

**INTERNATIONAL POLICE CANINE ASSOCIATION
BOARD ORDER 2026-02
TRACKING CERTIFICATION PROTOCOL**

TRACKING CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

I. Certification of Tracking Canine Teams

- A. Certification of tracking canine teams shall be **limited to current law enforcement personnel and authorized private sector** only.
- B. Certifications will be **valid for one year (365 days)** from the date of certification.

II. Qualified Certification Officials

A. The International Police Canine Association (IPCA) Board of Directors (BOD) will designate certification officials.

1. Each **certification official will have a minimum of five years' experience** training detection canines, including a minimum of two years of tracking canine training. From time to time, the IPCA BOD, 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 narcotic 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 people involved in the certification process.

E. Certification officials will evaluate the following areas during the examination:

- 1. Canine's ability to **recognize the track layer scent**.
- 2. Canine's **ability to locate the track layer**.
- 3. Handler's **recognition of the canine's alert**.
- 4. Working ability of the canine, to include **scent recognition and indication**.
- 5. **Overall performance demonstrated** by the certifying tracking canine team.

F. At any time, the **certification official can terminate the search for safety issues or cause.**

G. Once the canine team is deployed, **the search time for each search area will not exceed fifteen minutes.**

III Evaluation Criteria:

A. The track will be a **double-blind** assessment.

B. The **distance and age of the track are approximative and may vary**, as the track layer might encounter unforeseen conditions.

C. The canine team **must find the track layer or the article at the end of the track within the time limit.** However, this time limit can be extended at the evaluator's discretion (for example if the track is longer than planned or for whatever unforeseen circumstances).

D. **Finds based on a canine working in air scent patterns (area search) are not valid** and will result in failure.

E. The **evaluator has the final decision on passing or failing** the canine team.

F. Any disrespectful behavior towards the evaluator or against animal welfare will result in the disqualification of the canine team.

G. **In case of failure, the canine team can repeat the certification as often as they want.** It will be up to the evaluator if that can occur on the same day or if the team needs remedial training before they attempt to certify again.

IV Tracking Certification:

Scent evidence collection and use.

A. **The scent articles will be provided by the track layer in a jar or any other suitable container** before he/she lays the track.

B. The **scent articles** might either be **placed directly at the start of the track, the end of the track**, or left in the care of the certifying official/evaluator. **There will be at least two but no more than three scent articles on the track.** The **canine must find all the scent articles** on the track.

Certification:

A. The **track will be 750-1000 feet with two turns.**

B. The age of the track will be **at least 30 minutes old.**

C. The track will start on soft surfaces (woods, fields) and must have at least one surface change (gravel, concrete, asphalt, etc).