UPWDA Explosives Certification

Endurance and Proficiency

It is recognized that increased search time, endurance, and proficiency of the explosive detection canine teams, for deployment and future training requirements, is necessary. Agencies should be including this in their in-service training. Explosive Detection canine teams should strive for thirty-minute searches and be proficient within that time frame.

During testing, all necessary precautions should be taken to ensure that the handler has no prior knowledge as to the location of explosive training aids. Canine teams should search the way they were trained to. No assistance or leading the team by the Master Trainer, or anyone else, shall be permitted. The canine team should be able to locate all explosive training aids within a two meter (6.56 feet) radius of the source, without disturbing the source, regardless of the height of the source, barring extenuating environmental conditions deemed relevant by the Master Trainer. If the handler identifies a canine final response that is within 3.05 meters (10 feet) of a hidden explosives training aid, but not in the immediate area of the explosives training aid, the Master Trainer will advise the handler, "Not at Source." Prior to the test beginning, and to encourage handlers to trust their canine and discourage handlers from counting the training aids during testing, handlers shall be informed by the Master Trainer that once they leave a search area (room, vehicle, etc.), they will not be permitted to come back to that specific search location.

Mandatory Odors:
(All canine teams must be tested on ALL listed odors.)

Powders (Black, Single Base Smokeless and/or Pyrodex), Double Base Smokeless and/or Triple Base Smokeless Powder, Commercial Dynamite (AN or NG), (RDX) Plastic Explosive (C-4 or Flex-X), Semtex, A5, T.N.T or Military Dynamite or Comp B, (PETN) Primer Cord or Det Cord - Sheet Explosives (or substituted explosive with PETN, at Master Trainer's discretion), Water-Gel or Slurries or Emulsion

Additional, Optional Odors:
(At the discretion of the Master Trainer)

Black powder substitutes
Blasting agents
Cast boosters
Nitromethane
Photoflash/fireworks/pyrotechnic powders
Plastic explosives (unmarked and marked with detection agent)
Tetryl

Homemade explosives (GME) that include:
Chlorate based mixtures (e.g., potassium chlorate and sodium chlorate)
Nitrate based mixtures (e.g., ammonium nitrate, urea nitrate)
Perchlorate based mixtures (e.g., potassium perchlorate)

Due to the increased popularity of improvised explosives and nitrated and peroxide-based explosives used by terrorist elements worldwide, it is recommended that the current testing standard include peroxide based and nitrated explosives when available.

At the Master Trainer's discretion, and once the seven basic odors are tested and peroxide based and urea nitrate explosives are available, the certification test may include peroxide based explosives and/or urea nitrate.

Due to the sensitivity and safe handling of the explosive compounds listed, it is recommended that an exception to certification weights be allowed. Current availability of peroxide-based explosives is limited to one to two grams in order to handle and transport the explosives safely. It is further recommended that at least one gram of the explosive compound be used during testing, and not "trace" amounts.

The maximum weight of explosives used shall be unlimited; however, a minimum of 113.4 grams (¼ pound) shall be used for testing, except for the peroxide-based explosives. Those weights are include above.

Each area tested will contain three aids. Each aid will be a different explosive.

The handler will not be informed of the actual type of explosive training aids being used for testing. The term “explosive aid” will mean any explosive substance used for certification testing.

Five areas will be available for testing. The canine team will be tested in four of these five areas:

Building
Vehicle
Baggage
Open Area
Mass Transit Vehicle

Building

The building search will consist of four rooms to be searched by the canine team. Each room will be a minimum of 400 square feet in size and contain some type of furniture. Only one explosive aid will be placed in each room. One room will be blank. The explosive aids will be placed anywhere from ground level to eight feet high. The handler and the canine will not open any closed doors, cabinets, desk drawers, etc., during testing.

Vehicle

A minimum of eight motor vehicles will be used for testing. One of the motor vehicles will remain blank. Any passenger vehicle, including pickup trucks, tractor-trailers, vans, and/or buses may be used for testing, subject to availability. Testing may include the interior of vehicles. The vehicles will be parked in a configuration similar to a parking lot in order to allow access to each vehicle by the canine team being tested.
Only one explosive aid will be placed on or in each vehicle. One explosive aid must be placed inside of a baggage compartment. At the discretion of the Master Trainer, additional explosive aids will be placed on or in the vehicles.

The recommended locations are, but are not limited to:
Fuel tank exterior or fuel filler pipe
Drive shaft
Interior of closed trunk compartment

Undercarriage
Outer body

Baggage

The type of baggage used for testing will be hard and/or soft-shell suitcases, attachés, cases, clothing bags, briefcases, golf bags, sea bags, duffel bags, boxes, parcels, and any other containers used for the transport of personal items or shipping purposes. The Master Trainer will have discretion over the types of baggage used for testing. A minimum of twenty bags will be used for testing. All explosive aids will be secured in a bag. One or more bags should contain clothing or other items associated with the type of bag being used. The baggage should be placed in a straight line and divided up into rows.

Open Area

Open-area searches will include:
Building exteriors, open fields, wooded areas, and/or any area outside not covered in the above.

The open area used for testing will be no larger than 100 yards by 100 yards (300 feet by 300 feet), and no smaller than 50 yards by 50 yards (150 feet by 150 feet), or any configuration thereof. At the discretion of the Master Trainer, all explosive aids will be placed no more than three feet below surface level to a maximum of eight feet above surface level.

Mass Transit Vehicle

Mass transit vehicles may include:
Aircraft, watercraft, passenger trains, subways, overhead rail, and commercial touring buses.

The availability of mass transit vehicles will determine which vehicles are used for this phase of the test. Passenger trains, subways, overhead rail, and commercial touring buses will be used for testing. A minimum of one explosive aid will be placed in the interior of the mass transit vehicle. At the discretion of the Master Trainer, additional explosives may be placed either

inside or outside of the mass transit vehicle. The exterior includes support equipment, loading docks, platforms, and baggage handling equipment.

Aircraft Search

The availability of aircraft will be the deciding factor in this phase of testing and at the discretion of the Master Trainer.

Commuter, commercial, and military aircraft capable of carrying a minimum of sixteen people may be used for this test phase. Inoperable aircraft (mechanically unable to fly but used for ground-training purposes) are acceptable for certification purposes. The search shall include the interior and exterior of the aircraft, along with all ground-support equipment. One explosive aid will be placed in the interior of the aircraft. The interior of the aircraft includes the passenger compartment, cockpit, lavatories, and cargo compartments. At the discretion of the Master Trainer, additional explosive aids may be placed either inside or outside of the aircraft. The exterior of the aircraft includes the landing gear, wings, engines, and ground-support equipment. There is no time limit during the aircraft search phase of the test.

Watercraft Search

The availability of watercraft will be the deciding factor in this phase of testing and at the discretion of the Master Trainer.

The types of watercraft used for testing may be, but are not limited to, cruise ships, freighters, cargo ships, tug boats, barges, military vessels, or any other type of watercraft with an open deck and an interior cabin area. One explosive aid will be placed inside of an interior portion of the watercraft, such as a cabin, wheelhouse, cargo compartment, or engine room. Two explosive aids will be placed on or about the open deck of the ship, or the dock side support equipment.

Passenger Trains, Subways, Overhead Rail

The availability of passenger trains, subways, and overhead rail will be the deciding factor in this phase of testing and at the discretion of the Master

Trainer.

The types of trains used for testing may be, but are not limited to, passenger trains, subway trains, freight trains, monorails, and any other rail vehicle with an interior cabin area. One explosive aid will be placed inside of an interior portion of the rail car, such as a passenger cabin, cargo compartment, or locomotive engine room. Two explosive aids will be placed on or about the open areas of the depot area, or the baggage-support equipment.

Commercial Touring Buses

A minimum of two commercial touring buses will be used for testing. Any type or model of bus may be used for testing, subject to availability. Testing may include the interior of vehicles. The vehicles will be parked in a configuration similar to a bus station in order to allow access to each vehicle by the canine team being tested. Only one explosive aid will be placed on or in each vehicle. One explosive aid must be placed inside of a baggage compartment. At the discretion of the Master Trainer, additional explosive aids will be placed on or in the vehicles.

The recommended locations are, but are not limited to:
Fuel tank exterior or fuel filler pipe
Interior of closed driver's compartment
Closed passenger compartment
Undercarriage
Outer body

Mandatory search to include: Buildings, vehicles, and baggage. At the discretion of the Master Trainer, open area and/or mass transit vehicles may also be included in the test.

To successfully test for certification, the canine's final response must be passive, and the canine team must not miss more than one explosive aid throughout all phases of testing.

A team 'miss' is defined as any incorrect response by the canine team.

A team miss includes, but is not limited to:

All improper responses, such as the dog giving its final trained response to non-explosive odor.

Failure to detect the explosive aid, which includes the handler failing to direct the canine to search the area where the explosive aid is hidden.

The canine exhibiting any aggressive response.

Exceeding the allotted testing time (where applicable).

Opening of any closed doors, drawers, or containers of any kind by either the handler or the canine.

All testing will be done on a pass or fail basis.

If the testing canine team has more than one team miss, which is a failure, the canine team must retest in all phases and in all odors they are seeking accreditation for. The minimum acceptable level required to pass is 91.6%, as defined by United Police Work Dog Association Explosive Detection Rules. It is recommended that testing be administered over a two-day period or more. The final decision as to the length of the testing period shall rest with the Master Trainer conducting the test. All aids will be placed at least thirty minutes prior to the testing of the canine team.

No detonating devices will be allowed to be used for testing or be placed with explosive training aids. All handling of explosive training aids will be done in a safe manner.

If an explosive aid requires being moved to a new location, the previously used area will be removed as a testing sight.

An accredited United Police Work Dog Association Master Trainer in Explosive Detector Dogs will conduct all testing.

Prior to the first explosive detector team entering the test area, a human and a canine will walk through the testing area.

Prior to testing, each handler will brief the Master Trainer as to the particular dog's alert and response to the explosive aids. Each indication to an explosive training aid by the canine must be obvious to the Master Trainer.

Prior to each phase, the Master Trainer will inform the handler of the boundaries, time, starting point, etc. of the search problem.

With the exception of an aircraft search, a maximum time limit of forty minutes will be allotted for each phase of testing. There is no maximum time limit during an aircraft search.

The Master Trainer will maintain the time limit during the testing and will begin when the canine team begins to search. The test time will stop upon the handler's indication that the search is complete or the time expires. The Master Trainer may terminate the test and fail the team if the Master Trainer determines that the team is not working.

Conversation between tested and untested handlers will not be allowed while testing is in progress. Handlers undergoing testing will not be allowed to observe other canine teams during the testing procedure.

No overly harsh or inappropriate physical corrections by the handler to the dog will be allowed. At the Master Trainer's discretion, any such behavior will be grounds for a failure of the Explosive Detection Test. The Master Trainer will notify the testing team's agency on any extreme physical corrections or inappropriate harsh behavior, in writing, within 10 days from the incident.

The purpose of accreditation testing is to observe the team's ability to locate a hidden explosive. It should be noted that all explosive aids may not be pinpointed to source by the dog due to height, wind current, or placement of the aid. The Master Trainer will exercise reasonable judgment and the handler should consider all changes in behavior by the dog towards explosive odor.

Each certification certificate will be valid for one year from the date of the test.

It should be noted that normal training and retraining of the canine team must be conducted to maintain and enhance the team's capability.

All explosive aids used in testing should be of recent manufacture and in separate containers. It is the responsibility of the agencies being tested to provide the required explosive aids.

All explosive aids used for testing will be actual explosives. No pseudo or non-explosive substitutes will be used for testing. Strict safety measures will be upheld during all testing.

All outdoor testing will stop immediately upon threat of inclement weather, specifically lightning.

All explosive aids will be placed in such a manner that the dog cannot touch or retrieve them.

Use of Distracters:

Natural distracters are normally present and vary depending on the area where the testing is being performed. Placement of distracters in the testing area is required when no natural distracters are present. Care must be taken not to place artificial distractions in a manner that causes contamination with the test substance odor. Distracters can be the same as used in the odor recognition assessment.

Mass Transit Vehicles used during Explosive Certification Testing:

It is highly recommended that the testing Master Trainer record the registration numbers of aircraft, watercraft, or mass transit vehicles used during the certification test on the United Police Work Dog Association Certification Test Sheet. This recommendation is due to the wide use of aircraft, watercraft, and mass transit vehicles in certification testing and the possibility of inadvertent odor contamination, and the further possibility of said vehicles being used again for certification testing and/or training in other jurisdictions. The registration numbers noted on the United Police Work Dog

Association Certification Test Sheet would provide the UPWDA an opportunity to track aircraft, watercraft, and mass transit vehicles used in certification testing. A registration number is any identifying number, either permanent or temporarily assigned to an aircraft, watercraft, or mass transit vehicle.

Strict safety measures will be adhered to while working near the water and around steep stairwells. The Master Trainer will use his or her discretion in placing explosive aids in a location that may expose the canine team to the risk of falling or being injured. On smaller watercraft, personal flotation jackets should be used.

Mass Transit Vehicle Search

Strict safety measures will be adhered to while working near busy rail yards, depots, and electrical equipment.

All explosive aids used for testing will require the use of a 'barrier' object, such as a towel, paper towel, cardboard, etc., to prevent the explosive aid from coming into contact with any part of the mass transit vehicle causing residue contamination.

This certification will be valid for one year from the date of issue, as defined in the Certification Validity paragraph.

There will be no fee charged for UPWDA certification testing. A fee may be imposed to cover expenses of travel, lodging and meals if necessary.