate distance between these two (2) points.

The Master Trainer will determine if the handler has successfully completed Land Navigation Testing. The Master Trainer's decision is final.

It is the responsibility of the handler to ensure the Master Trainer has access to topographical maps of the area to be tested in. If the Master Trainer does not have maps of the area to be tested in, it will be the responsibility of the handler to supply them. If problems arise with the availability of topographical maps of the test area, the Master Trainer may select an alternative type of map for this test.

The handler must tell the Master Trainer what the K9 alert will be prior to entering the search area, and the "victims" will be unknown to the K9 team. The use of GPS devices is allowed during this portion of the test.

Test Areas:

The team shall be given grid coordinates on a map and must clear the assigned areas. There will be two (2) test areas; the combined area will be a minimum of 40 acres and a maximum of 160 acres. The terrain shall be light to medium and the area will be shortened if the terrain becomes denser. There will be anywhere from zero (0) to two (2) "victims" in each search area. Upon locating a "victim", it will be up to the handler if they want the subject to stay with them or leave the search area. The "victims" shall lie still and not stimulate or make any noises or movements to get the K9's attention. The alert must be obvious to the Master Trainer. The maximum time for both areas to be cleared will be two (2) hours.

There will be a break between search areas, and the K9 team may stop inside the areas to rest, which will not count towards the two (2) hour time limit. The length of the rest periods will be at the discretion of the Master Trainer. The team may not miss any victims in the time permitted, as this will constitute a failure. A team miss is any incorrect response by the K9 team. All tests given will be on a team pass/fail basis. The Master Trainer will determine if the team will be certified upon the completion of the test. The handler and dog will be considered as a team and it is the team that will be certified. If the dog changes handlers, a new team exists and the team will need to be certified.

Only VPWDA Master Trainers accredited in full Utility or Tracking/Trailing that have either attended a VPWDA instructed class on administering this test or have provided written documentation for their Master Trainer file folder from a formal course of Land Navigation, may administer this test.

This certification will be valid for one (1) year from the date of issue as defined in the Certification Validity paragraph. **There will be no fee charged for VPWDA certification testing. A fee may be imposed to cover expenses of travel, lodging and meals only, if necessary.**