

The area search field qualification test demonstrates the ability of an area search team to locate subjects, at locations unknown to the handler, in a large area, within a prescribed time period. This ability, combined with the demonstrated ability of the handler to correctly read the body language of the dog, and the ability of the handler to form and execute a search plan, constitutes the entry level area search dog team certification for Southwest Search Dogs.

Evaluators

The evaluation shall be conducted by a primary evaluator and another primary or associate evaluator as the co-evaluator. Should the evaluators fail to reach consensus as to whether or not the team has satisfactorily met the test requirements, the test will be considered as "No Test" and will count as neither a pass nor a fail.

Search Area

The test area shall be approximately 160 acres. The majority of the area should be forested or brush covered.

Subjects

Two subjects shall be placed 30 minutes prior to the start of the evaluation, at least 100 yards apart. The subjects must be concealed. The handler shall not be able to see the subjects from a distance of 20 feet or more.

Briefing

At the test site, the evaluators shall carefully explain the problem's boundaries and shall provide the handler with a good quality topographic map. The handler will address the evaluators, as though they were search managers unfamiliar with search dog teams. The handler shall introduce the team, explain its capabilities, and ask questions pertinent to the assignment.

Search Plan

The handler will develop a search plan based on the information provided and the existing conditions. The handler will then explain his/her plan to the evaluators. The handler will simulate providing base camp with in-field progress at intervals mandated by the search managers. The handler shall also inform search managers of any significant clues or evidence found.

Test Timing

Subjects must be located within 4 hours. Test timing shall commence after the handler has advised the evaluators of the search plan and has deployed the dog.

Mandatory Prerequisites

- M1 Capable of searching and sustaining self and dog for 72 hours in inclement weather
- M2 Handler certification in CPR and first aid is current
- M3 Handler preliminary requirements complete
- M4 Dog preliminary requirements complete
- M5 Handler physical fitness requirement current

Mandatory Performance Requirements

The evaluators will record the terrain, weather, elevation and temperature. To the extent that conditions allow, evaluators will assess and document the team’s performance of the below-listed handler and dog skills. Evaluators will rate skill performance using one of three ratings: YES, NO, or N/A. N/A indicates that a skill is not applicable or was not observed. A NO rating by both evaluators on any of the skills will result in test failure. A NO rating by only one of the evaluators will result in a “No Test.”

Handler: _____	SWSD #: _____	Date: _____
Dog: _____ Location: _____		
Start Time: _____	Stop Time: _____	Pass: <input type="checkbox"/> Fail: <input type="checkbox"/>
Terrain: _____		Elevation: _____
Weather: _____		Temperature: _____

Mandatory Prerequisites

No.	Mandatory Prerequisite (Must be checked prior to performing test)	✓
M1	Capable of searching and self-sustaining for 72 hours in all weather and low angle wilderness terrain	<input type="checkbox"/>
M2	Handler certification in CPR and first aid is current	<input type="checkbox"/>
M3	Preliminary Field Skill Requirements for Handler complete	<input type="checkbox"/>
M4	Area Search Preliminary Requirements and Initial 40 Acre Test complete	<input type="checkbox"/>
M5	Physical fitness Requirement current	<input type="checkbox"/>

Handler _____ SWSD# _____ Dog _____

Mandatory Performance Requirements

Handler Skills

No.	Handler Skill	YES	NO	N/A
H1	Conduct of initial interview			
H2	Initial plan of action			
H3	Demonstration of map & compass skills			
H4	Implementation of plan in field (including revision for changing conditions)			
H5	Adjustment of search for wind conditions			
H6	Alertness to surroundings and visual clues			
H7	Coverage of search area			
H8	Ability to interpret dog's alerts/interest			
H9	Ability to direct and control dog			
H10	Physical condition of handler			
H11	Provision of appropriate breaks for dog			

Search Dog Skills

No.	Search Dog Skill	YES	NO	N/A
D1	Locates subject #1			
D2	Makes report to handler which would be recognizable at night			
D3	Takes handler all the way to subject #1			
D4	Locates subject #2			
D5	Makes report to handler which would be recognizable at night			
D6	Takes handler all the way to subject #2			
D7	Ability to handle terrain (agility)			
D8	Demonstrates adequate stamina			

Evaluator: _____ Evaluator: _____

Subject #1: _____ Subject #2: _____