

# *National Search Dog Alliance (NSDA)*

## *Gun Source Residue Certification Test*

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### **1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

- This test is designed to assess Handler/K-9 team's operational suitability to locate the scent of gun source residue (referred to from this point on as GSR Finds), not human odor, on items that might be useful for Law Enforcement to obtain during a GSR search.
- The NSDA Prerequisites represent those items that we believe will allow the candidate to have the opportunity to safely and successfully complete the GSR Certification Test.
- Not all dogs possess the size or disposition to meet the criteria required in this standard. Please keep in mind that this is written for the sole purpose of assisting Law Enforcement.

### **2. OBJECTIVE:**

- The GSR Certification Test demonstrates the ability of the team (Handler/K-9) to locate hidden GSR Finds within a prescribed time period. This field test shall demonstrate the ability of the K-9 to search for and recognize odors that are commonly associated with a discharged or non-discharged firearm (not human odor), to perform a trained final response and for the Handler to correctly read the behavior of their K-9 partner.
- The Handler shall be responsible for formulating and articulating their search strategy and providing the Evaluator with a description of the K-9's trained final response. The K-9 should give a recognizable change in behavior when it initially detects scent, with the K-9 following up to identify the location of the GSR Find with its Trained Final Response at source. The Trained Final Response must not disturb the Find in any way.
- This test is designed to simulate an actual search and not team training. The Handler shall be asked to approach it as such.

### **3. GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

- The Handler may be asked by the Evaluator to submit copies of documentation verifying completion of testing prerequisites via mail or email prior to the testing event. Copies submitted in advance may not be returned.
- The test shall not be given if all copies of the prerequisite paperwork have not been presented.
- Testing shall be of the Handler and K-9 only.
- Testing the K-9 on leash/line is allowed. No electronic correction collars are permitted to be operational while the K-9 team is being evaluated. The K-9 may wear an electronic correction collar as long as the transmitter is turned off and given to the Evaluator until the test is completed.
- The GSR Certification Test includes four (4) components: wilderness, urban, roadway and building.
- The search area parameters shall be clearly marked and explained to the team testing prior to the start of each component.
- Teams testing shall not see the components set up for testing.

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- The team must successfully pass all four (4) components in the same testing session in order to pass the test.
- Components shall be set up a minimum of fifteen (15) minutes to a maximum of twelve (12) hours prior to the test.
- Prior to the start, the Handler being tested shall verbalize exactly what behavior the K-9 will exhibit as its Trained Final Response i.e. sit, down, bark, stare at Find, recall etc.
- The K-9 shall not disturb the source, i.e. digging, scratching, grabbing, etc.
- The team being tested may choose their start/entry location. Testing time begins as soon as the Handler being tested commands the K-9 to work or the team enters the test area.
- Based upon the K-9's Trained Final Response, the Handler shall mark the location of the GSR Finds in each of the four (4) components. Marking shall be done utilizing surveying flags or large washers with flagging tape.
- There shall be at least one (1) elevated Find that shall be a minimum of 6 feet high. Verbal identification of location shall be done for elevated hides.
- Distractions including, but not limited to, dead animals, food wrappers/containers, and/or uneaten foods may be a part of any of the test components.
- In the opinion of the Evaluator, if the test becomes hazardous to any participants, the test shall be terminated. The Handler or Evaluator may stop the test due to legitimate safety concerns such as heavy thunderstorms, tornadoes, or lightening, etc.
- Females in season shall be tested last.

#### **4. EVALUATORS:**

- The Evaluator shall be a designated NSDA Principal Evaluator.
- For assistance, the NSDA Principal Evaluator has the option of using a second NSDA Principal Evaluator, an NSDA Apprentice Evaluator or a Law Enforcement K-9 handler/Trainer for K-9's that perform detection work such as Narcotics, Bombs, Firearms or Human Remains Detection.
- A Principal Evaluator shall be present during each component of the test.
- There should be limited communications between the Evaluators unless for safety issues.
- The Evaluator(s) shall have complete discretion in the administration and evaluation of all portions of the test.

#### **5. GUN SOURCE RESIDUE TESTING FINDS**

- GSR Finds shall simulate what would be most useful to Law Enforcement during a firearms detection search. These items are odors that relate exclusively to parts of firearms as well as to the oils, powders and residue commonly associated with an unfired or recently discharged firearm (not human odor). One part equals one GSR Find. No rifle cartridges shall be used.

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Firearm, fired	working pistol or revolver, unloaded. To be used by sworn law enforcement Evaluators only
Firearm part - 1	from fired revolver or pistol: barrel, slide, cylinder or frame
Firearm part - 1	unfired, wiped with gun-oiled rag
Starter pistol	fired
Brass shell casing - 1	from 1 fired cartridge: .38, .9mm, .40 or .45 caliber
Shotgun shell - 1	1 spent, 12 gauge
Magazine	for handgun, empty but used: 6 - 16 rounds, .38, .9mm, or .45 caliber

## 6. WILDERNESS AREA

- There shall be one wilderness area searched.
- The search shall be conducted on land approximately sixty by sixty (60 x 60) feet.
- Search area should be comprised of light to medium ground cover.
- It may contain obstacles such as woodpiles or downed trees
- Handler and K-9 shall have fifteen (15) minutes to search the wilderness area.
- The Handler shall mark the area of the K-9's final response within three (3) feet of each Find.
- **GSR Finds:**
  - ✓ Zero to three (0-3) GSR Finds of different compositions shall be placed within the search area.
  - ✓ The Handler shall not know how many GSR Finds are placed.
  - ✓ GSR Finds shall not be clearly visible and shall not be buried.

## 7. URBAN AREA

- There shall be one urban area searched.
- The search shall be conducted on a site no larger than sixty by sixty (60 X 60) feet total.
- It may include variable surfaces such as asphalt, cement, rock, and gravel.
- It may or may not be level ground.
- It should preferably be in a commercial or industrial area, i.e. with stores, dumpsters, boxes, litter, cans, lumber, pipe, stairway, etc.
- Handler and K-9 shall have fifteen (15) minutes to search the urban area.
- The Handler shall mark the area of the K-9's final response within three (3) feet of each find.

### **GSR Finds**

- Zero to three (0-3) GSR Finds, chosen from the approved list, shall be placed into this area.

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- The Handler shall not know how many GSR Finds are placed.
  - Items must not be openly visible to the team testing.

### **8. ROADWAY SEARCH**

- There shall be one area searched that runs adjacent to a roadway.
- The roadway shall be no less than 528 feet (1/10 mile) in length and no more than thirty (30) feet in depth.
- Search areas should be comprised of light to medium ground cover.
- Handler and K-9 shall have thirty (30) minutes to search the roadway.
- The Handler shall mark the area of the K-9's trained final response within three (3) feet of each Find.

#### **GSR Finds:**

- Zero to three (0-3) GSR Finds shall be placed into this area, no closer than twenty-five (25) feet apart.
- The Handler shall not know how many Finds have been placed.
- GSR Finds must not be openly visible.

### **9. BUILDING**

- There shall be one (1) building searched.
- The search area shall be no less than 1,000 square feet and no more than 1,500 square feet, and consist of at least three (3) rooms.
- A building with a single room is not suitable for testing.
- The Handler and K-9 shall have fifteen (15) minutes to search the building.
- The Handler may not open cabinet doors, desk drawers, closet doors, etc.
- The Handler shall mark the area of the K-9's trained final response within two (2) feet of each find.
- Additional Distractions for Building Component Only:
  - ✓ Small pet in a crate, accessible food on a table or desk, an extra person sitting or standing in a room, music on a radio, quiet conversation between two people, in a manner not to be disruptive to the team.

#### **GSR Finds:**

- There shall be from zero to three (0-3) Finds.
- The Handler shall not know how many Finds have been placed.
- The finds may be at floor level, raised surfaces or on the wall but not in areas such as in ceiling tiles, piping, air ducts or other such locations that could cause scent to travel throughout the building.

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### **10. EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS:**

- NSDA has published a recommended equipment list but, for this test, it is the responsibility of the Handler to be adequately equipped and attired for the conditions at the time.

### **11. BRIEFING OF HANDLER**

- At the test site, the Evaluator shall carefully explain the area's boundaries.
- The Handler shall address the Evaluator as though the Evaluator were a Search Manager unfamiliar with search K-9 teams. He/she shall introduce the team, explain its capabilities and ask questions pertinent to the assignment.

### **12. TEST TIMING**

- The Handler shall have a maximum of ten (10) minutes to break the K-9 outside of the test area, prior to the beginning of the first component.
- The team shall have fifteen (15) minutes to search the wilderness area, fifteen (15) minutes to search the urban area, thirty (30) minutes to search the roadway and fifteen (15) minutes to search the building.

### **13. KNOWLEDGE AND PERFORMANCE**

- Demonstrate the ability to work and control the K-9 to effectively search all testing components.
- Demonstrate that the Handler recognizes when the K-9 is recognizing the scent of the GSR Finds and when the K-9 is giving its Trained Final Response.
- Demonstrate the ability to judge sweeps of areas or systematic search patterns as to their suitability to the prevailing conditions.
- Demonstrate that the Handler recognizes if either member of the K-9 team is working ineffectively and takes action to compensate for or remedy the situation.
- Demonstrate that the Handler has the ability to work effectively and locate GSR Finds with an additional person or persons observing the K-9 team.

### **14. TERMINATION OF FIELD TEST**

- The test may be terminated and considered a failure under the following conditions:
  - ✓ A false final response is given by the K-9 and called by the Handler.
  - ✓ The Handler cues the K-9's final response.
  - ✓ The K-9 fails to give the Trained Final Response when the Find is located.
  - ✓ The K-9 is unable to work past a natural distracter.

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- ✓ The K-9 urinates/marks or defecates on or otherwise disturbs the Find.
- ✓ The Handler marks the Find outside of the designated radius.
- ✓ If needed during the test, the Handler is not carrying the proper equipment (water, First aid, etc.)

### **15. REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE GUN SOURCE RESIDUE CERTIFICATION FIELD TEST:**

- The following requirements must be successfully completed in order to pass the GSR Certification Test.
  - ✓ The K-9 locates all GSR Finds within the allotted time and performs its Trained Final Response.
  - ✓ The Handler marks the GSR Finds within the allowable distance or verbalizes high Finds.

### **16. RETESTS**

- A re-test is an additional attempt of an entire test.
- One (1) testing fee covers an initial test and a re-test, if necessary, within one (1) year of the time of the test payment.
- If a Handler would like to re-test during the same testing event, the scoring sheet of the initial test must be marked with “re-test immediately”.
- If the Evaluator marks the initial failed attempt as re-test in three (3) or six (6) months, the handler shall not be eligible to re-test during the same testing event.
- A re-test requires a new set of paperwork-
- Re-tests during the same testing event are at the discretion of the Evaluator, only if time permits and there is justification.
- A team that was unable to perform the search in the designated time allowed or called a false final response shall not necessarily warrant a re-test during the same testing event.
- A test that is discontinued and cannot be resumed due to weather or safety concerns shall not count as a failure. A re-test at the same testing event may be provided at the Evaluator’s discretion. If time does not allow for a re-test, the Scoring Sheet shall be marked “Discontinued” with the reason stated. The Handler shall be allowed one attempt in the following six (6) months. The testing fee shall be credited to the re-test but not refunded.
- A copy of the Scoring Sheet shall be given to the Handler.

### **17. RE-CERTIFICATION**

- Re-Certification is required every two (2) years,