

Evaluator Guidelines

Teams need to be field qualified in cadaver prior to taking the water cadaver search field qualification test. Teams shall have completed the water cadaver search core sign-offs before taking the test.

All participants in the test shall wear personal floatation devices (PFD's) at all times when on a boat or near swiftly moving water. The only exception would be a person wearing a complete wet suit.

The evaluation shall be conducted by a primary evaluator. There shall be one water evaluator for each element of the test (can be the same person). Evaluators must keep the role of the water search handler/dog team in mind, i.e. to be able to define a relatively small area or direction for the divers to search. Thus a precise location of the scent source is not required and often is not possible. The handler should be able to interpret the dog's natural and trained alerts, significantly narrow down the search area, and recommend the area in which the divers should be deployed.

The handler will not know the location of the scent sources. Scent sources shall be used as defined in water cadaver search core sign-offs.

1. Boat Search Element

The search area should be approximately one acre, or 43,560 square feet. For example, search areas of 70 yards by 70 yards will yield a one-acre test site. The perimeter of the search area may be marked but this is not required.

From a boat, the handler/dog team will locate and mark or describe to the evaluator the general area in which the submerged scent is located in a lake or pond. It is the handler's responsibility to select an appropriate search strategy. The handler should brief the boat operator on the strategy to be used. The handler will tell the evaluator when the dog is alerting and give directions to the boat operator to assist the dog in localizing the scent. When the handler is satisfied that the location of the scent source has been determined adequately, the handler will tell the evaluators where divers should be deployed to follow up the alert. The evaluator is to take into account the weather and water conditions to determine what degree of precision is feasible for a given test.

The evaluator must be on the boat during the test. If the evaluator is a skilled boat operator, the evaluator may also function as boat operator.

The boat search test is allowed a maximum time of thirty minutes.

2. Shore Search Element

Working along the shore, the handler/dog team will locate and describe to the evaluator the general area in which the submerged scent is located. The designated search area should be 100 to 125 yards in length. If there is a hazardous or impassable area, the length of the search area may be split into no more than two sections, with the handler being advised of the area not included in the test. The evaluator should ensure that the problem is set up according to existing/expected wind conditions so that the problem is solvable by a competent water search team. The scent source should be submerged, inaccessible to the dog, and should be within 15 feet of the shoreline.

The shore line search test is allowed a maximum time of thirty minutes.

The handler should indicate the direction of the scent source based on the dog's alerts, narrowing the line to be searched to a width of approximately 35 feet. The evaluator is to take into account the weather and water conditions to determine what degree of precision is feasible for a given test.

Handler _____ Dog _____ Location _____

Boat Search

No.	Boat Search Requirement	YES	NO	N/A
B1	The handler demonstrates appropriate safety precautions, including wearing a PFD			
B2	The handler is at ease on boat			
B3	The handler utilizes an appropriate strategy for existing conditions			
B4	The handler gives adequate direction to boat operator			
B5	The handler reads dog's natural and/or trained alert(s)			
B6	The handler does not give cues to dog			
B7	The handler informs the evaluators where divers should search			
B8	The dog is at ease on boat			
B9	The dog is not readily distracted			

Shoreline Search

No.	Shore Search Requirement	YES	NO	N/A
S1	The handler demonstrates appropriate safety precautions			
S2	The handler utilizes an appropriate strategy for existing conditions			
S3	The handler reads dog's natural and/or trained alert(s)			
S4	The handler does not give cues to dog			
S5	The handler informs the evaluators where divers should search			
S6	The dog is not easily distracted			

Boat Search Element

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Shoreline Search Element

Date: _____

Signature: _____