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UNITED POLICE WORK DOG ASSOCIATION

CERTIFICATION STANDARD

Electronic Storage Device Detection (ESDD) Canine Certification Standard

Effective January 1, 2027

PURPOSE

The purpose of this certification is to establish the minimum performance standards for Electronic Storage Device Detection (ESDD) canine teams. Certified teams shall demonstrate the ability to locate concealed electronic storage devices commonly encountered during criminal investigations, digital evidence searches, and search warrant operations while maintaining a high level of reliability, control, and operational safety.

SECTION 1 – CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

The canine team shall successfully complete all phases of the certification during a single testing event.

The handler shall have no prior knowledge of the number or location of hides.

All hides shall be placed by the evaluator or designated hide steward.

Only certified UPWDA Master Trainers may administer this certification.

SECTION 2 – TARGET ODORS

- Triphenylphosphine Oxide (TPPO)
- Hydroxycyclohexyl Phenyl Ketone (HPK)

The canine shall alert on electronic storage devices including, but not limited to:

- USB flash drives
- Cellular telephones
- Smart phones
- Tablet computers
- Laptop computers
- Hard disk drives (HDD)
- Solid State Drives (SSD)
- Micro SD cards
- SD cards
- SIM cards
- Memory sticks
- External hard drives
- Electronic circuit boards containing digital storage

Devices may be operational, damaged, powered on, powered off, or concealed.

SECTION 3 – SEARCH AREAS

Certification shall include the following search environments.

Interior Search

Residential or commercial room(s) containing multiple concealment locations.

Minimum of six concealment opportunities.

Vehicle Search

One or more passenger vehicles.

Electronic devices may be concealed inside:

- Passenger compartment
- Trunk
- Engine compartment
- Center console
- Door panels
- Cargo areas

Luggage / Container Search

Boxes, bags, backpacks, lockers, or similar containers.

Open Area Search

Outdoor search area where devices may be hidden:

- Under debris
- Vegetation
- Equipment
- Building exteriors

SECTION 4 – CONCEALMENT DIFFICULTY

Hides should represent realistic investigative scenarios.

Examples include:

- Clothing
- Furniture
- Wall voids
- Ceiling tiles
- Tool boxes
- Books
- File cabinets
- Electronics
- Appliances
- Vehicle compartments
- Buried beneath lightweight clutter
- Hidden within common household items

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SECTION 5 – BLANK AREAS

At least one search area shall contain no target odor.

The canine must complete the search without providing a trained final response.

Any false final indication in a blank area constitutes a deduction or failure as outlined below.

SECTION 6 – FINAL RESPONSE

The canine shall demonstrate a trained final response that is:

- Consistent
- Passive (sit, down, stare, freeze, etc.) or trained response approved by the handler's agency
- Clearly recognizable
- Under control

The canine shall not excessively damage property or evidence during the indication.

SECTION 7 – HANDLER PERFORMANCE

The handler shall demonstrate:

- Proper deployment
- Safe search techniques
- Proper leash handling
- Effective search coverage
- Recognition of the canine's behavior
- Proper reward procedures after completion

Handlers shall not intentionally cue or direct the canine toward a hide.

SECTION 8 – DISTRACTIONS/CONTROLS (MANDATORY)

A distractor is any item, odor, or stimulus that is not the target odor but is intentionally introduced to test the dog's ability to ignore irrelevant scents.

A Control is an item known not to contain the target odor, but may have a familiar odor that the dog would recognize. Some examples may be but are not limited to:

- latex gloves
- canvas bags
- cotton bags
- Metal stash boxes
- Plastic bags

The dog should not alert to controls due to the absence of target odor, although the items used are familiar to the dog and are often paired with target odor.

NOTE- Controls must be placed in each search area to ensure to the Master Trainer that the canine does not alert to anything other than the trained target odor when presented in each phase

The canine shall ignore non-target distractor odors. These may include but are not limited to:

- Food
- Clothing
- Firearms
- Ammunition
- Human scent
- Electronic devices not containing target odor
- Common household odors
- Office equipment
- Animal odors

- Plastic storage bags
- Electrostatic bags
- Latex gloves
- Metal
- Plastic

SECTION 9 – SCORING

A passing certification requires:

- Detection of all target hides
- No unsafe handler actions
- No handler interference
- No more than one false final response
- Successful completion of the blank search

The evaluator may terminate the certification for:

- Aggressive behavior
- Loss of handler control
- Multiple false alerts
- Failure to locate required hides
- Evidence destruction
- Unsportsmanlike conduct

SECTION 10 – TIME LIMITS

Reasonable time limits may be established based upon:

- Size of search area
- Number of hides
- Environmental conditions

Time limits shall be established prior to the certification.

SECTION 11 – CERTIFICATION PERIOD

Successful certification shall remain valid for one (1) year from the certification date unless revoked by the UPWDA Executive Board.

Annual recertification is required.

SECTION 12 – EQUIPMENT

Handlers may utilize:

- Standard working collar
- Harness
- Long line
- Reward toy
- Food reward

SECTION 13 – PASSING STANDARD

To earn UPWDA Electronic Storage Device Detection certification, the canine team shall demonstrate:

- Operational proficiency
- Reliable odor recognition
- Accurate final responses
- Safe deployment
- Professional handler performance
- Overall readiness for law enforcement investigations involving digital evidence recovery