

LAND HUMAN REMAINS DETECTION FIELD TEST

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

Note: To the Readers and Users of the National Search Dog Alliance (NSDA) Land HRD Standard:

This standard has been developed by the NSDA to assess handler/K-9 team's ability to search a house/building, vehicles and wooded areas. NSDA prerequisites represent those items that we believe will allow the candidate to conduct the HRD test and searches safely and successfully.

2. OBJECTIVE:

The Land HRD Test demonstrates the ability of the team to locate hidden sources in a wooded area, building, and vehicle within a prescribed time period. This field test will demonstrate the ability of the K-9 to search for and recognize the scent of human remains, to perform a trained indication, and for the handler to correctly read the behavior of their K-9 partner. The handler will be responsible for formulating and articulating their search strategy and providing the evaluator with a description of their K-9's trained indication. The K-9 should give recognizable change in behavior when it initially detects scent from the source, with the K-9 following up to identify the location of the actual source. This simulates what handlers will encounter on actual searches.

3. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- In an effort to provide all K-9s with the same level of testing, K-9s that urinate/mark more than twice in a given search area (wilderness) will have their test suspended until all other K-9s are tested. K-9s that urinate/mark or defecate on or within 3 feet of the source will be considered an automatic failure.
- Females in season will be tested last.
- If an Evaluator observes a K-9 that is out of the vehicle showing signs of unprovoked aggression (growling, snapping, lunging) towards another K-9 or person, it will be considered an automatic failure.

4. TEST COMPONENTS:

- Components of the HRD test include a Wilderness, Building and Vehicle test. The K-9 team must successfully pass all three sections in order to be considered field operative.

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- Flagging of the source must be within a two (2) foot radius of the actual source for Wilderness, pinpoint the location within a Building and based upon their K-9's alert, which vehicle contains the odor of human remains. Flagging shall be done utilizing surveying flags or large washers with flagging tape.
- Handlers will be expected to carry water and any other necessary items into the field.
- False indications called by the handler will be considered a failure of the component.
- Natural distracters including, but not limited to, dead animals, food wrappers/containers, and/or uneaten foods can be a part of any of the test components. This simulates what handlers will have to deal with on actual searches. Should the handler call an indication/alert or if the K-9 is unable to work past the natural distracter, it will be considered a failure.
- If the team fails one component (Wilderness, Building or Vehicle) and time allows, the team can be re-tested in that one component during that testing session. The team has six (6) months to re-test in that one component before having to re-take the entire test. If the team fails two (2) components, they must wait three (3) months before re-taking the entire test.
- If the Handler or Evaluator stops the test due to legitimate safety concerns that are beyond their control, the handler will be allowed to re-take those portions not tested. The stopped attempt will not count as a failure. The Evaluator will make final determination as to whether or not the safety concerns are valid. Safety concerns can include heavy thunderstorms, tornadoes, etc.

5. WILDERNESS:

- There will be a total of three (3) testing sites. Two will be 1-acre sites. The 3rd site will run adjacent to a roadway. It will be no less than 2/10th of a mile in length and no more than 20 yards in depth, which will total approximately 1.4 acres. Search areas should be comprised of light to medium ground cover or trees. The corners of the search areas will be clearly marked.
- There will be from 0-3 sources in each area; with the handler being tested not knowing how many sources are in a given area. The sources can be buried or concealed on the ground surface. Buried sources shall be no less than six (6) inches and no more than 12 inches. Sources shall be placed no less than one (1) hour prior to testing and no longer than twelve (12) hours.

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- Flagging of the source must be within a two (2) foot radius of the actual source for Wilderness.
- The roadway portion of the test will be set-up as a blind search with the handler working the area alone, flagging the location(s) where their K-9 indicates/alerts. Upon completion, the handler will bring the Evaluator to the location(s) flagged. In the Wilderness portion of this test, the K-9 is allowed to miss one (1) source when the K-9 works a total of five (5) or more sources.
- The handler and K-9 will be given the following testing times:
 - On each 1 acre site – a total of thirty (30) minutes
 - On Roadway - a total of forty-five (45) minutes
- Sources can be one or more of the following:
 - a. Wet and/or dry bone at no less than five (5) inches and no more than fifteen (15) inches in length.
 - b. Wet and/or dry blood no less than ten (10) cc's and no more than twenty (20) cc's located on a piece of clothing or gauze. It could be fresh or old blood.
 - c. Tissue no less than a pound and a half (i.e., whole placenta) and no more than two pounds.
- Acre and Roadway options are:
 - a. Fresh tissue with fresh bone or
 - b. Piece of clothing with dried blood and old dry bone

Note: If possible, if option "a" is used in the acre site then option "b" should be used in the roadway, or visa-versa. This would allow the K-9 to work both fresh and dried sources.

6. BUILDING:

- There will be one building searched. The search area should be no less than 1,000 square feet and no more than 1,500 square feet with it consisting of at least three rooms. In the event a larger building is available, the interior rooms can be subdivided to equal areas of no less than 1,000 square feet and no more than 1,500 square feet. A building with a single room is not suitable for testing.
- The handler and K-9 will be given no more than fifteen (15) minutes to search the building. Sources shall be placed no less than one (1) hour prior to testing and no longer than twelve (12) hours.

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- There will be from 1-3 sources; with the handler being tested not knowing how many sources are in a given area. The sources can be concealed within structures or at floor level, but not in areas such as in ceiling tiles, piping, air ducts or other such locations that could cause scent to travel throughout building.

Note: Sources must be pinpointed.

- Sources will be the following:
 - a. Wet and/or dry blood no less than two (2) cc's and no more than three (3) cc's

7. VEHICLES:

- There will be three (3) vehicles (commercial vehicles such as 18-wheelers, police cars, ambulances, fire engines will not be used). Prior to setting source material on the outside of the vehicle, a certified HRD K-9 must work the vehicles to make sure there are no residual odors. This is to prevent unknown sources in the vehicles being identified by the K-9s testing.
- The handler will be given two (2) minutes per vehicle for a total of six (6) minutes to conduct a search of the exterior of the vehicles. The handler must check all three vehicles and then tell the Evaluator, based upon their K-9's alert, which vehicle contains the odor of human remains. If the K-9 alert's on a vehicle, the handler must finish working the remaining vehicles.
- There will be one (1) source within the line-up. Source will be placed no less than one (1) hour prior to the test but no more than six (6) hours. K-9s will work the exterior of the vehicle only. Source will be placed in a way that the K-9 will be able to locate without gaining entry to the vehicle.
- Source will be the following:
 - a. Wet and/or dry blood of no less than two (2) cc's and no more than three (3) cc's