

Evaluator Guidelines

The cadaver search field qualification test demonstrates the ability of the dog team to locate cadaver scent.

Teams must be field qualified in area search or trailing prior to taking the cadaver search field qualification test. Teams shall have completed the cadaver search preliminary requirements before taking the test.

The evaluation shall be conducted by a primary evaluator and another primary or associate evaluator as the co-evaluator.

The search area shall be approximately one acre (70 yards by 70 yards) with marked boundaries. The search terrain should consist of a mixture of open areas, trees, brush, rocks, etc. The evaluators should have a clear view of the dog’s work. The search area shall have one to two scent sources. One of the scent sources shall be buried 15 inches deep in porous soil. There shall be a false hole at least 20 feet away from any cadaver scent source. Scent material will be placed at least one hour prior to the test. The test area shall not include known animal remains.

The evaluators shall brief the team and point out the boundaries. The search time will start after the briefing. The team will be allowed to search for a maximum of one hour. The handler may direct the dog to search, but should not encourage the dog’s alert.

Evaluators must be aware of any previous tests given in the search area.

To pass the test, the team must find all items. The handler must correctly interpret the dog’s behavior and must indicate to the evaluators where the source of the cadaver scent is located.

Item 1: Buried Cadaver Scent

Cadaver scent material will be buried 15 inches deep in porous soil and should not be readily visible to the dog or handler. Porous soil can be made by mixing debris such as leaves, branches, and rocks into the dirt. In the event the dog digs up the scent item, the handler shall identify the alert before the item is visible.

Item 2: Optional

Item 2 is optional to the evaluators and may be hanging, surface, or interior.

Southwest Search Dogs (SWSD) Cadaver Search Field Qualification Test

Handler _____ Dog _____ Location _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

Signature: _____