

Draft standards: Criteria for ASRC dog team evaluators

(Note requirements in Roman type are identical to DES state evaluator requirements (Appendix G, DES Standards for Air-scent Search Dog Teams); those in italics are requirements over and above those standards.)

In order to evaluate dog teams to ASRC air-scent dog authorization standards, an individual must satisfy the following criteria:

- A. The individual must be an active operational dog handler in an ASRC Group.
- B. The operational dog handler must have been nominated by the ASRC board to become an ASRC and Virginia DES dog team evaluator.
- C. The handler must have responded to and logged a minimum of five (5) searches and performed as a dog handler in a minimum of ten (10) air-scent dog tasks.
- D. Prior to performing evaluations as an ASRC evaluator, the handler must participate in a DES state-wide evaluators' seminar.
- E. *The handler must meet requirements as an ASRC senior dog handler (see Appendix).*
- F. The evaluator must remain an ASRC Group member in good standing.
- G. These standards will change to correspond to current Virginia DES regulations for dog-team evaluators.

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Appendix, draft standards, criteria for ASRC dog team evaluators: ASRC senior dog handler standards

A. Introduction

A senior dog handler (SDH) team is expected to be a highly versatile SAR resource, capable of leading a quick response team in hasty search, detecting and interpreting clues with great facility, and operating expertly without significant backup. The SDH is capable of assisting in plans and operations at the command post of a major extended search; in particular, the SDH is able to advise incident staff about the most effective use of dog teams and the interpretation of their clues and reported PODs.

An SDH must also be an active part of an ASRC group's dog training and evaluation program, teaching trainee dog handlers, advising operational dog handlers (ODHs) as they

work toward SDH certification, conferring with SDH peers in maintaining training levels and continually advancing personal and unit skills, and assisting non-canine ASRC personnel in better utilizing and integrating with dog teams. It is the ASRC's goal that all dog handlers eventually certify as SDHs. SDH will serve as a basic prerequisite to reaching status as a Group or Conference canine training coordinator or an ASRC-approved dog team evaluator.

B. SDH prerequisites

1. The handler must hold ASRC ODH status for a period of not less than one year.
2. The handler must hold current ASRC ODH and FTL certification.
3. The handler/dog team must have participated in and logged at least 10 air-scent dog tasks of 30 minutes or more duration on real searches.
4. The handler must have completed a search management course - MSO, MSF, MLPI, or the equivalent.
5. The handler must have demonstrated active leadership in the group's dog training program.

B. Operational status of SDH teams

1. The handler's operational level is considered to be that of the handler's highest current ASRC certification for the purposes of assisting management, accompanying field teams and canine teams, serving as a group CTC, and training new canine teams.
2. For the purposes of fielding as a dog team, the handler's level of certification is used, but only if that handler/dog combination has passed the ODH practical test. No handler may field with an uncertified dog.

C. Recertification of SDHs

1. Group CTCs will establish a continuing education program for the maintenance of SDH status.
2. The handler must maintain a leadership role in the group's dog training program.
3. The handler must maintain current ODH and FTL certifications.