



"IN DOG WE TRUST"

FIREARM/GUN CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

- I. Certification of Firearm/Gun Handler and Dog Teams**
 - A. Certification of dog teams shall be limited to current law enforcement personnel and private personnel only with exception being prior approval.**
 - B. Certifications will be valid for one year from the date of certification.**

- II. Qualified Certification Officials**
 - A. The IPCA Executive Board will designate certification officials. Each certification official will have a minimum of five years of experience training detection dogs. From time to time, the IPCA Board of Directors, in its discretion, may waive certain requirements.**
 - B. Certification officials will designate the areas to be tested and will coordinate with the host agency to obtain these areas.**
 - C. The certification official will be responsible for coordinating with the host agency to obtain appropriate training aids to be used in the test procedure.**
 - D. The certification official will be responsible for ensuring all safety precautions are adhered to by all persons involved in the certification process.**
 - E. Certification official will evaluate the following areas during the examination.**
 - 1. Does the canine recognize the target odor?**
 - 2. Does the canine alert/indicate to the target odor?**
 - 3. Does the handler recognize the canine alert/indication?**
 - 4. The working ability of the dog, to include scent recognition and indication.**
 - 5. Overall performance demonstrated by the certifying canine team.**
 - F. The certification official can terminate the search for cause at any time.**

- III. Canine Testing Area**
 - A. The tests will be set in as practical a manner as possible using 'live' buildings, areas, cars, packages, and baggage.**
 - B. The canine team will be tested in four (4) areas:**
 - 1. Building Search (0-2 Target Odors, maximum of seven (7) minutes)**
 - a. Building search will consist of a minimum of three (3) rooms and a maximum of four (4) rooms.**
 - b. Buildings, warehouses, residences or any other structure utilized as a certification site shall be no less than 100 square feet per individual search area and shall have furniture or other articles present in the search area.**
 - c. A minimum of one (1) room shall have NO target odor (blank).**
 - d. The handler may not open cabinet doors, desk drawers, closet doors or move items in rooms unless authorized by the certification official.**
 - e. All aids will be placed in a way the canine cannot retrieve same.**

2. **Vehicle Search (0-2 Target Odors, maximum of seven (7) minutes)**
 - a. The word 'vehicles' as used for the purpose of certification shall include any passenger car, truck, van or any similar type of vehicle. During the vehicle search, three (3) vehicles must be present.
 - b. The vehicles will be parked in a configuration to allow the team to have easy access to each vehicle.
 - c. Only one (1) aid may be placed on or inside each vehicle with a minimum of one (1) vehicle having NO target odor (blank).
 - d. All aids will be placed in a way the canine cannot retrieve same.

3. **Open Area Search (0-2 Target Odors, maximum of seven (7) minutes)**
 - a. The word 'open area' as used for the purpose of certification shall include the exterior of buildings and/or open fields.
 - b. The search area shall be approximately 1,000 square feet.
 - c. Aids will be placed at the discretion of the examining certification official and can be paced anywhere from surface level, including under ground cover, to a maximum of five (5) feet above surface level.
 - d. All aids will be placed in a way the canine cannot retrieve same.

4. **Packages/Baggage Search (0-2 Target Odors, maximum of two (2) minutes)**
 - a. Baggage shall be defined as hard- or soft-shell suitcases, attaché cases, clothes bags, briefcases, golf bags, sea bags, duffel bags, and backpacks.
 - b. Packages shall be defined as cardboard boxes, shipping envelopes, paper boxes and envelopes, or Express Mail type envelopes.
 - c. Ten (10) bags/packages minimum with a maximum of twelve (12) bags/packages or a combination thereof shall be used. The search items may be placed in a linear or circular fashion.
 - d. A minimum of eight (8) bags/packages shall have NO training aid placed inside.
 - e. All aids will be placed inside the bags/packages in a way the canine cannot retrieve same.

IV. Detection Substances

- A. The word "aids" shall mean any target odor that is used for testing purposes. All aids used in testing should be stored in separate containers. The detector canine shall be tested on the target odors for which it is trained.
- B. The certification will contain the following aids:
 1. Firearms – both cleaned and recently fired
 2. Magazines – both loaded and empty
 3. Shells – both brass and shotgun
 - a. Brass – Five (5) shells
 - b. Shotgun – Three (3) shells
 4. All Shell Casings – both empty, previously discharged, and fully loaded
 - a. Five (5) of each type and they shall not be placed together
 5. Gun Oil(s) – common national brand gun oils ie. Hoppes, M-Pro7, Ballistol (OPTIONAL)
 - a. A minimum of 2 fluid ounces.
 6. Gun Powders (OPTIONAL)
 - a. Black Powder – minimum of 20 grams

b. **Smokeless Powder or a recognized national brand substitute ie. Pyrodex, Triple Seven, Black Mag3, Black Horn 209 - minimum of 20 grams**

- C. **All aids shall be placed in search areas for at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the first search team starting certification.**
- D. **No aid find shall be placed at an elevation higher than five (5) feet.**
- E. **A verification of odor will be conducted prior to deployment of the first search team.**
- F. **All the listed substances will be included in the certification in any combination designated by the certification official.**

V. Certification Standards

- A. **If an aid has to be moved to a new location, the previously used area must be removed as a testing site.**
- B. **The dog shall be able to locate/indicate ALL of the previously declared controlled substances which the canine team is attempting to locate/indicate in the test area.**
- C. **The amounts and weight of each target aid should reasonably simulate what the canine team is likely to encounter during a real deployment. It shall be in the sole discretion of the certification official to determine this factor for each target aid and search phase except as otherwise specified.**
- D. **Certification requires that the canine team CANNOT miss any aid in any phase of testing.**

VI. Alerts

- A. **Each handler shall brief the examining certification official as to the dogs' alert and response to aids prior to testing. Each indication to a training aid by the canine should be obvious to the examining certification official. The purpose of the testing is to observe the team's ability to locate a hidden or concealed target odor aid. The discretion as to accuracy of the canine team shall be solely determined by the certifying official.**
- B. **To cause an official to score a positive find for the detection team, the handler must verbally state 'alert' to the certification official for the alert/indication to be recorded, and to identify the location of the alert.**
- C. **It should be noted that all aids might not be pinpointed to source due to height, wind current and/or placement of the testing aid.**

VII. False Alerts

- A. **Any false indication called by a handler may be grounds for certification failure.**

VIII. Certification Failure

- A. **A detection team who fails to locate/indicate on any one aid during the certification may be tested again the same day if the certification official rules that the miss is the handler's error and requires no additional training of the canine.**
- B. **All other certification failures require the team to reschedule another certification at a later time.**
- C. **All decisions made by certification officials are final.**