

Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group

Canine SAR Training Program and Performance Standards

DRAFT

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Introduction

The Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group Canine SAR program is intended to select, train, evaluate and maintain dog/handler teams that perform at the highest level of competence in wilderness and specialty SAR operations. AMRG operational dog teams will meet or exceed the performance standards promulgated by the Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council, the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference, and all other applicable jurisdictional bodies.

Part I: Canine Program Administration

Part II: Prerequisites for Acceptance to the Canine Training Program

Part III: Canine Training Program Membership and Requirements

Part IV: Operational Performance Standards

Part V: Evaluation Procedures

Part VI: Appendices

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Part I: Canine Program Administration

A. Canine Training Director

1. AMRG will elect by vote of the membership a canine training director (CTD) whose duties shall include accepting applications for canine training, scheduling canine trainings, overseeing team progress, maintaining training logs and records, and evaluating teams for canine operational status.
2. The canine training director may or may not be the ASRC group training officer.
3. The canine training director will hold the ASRC field certification of Field Team Leader (at minimum).
4. The canine training director will be a Level 2 operational handler.

B. Canine Training Schedule

1. The CTD will schedule an average of one session unit canine training session per week.

2. Unit canine training sessions shall not conflict with regularly scheduled monthly unit training sessions.
3. The CTD will publish the canine training schedule quarterly or semi-annually.

C. Discipline and Sanction

1. Canine handlers and trainees are subject to the same procedures governing searcher and member conduct as all AMRG members.
2. Additionally, canine handlers and trainees may have their status as part of the canine training program suspended, revoked, or altered without impinging upon their status as AMRG members.
3. Full or probationary members disciplined or demoted for cause by the Canine Training Director may appeal to the AMRG membership for a review of the CTD's actions.
4. Probationary members of the canine training program removed by majority vote of the operational handlers may not appeal to the AMRG general membership for reinstatement.
5. Failure to complete or document required trainings on a quarterly basis will result in the team's automatic suspension from operational status and/or ineligibility to test for Level 1 or 2 certification within three weeks of the end of the undocumented quarter.
 - a. The team will regain eligibility for operational status after completing one quarter of properly documented training
 - b. The team will be automatically removed from the canine trainee roster after two quarters of no documented training, within three weeks of the end of the second undocumented quarter.

Part II: Prerequisites for Acceptance to the Canine Training Program

A. Preliminary Handler Requirements -- Canine Candidate Status

1. The handler must be a full or probationary member of AMRG.
2. The handler will have passed the requirements for Call-Out Qualified (COQ) status.
 - a. In addition to standard COQ gear, the handler candidate's ready pack shall include:
 - (1) 48-hour food supply for the dog
 - (2) Sufficient extra water for the dog
 - (3) Leash or equivalent

- (4) Cyalume sticks, strobe, or other light to be affixed to the dog for night search
 - (5) Orange safety vest for the dog
 - (6) Powder bottle or other wind-measuring device
 - (7) First-aid items suitable for use on the dog as determined by the CTD and unit medical director (Appendix H)
- b. The handler candidate will have participated in at least two unit canine training sessions.
 - (1) The handler candidate will have met with the canine training director to discuss the canine training program.
 - (2) If the handler has no canine partner, he will have discussed the issue of selecting a partner with the canine training director.
 - c. The handler and dog are admitted to the canine training program on a six month probationary basis.
 - (1) This probationary status is distinct from AMRG membership probation.
 - (2) The dog, handler, or both may be terminated from the canine training program at any time during the six month probation period by a majority vote of operational dog handlers.
 - (3) Termination from the canine training program shall not affect membership in AMRG

B. Preliminary Dog Requirements -- Canine Candidate Status

- 1. The dog is of acceptable age, health, and physical type to be feasible for SAR work, as determined by the canine training director.
 - a. Minimum age for evaluation will be eight weeks.
 - b. Dogs that have achieved "middle age" (according to the norm for each breed or type) will be deemed beyond the age at which SAR training can be profitably begun; however, a handler may be permitted to train with an older dog in order to develop skills useful in the later training of a young animal.
 - c. The CTD **may** require a veterinarian's affidavit stating that the dog is in sufficient physical and mental health to undergo SAR training and is free of parasites and communicable disease.
 - d. The CTD may decline to begin training with an animal that appears to be of unsuitable physical type for wilderness SAR, i.e. one that cannot sustain normal locomotion, olfaction, and function while performing search tasks in a wilderness environment.

2. The handler will present proof of inoculation for rabies, distemper, parvovirus, bordatella, hepatitis, adenovirus and leptospirosis, or show that the inoculation program is underway in the case of a young puppy.
3. The handler shows proof the dog is licensed in accordance with local law.
4. The CTD has evaluated the dog for good manners and socialization towards people and other animals. The CTD may decline to accept a dog and/or handler for candidacy for any reason, but specifically **will** do so whenever:
 - a. The dog shows any aggression towards a human being;
 - (1) Aggression towards a human being includes biting, snapping, growling, lunging, snarling, and threat displays such as stiff-legged stalking, raised hackles and curled lips.
 - (2) The CTD **may** surprise or mildly agitate any dog with questionable demeanor in order to elicit a response.
 - b. The dog shows an unacceptable level of aggression towards another dog;
 - (1) Unacceptable aggression towards a dog includes attacking, snarling and lunging, and excessive threat displays.
 - (2) A dog who is initially dubious must be able to show the ability to accept strange dogs within a few minutes.
 - (3) The CTD **will** expose the candidate dog to strange dogs to elicit a response.
 - c. The dog shows uncontrolled aggression or predatory behavior towards any other species of animal;
 - d. The dog is excessively fearful, timid, or shy;
 - e. The dog is excessively unruly and not under handler control;
 - f. The handler shows a lack of understanding about the means for controlling and changing the dog's behavior, or an unwillingness to do so;
 - g. The handler displays abusive behavior towards the dog at any time;
 - h. The dog appears to be mentally or emotionally unstable in the CTD's judgment.
 - i. No dog will be accepted for training who is concurrently training in schutzhund, personal protection, police K-9 or any other biting or agitation work. A dog who has previously been trained in bite work *may* be accepted for training pending a successful decommission from all aspects of bite work.
 - (1) A police officer with an active-duty patrol K-9 may petition the CTD for exemption and permission to work the dog on-lead only.
 - (2) Any active-duty patrol dog must meet all behavior requirements in VI.C.2, and must demonstrate a reliable *aus* with no bite, on verbal

command only, in the context of a modified (on lead) subject safety test.

- j. Under no circumstances will a dog be accepted for training who is concurrently training to detect any non-human target scent, including but not limited to game, narcotics, explosives, lost pets, currency, estrus cows, termites, gas leaks, etc. etc. A dog who has previously been trained in detection of non-human scent *may* be accepted for training pending a successful decommission from the previous target scent, as determined by the CTD.

Part III: Canine Training Program Membership and Requirements

- A. All canine handlers will be subject to the same general training requirements as non-canine AMRG personnel, in addition to attending and progressing with canine training.
 - 1. Trainee and operational dogs are encouraged to attend most non-canine unit trainings and testing weekends.
 - 2. Some trainings, e.g. technical rescue and mantracking, may require that handlers leave their partners at home or restrain them at the training site.
- B. Candidate Training Requirements and Record-Keeping
 - 1. The candidate dog-handler team shall participate in a minimum of six unit canine search trainings per quarter.
 - a. Handler-candidate participation in a search incident may be considered to be in lieu of unit training.
 - (1) Such handler participation does not count towards the ten required quarterly team trainings.
 - (2) The handler must document task assignments from search incidents and submit documentation with quarterly training logs.
 - b. The Canine Training Director may designate interunit trainings and other events as unit canine training.
 - 2. Candidate teams shall submit to the CTD training records for a minimum of ten total canine search training sessions per quarter.
 - a. These records will be in standard AMRG format, and will be submitted to the CTD no less frequently than every quarter.
 - b. The CTD may require candidate teams to alter their reporting to include more detail or substantiation.
 - 3. Candidates shall also document their training in canine SAR-related disciplines, such as obedience, agility, and veterinary medicine, and submit records to the CTD no less frequently than every quarter.

4. The candidate team shall progress in a manner that is deemed satisfactory by the CTD.
 - a. The CTD shall consult with each candidate handler no less frequently than quarterly to evaluate the candidate team's progress.
 - b. The CTD shall provide each candidate handler with a written progress report and training goals at each evaluation meeting.
5. Eligibility for Certification Testing
 - a. Training Duration and Age Requirements
 - (1) The team must be able to document training for a minimum period of seven months.
 - (a) Only team training of dog and handler together will be considered in this seven month minimum period; training of a dog by another handler or a handler with another dog will not be considered.
 - (b) Exceptions may be granted by the CTD in the case of a new partnership between an already operational dog and an already operational handler.
 - (c) Training completed and documented with another SAR unit may apply, at the discretion of the CTD.
 - (2) The dog will be no less than twelve months old at the time of testing.
 - (3) The handler will be no less than eighteen years old at the time of testing.
 - b. Prerequisites
 - (1) Whenever possible, the canine partner has accompanied the handler on the search tasks of the handler's FTM test and been present during the entire FTM testing weekend.
 - (2) The canine partner has accompanied the handler on the bivy portion of the FTM test, or if this is not possible, has participated in a unit bivy during the trainee period.
6. Maintenance of Operational Status

In order to maintain Level 1 operational status, the team must:

 - a. Maintain the handler's FTM certification
 - b. Attend a *minimum* of five unit canine trainings per quarter
 - c. Submit quarterly records to the CTD showing a *minimum* of nine team canine search trainings per quarter
 - d. Submit quarterly records to the CTD documenting training in canine SAR-related disciplines such as obedience, agility, and veterinary medicine.

- e. Meet quarterly with the CTD to discuss the team's training status, and take direction from the CTD to remedy any shortcomings identified

Part IV: Operational Performance Standards

A. Operational Status -- Level 1

In order to attain operational status as a canine team, dog and handler must meet the following criteria:

1. The handler will have attained the ASRC certification of Field Team Member. (Appendix C)
2. The dog will have passed a AMRG Subject Safety Test within three months of testing; a dog < 15 months old may commence field testing before taking the Subject Safety Test, but must successfully complete it before age 16 months in order to maintain operational status. (Appendix D)
3. Written Test (Level 1)
 - a. The handler shall pass a 100 question written exam specific to canine SAR with a score of 70 or above.
 - (1) Each Handler Written Test shall include ten (10) questions in each of the following categories: animal behavior, command post procedures, navigation, olfaction, scent behavior, meteorology, veterinary medicine, probability factors in canine SAR, canine SAR tactics
 - (a) A test question pool of no fewer than twenty (20) questions in each category will be developed by the CTD, AMRG Level 2 Handlers, and AMRG FTL and IS personnel in consultation with canine handlers from other organizations.
 - (b) No handler will receive the same written test twice.
 - (2) The CTG and the handler will meet before the field tests to discuss the handler's performance on the written test
 - (3) A handler of multiple dogs need complete the written test only once every 24 months.
 - b. A handler who fails the written test may not retest for thirty (30) days.
2. Obedience and Manners Test (Levels 1 and 2)
 - a. The dog shall stay inside the handler's open vehicle (doors open or truck gate down) for ten minutes without physical restraint while the handler engages in conversation no less than twenty feet away.
 - b. The dog shall hold a down-stay outside a building or structure for ten minutes with one other dog on a stay within five feet of his position while the handler is out of sight inside.

- c. The dog shall down and stay for three minutes at a distance of fifty meters from the handler; at the end of three minutes, the dog will come to the handler on command directly, and sit within an arm's length of the handler. Handler may command the dog to sit.
 - d. The dog will walk with his handler on a loose lead or off-lead, at handler's discretion at heel through a group of at least ten people and two dogs for two minutes on a pattern directed by the tester.
 - e. The dog will drop or freeze on the handler's command and/or signal while running loose at least 30 feet from the handler, and remain in place for 30 seconds.
 - f. The dog will load quietly into the bed of a pickup truck with his handler and at least two other people and two other dogs, and ride for ten minutes without showing fear or aggression, or becoming uncontrollable.
 - g. While off-lead, the dog will be given a marrow bone by a stranger, and will drop it on his handler's command (the dog may refuse the bone from the stranger).
 - h. The dog will remain quietly in his car or pickup bed (doors closed, gates up, windows open all the way) for ten minutes while at least two other dogs are walked within four feet of the vehicle at least two times each, and at least five people walk within two feet of the vehicle.
 - (1) The dog may bark at the other animals briefly, but must not attempt to escape the vehicle or attack the other animals
 - (2) The dog must not bark at or threaten any person
 - i. At the completion of h., the dog will allow another team member to enter his vehicle and remove equipment.
3. Agility/Directability Tests (Levels 1 and 2)
- a. The dog will load into the bed of a pickup truck, gate down, unaided
 - b. The dog will traverse a pipe or culvert 10 feet long and at least 4" smaller in diameter than the dog's height at the shoulder with the handler sending the dog, and no person at the other end of the pipe.
 - (1) The dog will stop on the handler's command while traversing the pipe
 - (2) The dog will return to the handler through the pipe after exiting and turning around
 - c. The dog will demonstrate the ability to climb open stairs and wide-runged ladders (e.g. playground ladders), with assistance from a spotter permissible.
 - d. The dog will demonstrate the ability to negotiate unstable surfaces while continuing to work.

- 4) Airscent Tests (Level 1 only)
 - a. Hasty Search
 - (1) The dog and handler will search a travel route or drainage between 1/2 and 1 kilometer long, using tactics designed to yield a POD of approximately 70% for an area within 50 meters of the trail or drainage.
 - (2) The subject, if any, will be within 50 meters of the trail or drainage.
 - (3) The subject will have accessed his position via the trail or drainage, though not necessarily using the same route as the team.
 4. Between 0 and 1 subject(s) will be placed within the search area.
 - b. Large Area Problem
 - 1) The dog and handler will search an area of between 60-67 hectares of moderate terrain, using tactics designed to yield a POD of approximately 80% for the whole area.
 - (a) "Moderate terrain" may include fields both open and cultivated, dry bog, open woodland with only moderate undergrowth, and rolling topography.
 - (b) The search area may include unoccupied buildings and structures; the team is responsible for searching these when they are accessible.
 - (c) The search area may include "no-go" zones of inaccessible, hazardous, or difficult terrain.
 - (i) No-go zones will not be included in computation of the total area.
 - (ii) All no-go zones will be marked on the handler's and evaluators' task maps and explained by the test administrator.
 - (iii) The team will not be responsible for searching no-go zones.
 2. Between 0 and 3 subject(s) will be placed within the search area.
 - c. Challenging Terrain Problem
 - (1) The team will be asked to search an area of approximately 17-21 hectares of difficult and challenging terrain, using tactics designed to yield a POD of approximately 50% for the whole area.
 - (a) "Difficult terrain" may include steep hillsides, rock fields, swamp or inundated land, dense brush, brambles or other hostile vegetation.

- (b) The search area may include features such as caves, cliffs, and rock grottos; the team is responsible for searching these when they are accessible.
 - (c) When the search area includes areas that are not accessible, the handler will be responsible for reporting their presence and suggesting tactics for access.
 - (2) Between 0 and 2 subject(s) will be placed within the search area
 - d. Night Operations
 - (1) At the handler's request, either the large area or challenging terrain problem may be conducted in such a way that at least 1/2 the search area is covered during darkness.
 - (2) Alternatively, the team may request a separate night test in which the team searches 20 hectares (.2 square kilometers) of moderate terrain in darkness, using tactics designed to yield a POD of approximately 80% for the entire area.
 - (3) Between 0 and 2 subject(s) will be placed within the search area.
5. Trailing Tests (Level 1)
- <Reserved for future development>*

Part V: Evaluation Procedures

A. Obedience and Agility Evaluation

1. Evaluators

- a. The Canine Training Director will administer the obedience and agility evaluations for each team.
- b. At the CTD's discretion, any other operational dog handler in the unit may serve as evaluator for the obedience and agility requirements, or any portion thereof.
- c. No handler will be evaluated by a member of his or her family or household.

2. Test Procedures

- a. All elements of the obedience requirements will be successfully completed by the candidate team no more than one month prior to commencing field tests. Agility requirements will be successfully completed by the candidate team no more than two months prior to commencing field tests.
- b. Obedience and agility requirements need not be evaluated at once, but may be checked off during several sessions.

B. Search Skills Field Evaluation

1. Evaluators
 - a. The two field evaluators will be the CTD and/or (a) level 2 handler(s) designated by the CTD and acceptable to the handler candidate.
 - b. Evaluators from outside the unit may be employed in place of or in addition to unit evaluators if this is acceptable to the handler or required by an applicable supra-unit standard, but there will be no more than three observers accompanying the team on their field tests.
 - (1) Outside evaluators will possess qualifications equivalent to those of AMRG evaluators as determined by the majority of operational handlers.
 - (2) Outside evaluators will receive detailed briefing and copies of the relevant AMRG performance standards, and will be directed to evaluate teams to AMRG requirements.
 - c. The Canine Training Director, as well as any family members of the CTD, will be evaluated by two Level 2 handlers, two outside evaluators, or one of each, to be selected by a majority of operational handlers and acceptable to the candidate.
 - d. No handler will be evaluated by a member of his or her family or household.
 - e. No handler will be required to accept an evaluator whom he believes to be hostile or unqualified.
2. Test Administrator
 - a. The Test Administrator will be a Level 2 handler or an AMRG FTL designated by the Canine Training Director
 - b. The Test Administrator's responsibilities will include:
 - (1) Scheduling the field test(s) and coordinating time and directions with the candidate, evaluators, and subjects
 - (2) Designating a test area that meets all the criteria for the field test, and procuring access to the area
 - (3) Recruiting and briefing test subjects
 - (4) Placing and concealing test subjects and otherwise preparing the test area
 - (5) Preparing appropriate maps of the area, as per the test procedures
 - (6) Collecting and maintaining all documentation for each test he administers
 - (7) Resolving discrepancies in evaluator reporting, as per the test procedures
 - (8) Remaining on scene and acting as "base" during the field test

- (9) Maintaining contact with test subjects during the field test, and ensuring their safety
 - (10) Maintaining the security of the test by ensuring that the number and location of the subjects is undisclosed, that the evaluators do not confer with one another before debriefing, and all debriefings remain private
3. Test Procedures
- a. The Test Administrator will place any subjects and return to base at least 30 minutes prior to the arrival of candidate and evaluators.
 - (1) The test administrator will provide a true-scale black and white photocopy of the USGS 7.5 minute topographical map of the search area, with legend data and ASRC grid overlay included.
 - (a) At the request of the candidate handler, the Test Administrator will include UTM information on the test map
 - (b) The map will include the most current known declination figure and revision date
 - (2) The Test Administrator will define the search area for the testing team by clearly marking the map.
 - b. Teams will be expected to search their entire areas on each test, except that:
 - (1) The evaluators may call a halt to a test when the team has failed irreparably
 - (2) The team may cease searching after locating the maximum number of subjects for each test
 - (3) No-go zones, as designated by the test administrator, will not be considered part of the test area
 - c. At least one of the three (or four) tests will have no subject in the search area
 - d. At least one subject in one test will be completely buried or concealed in such a way that the test administrator cannot detect his presence visually from any angle at a distance of fifteen feet.
 - e. At least one subject in one test will be suspended six feet or more above the ground, either in a tree or on a cliff face, building rafters, etc., in such a way that he is inaccessible to the dog.
 - f. All test areas will be new to the handler, and not previously used by him during training.
 - g. The handler will not be permitted to use a leash or restraint of any kind, including electronic, while his dog is working, except that a leash may be

used while crossing roads or railroads and during an initial grid along a road or railroad as a boundary, and when confronting a potential hazard.

- h. The handler will be permitted to use all standard techniques generally available to SAR dog handlers during missions, except that he may not attempt to elicit information from passers-by or test participants about subject location, landmarks, etc.
 - i. The evaluators, test subjects, and test administrator may in no way impede or aid the team.
 - j. The handler will affix a flagging marker provided by the Test Administrator at the site of each find of a test subject. All flags left by the handler will remain in place until debriefing is complete and the Test Administrator has resolved any discrepancies.
4. Debriefing
- a. The Test Administrator will debrief the evaluators and handler separately and privately after the completion of the field task.
 - b. The handler will be debriefed with a standard PSARC debriefing form, and questioned on POD, conditions, area covered, hazards, clues, incidental finds, and areas to re-search.
 - (1) The handler will submit a task map, marked with the area covered, wind directions, location of clues, and location of any subjects found.
 - (2) The handler will give an opinion about the likelihood that there are subjects remaining in the search area, and their probable locations.
 - c. The evaluators will be debriefed with a standard PSARC debriefing form, and questioned on POD, conditions, area covered, hazards, clues, incidental finds, and areas to re-search.
 - (1) Each evaluator will submit a task map, marked with the area covered, location of clues, and location of any subjects found.
 - (2) Each evaluator will give an opinion about the likelihood that there are additional subjects present in the search area, and their probable locations.
 - (3) The Test Administrator will document all discrepancies between the evaluator(s)' and handler's debriefings .
 - (a) The Test Administrator will resolve all verifiable discrepancies by reference to his own map, flag lines, clue flags, etc.
 - (b) Unverifiable discrepancies, and all discrepancies between two evaluators, will be documented by the test administrator.

- 4) Evaluators will be kept separate before and during debriefing, and may not consult with one another.

5. Evaluation Criteria

a. Handler SAR Competence

Each evaluator will rate the handler on the following skills, using an AMRG field test checklist:

- (1) Handler's use of appropriate questions about subject description and behavior, time factors, terrain, hazards, POA, etc.
- (2) Handler's ability to choose appropriate tactics for the task, including:
 - (a) An explanation of how wind, weather, terrain and air movement influence his choice of tactics
 - (b) The ability to appropriately modify tactics or adjust POD to compensate for changes in the above
- (3) Handler's navigation skills, including:
 - (a) Identifying boundaries and landmarks of search area
 - (b) Setting and maintaining a search pattern
 - (c) Identifying the team's location using ASRC grid coordinates
 - (d) Informing base of an appropriate route to the team's location at the site of each find
 - (e) Accurately characterizing the area searched and any relatively higher and lower POD estimates for sub-areas while debriefing
- (4) Handler's appropriate use of communications equipment and procedures
- (5) Handler's attentiveness to and interpretation of visual and audio clues
- (6) Handler's attentiveness to and interpretation of his partner's communications and behavior, including the accurate identification of his partner's alert to scent.
- (7) Handler's attentiveness to the safety and well-being of his partner.
 - (a) No handler will be penalized for refusing or stopping a task that, in his opinion, poses an unacceptable threat to his dog or other team members
 - (b) Each evaluator is ultimately responsible for stopping a task that poses a threat to the dog or other team members.
 - (c) A task that is stopped because of a safety compromise before passing criteria can be met will be declared a "no test"

- b. Dog SAR Competence
The dog will be evaluated on the following skills:
 - (1) Ranging and general commitment to search behavior, including willingness to leave travel aids to seek scent
 - (2) Obedience and responsiveness to handler direction where appropriate
 - (3) Willingness to follow scent once it is detected, including following it through/over difficult obstacles
 - (4) Ability to pinpoint the location of the scent source
 - (5) Completion of the refind for every confirmed find of a test subject
 - c. Team SAR Competence
The team will be evaluated on the following skills:
 - (1) Their ability to work without the dog seeking or the handler issuing excessive commands and directions
 - (2) Their ability to problem-solve together to identify the source of scent
 - (3) Their ability to respond appropriately to one another during the alert-find-refind sequence
6. Failure
- a. Failure is automatic when:
 - (1) The dog shows aggression towards any person during the course of the test, as determined by the evaluators.
 - (2) The dog chases game or domestic animals and cannot be called off; or the dog "runs away" during the test.
 - (3) The handler is abusive towards the dog, as determined by the evaluators.
 - (4) The dog fails to perform, or the handler fails to acknowledge, a refind or signal on a found subject, *as determined by the subject himself.*
 - (5) The handler solicits or employs any outside assistance
 - b. Teams may also fail when:
 - (1) In the evaluators' opinions, the dog, handler, or team as a whole show a serious deficiency in any of their evaluation criteria
 - (a) All measurable criteria must be documented by both evaluators, and in the case of discrepancy, reconciled by the test administrator

- (b) All unmeasurable criteria must be documented by both evaluators, and in the case of discrepancy, adjudicated by the test administrator
 - (2) The dog fails to find a subject or subjects whom, in the evaluators' opinions, should have been found within the limits of the target or reported POD
 - (a) In order for evaluators to withhold certification on these grounds, both evaluators must independently identify the general location of the missed subject or subjects to the satisfaction of the Test Administrator
 - (b) Note that a "miss" on a subject is not automatic grounds for failure, if in the opinion of the evaluators, the team was performing competently at the target or reported POD and, in the opinion of the test administrator, the handler gave an accurate debriefing concerning the area in which the subject was placed
 - c. A team that fails any one field test may retake that test only a minimum of two weeks later
 - d. A team that fails a retest must wait a minimum of two months, and complete the entire field test.
 - e. In case of a disagreement between two evaluators, the test administrator shall decide any issue that is verifiable from the debriefing data or administrator's own information about test setup.
- 7. Documentation
 - a. All tests will be completely documented by both evaluators and test administrator on the appropriate AMRG forms (appendices E and F)
 - b. Evaluators' and handlers' task maps, TAFs and debriefing forms, and evaluators' and test administrators' report forms will be retained by the CTO and the GTO as part of the team's permanent training files.
 - c. All team failures must be documented on the evaluators' report forms, with a precise description of the deficiency and a reference to the section of the AMRG standard that describes the skill found deficient.
 - d. The handler shall receive complete copies of all test documentation within one week of the test date.
- 8. Mis-test
 - a. The evaluator(s) may declare a mis-test without prejudice to the testing team.
 - (1) Mis-test should called when a test must be stopped due to the appearance of a hazard, injury to any party to the test, sudden illness, deteriorating weather.

- (2) Mis-test should be called whenever an outside party interferes substantially with the conduct of the test.
 - b. In case of a mis-test, the test administrator, evaluators and testing team may reschedule at their convenience, but no more than two months from the original test date.
9. Appeal
- Any handler may request that his retest be conducted with different evaluators and/or test administrator; this request should be filed in writing with the CTD within one week of the handler's receipt of his test documentation.
10. Recertification
- a. Operational teams shall recertify biannually. Each team will complete its recertification testing no less than twenty-two (22) or more than twenty-six (26) months after the completion of the previous certification test.
 - (1) All paperwork documentation, FTM or FTL certification, medical and other required certification, and safety testing must be up to date and filed with the CTD before the team is considered recertified.
 - (2) The handler will pass the appropriate level written test with a score of 70 or above.
 - (3) The dog will pass the AMRG subject safety test, as well as the obedience and agility requirements
 - (4) The recertifying team will complete two of the four field tests used for the initial certification. Tests will be chosen at random by the CTD.
 - b. Level 1 teams who fail the Level 1 recertification will be demoted to trainee status and removed from the active canine call roster.
 - c. Level 2 teams who fail the Level 2 recertification may be demoted to Level 1 or to trainee status, depending upon the nature and severity of the shortcomings.

IX. Operational Status -- Level 2

<Reserved for Future Development>

X. Specialty Search

- A. Water
- B. Disaster
- C. Burial/Avalanche
- D. Cave

<Reserved for future development>

Appendix A: Decorum and Behavior

All trainee handlers must agree to and sign the following statement upon admission to the canine training program:

I understand that my own conduct and the behavior of my canine partner are solely my responsibility. I will be mindful of my dog's effect on others at all times, and will endeavor to ensure that no one is distressed or inconvenienced by his or her disobedience, rude behavior, aggression or fear. I will immediately rectify behavior shortcomings identified by the training director through humane training and socialization, and will seek assistance for any behavior shortcomings that come to my attention in any context.

I realize that all SAR dogs will be judged by my partner's public behavior, and agree that any behavior that is not friendly, confident, poised and obedient will reflect poorly on the unit and the SAR community. I agree not to represent my partner as a "search and rescue dog" until we have completed our Level 1 operational testing.

I understand that I or my dog may be asked to leave the canine training program for any reason during the six month probationary period. I also understand that I or my dog *will* be asked to leave the canine training program at any time if my dog shows extreme aggression towards a human being, or if I fail to take effective steps to correct a pattern of unacceptable behavior that interferes with the decorum of the unit.

date

handler candidate

witness

Appendix B:

SAR Dog Behavior Policy (With thanks to Mid-Atlantic DOGS)

Search and rescue dogs are expected to be friendly and non-aggressive toward people and other animals. Any deviation from expected friendly behavior is a poor reflection on all of us and volunteer search and rescue dog teams in general.

The best correction in dog training is the anticipated one that is given before or just as the undesired action begins. In training sessions we:

- * Introduce our dogs to as many situations as we conceivably can in a controlled environment.
- * Expose our dogs to off-leash play at training.
- * Have other members handle our dogs during obedience sessions
- * Use training sessions as the place to retrain, correct, or discipline dogs with behavior problems.
- * Create situations in which a dog that has displayed unwanted social behavior can be corrected so that it learns acceptable social behavior.
- * Train our dogs to come immediately when called from a distance when off lead and to down on recall.

Policy

1. Handlers are responsible for the behavior of their dogs at all times.
2. Repeated acts of antisocial behavior by a dog that is not immediately corrected by the handler will not be tolerated.
3. Handlers will use regular training sessions as the opportunity to correct behavior problems.
4. Each of us will notify the handler if we observe inappropriate behavior by a dog in the handler's absence.
5. Each of us will assist a handler in correcting or retraining a dog.
6. At non-training sessions, dogs will be kept on a leash, held at a sufficient length so the dog is under control, until the handler is confident that his dog is relaxed and others do not mind dogs off leash.
8. Dogs will be on down stays away from the table when people are eating; puppies who do not have solid down-stays will be leashed or confined away from the table.
9. Non-SAR dogs (pets of handlers and other unit members) may attend unit events where appropriate, provided they maintain the same standard of decorum as expected of SAR dogs, and are not represented as SAR dogs to the public or the SAR community.
10. Dogs will not be left unattended at conferences, public demonstrations, inter-unit trainings or other public events. If a dog cannot accompany his or her handler due to the legitimate demands of a task, another responsible person must keep physical custody of the dog. The

canine training director will communicate this unit policy to the organizers of conferences and inter-unit events that will be attended by AMRG handlers.

I agree with this behavior policy and will abide by its provisions.

Date

Handler candidate

witness

Appendix C: ASRC FTM Standards

Appendix D: SDNE Subject Safety Test

Appendix E: Evaluator Test Briefing and Report Form

Appendix F: Test Administrator Briefing and Report Form

Appendix G: Glossary of Terms