

Rocky Mountain Rescue Dogs, Inc. **Operational HRD Land-Cadaver Test**

Purpose

The HRD land-cadaver test demonstrates the ability of a handler and their canine partner to effectively locate large quantities of human remains, simulating as much as possible a deceased bodies, in a defined area within a prescribed time period. This test shall demonstrate the ability of the canine to search for and recognize the scent of human remains, to perform a trained final response, and for the handler to correctly read the behavior of their canine partner. It shall also demonstrate the ability of the handler to plan and follow an appropriate search strategy, download and upload GPS data and execute appropriate area coverage.

Prerequisites

1. Candidate/handler in good standing
2. Request to test HRD land-cadaver form approved by the governing board
3. Completed necessary checklist
4. Attendance at a minimum of two (2) searches
5. Training logs for HRD land-cadaver consistent with the level of training necessary to pass the test.
6. Proof of canine successfully completing a nationally recognized obedience evaluation which meets or exceeds the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen test.
7. Minimum of 6 months as a RMRD candidate
8. Proof of completion of Incident Command System (ICS)/Incident Management System (IMS) course, ICS-200, modules 1-6 or higher level course, NIMS IS-700 course and IS-800b, or higher
9. Haz-Mat awareness class (NFPA 472/CFR 291910.120 Part Q or equivalent)
10. Bloodborne pathogens class (29CFR1910 or equivalent)
11. Crime scene preservation class (2 hour minimum course taught by law enforcement, crime scene technicians or equivalent)

Test Criteria

1. The test consists of two (2) sources hidden in moderate terrain in a 40-acre area. The sources should be elevated (not more than 6 feet) and on the surface. The sources shall be concealed: covered with boards, leaves, branches, rocks etc. to allow airflow.
2. The team has two (2) hours to complete the test. The handler must place a flag and/or GPS waypoint within a three-foot radius of the source. If the source is elevated, the handler must place the flag and/or GPS waypoint within a radius equal to 1 ½ times the height; i.e. a 4 foot high source must be flagged/marked with in a 6 foot radius.

3. Upon interpreting the dog's final response, the handler shall advise the evaluator and mark the location with a flag/GPS waypoint. Any identified (flagged and/or GPS marked) final response that is incorrect shall constitute a fail. The test can be repeated once in a different location if conditions and time permit. If the team fails a second time, the test must be repeated at a later date after proof of the completion of more training to remedy the problem.
4. The team shall upload the search area from a computer to their GPS prior to the test and download the GPS track log to the computer upon completion and discuss coverage and strategy with the evaluator.

General Guidelines

1. The HRD material, referred to as "source", shall be at least 300 grams of human blood, bone and/or tissue, simulating as much as possible a deceased body. The sources shall be contained in such a way that no dog or handler shall come into direct contact with them.
2. The area should be moderate terrain and have shrubs or trees present so that an elevated target could be hidden in them. Each corner of the area shall be identified with GPS coordinates.
3. The sources should be placed one to six hours prior to the start of the search. The search area shall be contaminated with human scent to prevent the canine from trailing to the source. One to two people in addition to the evaluator should walk in the search area after the sources are placed.
4. Distractions shall be present in the test area. These may be animal remains, animal scat or other naturally occurring distractions.
5. The evaluator shall conduct a briefing in which the handler shall be given pertinent information about the search scenario and answer any questions the handler might have. The evaluator (who is not the candidate's mentor) should not know the location of the sources (double blind test) and should have another qualified handler place the sources.
6. The handler shall be responsible for formulating and articulating their search strategy and providing the evaluator with a description of their dog's final response. The canine should give a recognizable change in behavior when it initially detects scent and follow it to identify the location of the actual source. Changes in search strategy are permissible, however they must communicate their reasoning to the evaluator.

7. Dogs must be under the handlers control at all times. If the dog mouths, picks up or begins to move the source, the dog must immediately stop at the command of the handler.
8. Once the dog locates the source, the dog shall demonstrate its final response. The Handler is not permitted to physically search for the source before calling the final response.
9. At the conclusion of the test, the evaluator shall be responsible to complete the appropriate evaluation form and debrief the handler on their performance.

Evaluation Criteria

1. Team is adequately attired and has adequate supplies, equipment and water for the team.
2. The handler plans and executes a good search strategy based on a correct analysis of the situation, the conditions and the detection capabilities of the canine.
3. The handler and canine demonstrate good working stamina for the complete duration of the test.
4. The canine demonstrates good focus on the task at hand. The canine avoids wildlife interaction, responds to the handler's corrections/commands and readily returns to work after distractions.
5. The handler recognizes and correctly interprets the behavior of the canine.
6. The canine demonstrates the ability to detect human scent and the persistence to work the scent from the point of detection to the scent source.
7. The canine locates the sources within the allotted time and performs easily identifiable, trained final responses.
8. The handler marks the sources within the allowable distance from the source.
9. No false alert is given by the dog and called by the handler.

Recertification

Recertification is required every two (2) years.