



## **SARDOC New Member Packet**

## Table of Contents

Introduction: Use of Dogs in Search and Rescue (SAR).....	3
Expectations for New Handlers .....	7
What to Do at a SARDOC Practice .....	12
Early Training Progression Guidelines .....	14
Dog Team Evaluations.....	17
Member Requirement Form.....	22
Sample Training Log Forms .....	25
Suggested Reading List.....	27

# Introduction: Use of Dogs in Search and Rescue (SAR)

"One trained search dog can patrol a tract in 6 hours that it would take 106 workers 370 man-hours to comb with the same probability of detection."

- Tim J. Setnicka in Wilderness Search and Rescue

**Search and Rescue Dogs of Colorado (SARDOC)** was formed in 1983 as the need arose for locating and standardizing search dogs and handlers throughout the state and surrounding region. By developing a formal set of Standards (particular guidelines for training and certification), search managers from different search and rescue organizations around the state have come to expect a known level of proficiency from both search dog and handler. To reach the point of certification based upon SARDOC's Standards, a dog/handler team trains several times weekly for generally two years. SARDOC is a non-profit organization run completely by volunteers and funded by donations. While many of you may have become familiar with disaster trained search dogs after the Oklahoma City bombing or the September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedies, SARDOC is focused training and certifying *wilderness* search and rescue dogs – finding people lost in the backcountry. Each type of searching requires different skills from both handler and dog. The future of SARDOC will continue to be determined both by the energy and commitment of its volunteers and by the changing needs of law enforcement and search and rescue organizations in Colorado.

**Scent.** Watching a trained search dog is both fun and amazing. SAR dogs are trained to detect scent derived from skin "rafts" -- microscopic dandruff -- that all humans slough off constantly. Scent rafts create a cloud of scent around us that can be carried on the wind and deposited in the environment around us. (Imagine "Pig Pen", the dusty little Charlie Brown character!) Each human has his or her own unique scent that is influenced by diet, hygiene, environment, scented toiletries and other factors. SAR dogs are trained to "scent discriminate", that is, to search for the scent of the lost person (or "subject") while disregarding other human scent in the area. This is accomplished by always giving the dog a scent article (socks, hat, or other object) that smells like the lost person, prior to giving the dog the search command. (It is extremely important that scent articles are not contaminated (touched) by another person!!) Over time, SAR dogs learn to match the unique scent from a given scent article to the same scent in the field. SAR dogs also learn to clearly alert their handlers to the presence of human scent, leading them toward the area of stronger and stronger scent until they find the subject. The handler rewards the dog with her favorite toy when she has found the subject. One of the most challenging aspects for the handler is to learn to predict how the wind, terrain features, and weather affect the distribution of scent in the environment – scent which is completely invisible to us as humans.

Sometimes, the human subject is not always found alive - one of the sad realities of search work. Thus, SAR dogs are also trained to find the scent of a human cadaver. As soon as a person dies, the body begins decomposing. This process releases gases and volatile compounds into the air, in addition to the unique human scent described above. Although the dog was most likely given a scent article from the "live" person, SAR dogs are still able to locate the subject, even if he is dead. Again, the dogs are trained and rewarded for find human cadaver and are not rewarded for finding animal carcasses.

Very little is known about exactly what chemicals of human life or death that the dogs are using as cues and how the dog's brain processes this complex information.

**Training.** A frequently asked question is: "How do you train a search dog?" SARDOC recommends that a search dog begin training as a puppy. As soon as a puppy and handler are bonded to one another, training can begin; this may be as young as 8 weeks old. Since SARDOC will not certify any dog for search work until it is at least 18 months old, potential handlers must understand that a large time commitment is required in order to reach certification. Adult dogs can also be trained to do search work; however, their search life will not be as long as a puppy's since they are already adults. Handlers should consider this when thinking of training an older dog. More information on training steps is included later in this manual.

**Search Dog Scenting Disciplines.** There are two basic scenting techniques dogs use in training and actual searching: trailing and airscenting. All dogs that train with Search and Rescue Dogs of Colorado (SARDOC) start out with trailing, but may eventually switch to airscenting. All SARDOC dogs should be able to follow a one-hour-old trail even if they do not certify in trailing. All SARDOC dogs must first certify in one of two wilderness search disciplines, trailing or airscent, prior to certifying in other disciplines such as avalanche, water, or evidence. The training and deployment of each type of SAR dog are described below.

**Trailing.** Trailing dogs follow scent that has been deposited on the ground as a person walks through an area. This scent may not necessarily follow the exact footsteps of the lost person. Rather, the effects of wind and weather may move the scent particles, redepositing them into vegetation, rocks, or water nearby. The dog's nose is typically near the ground while it is searching for scent. Trailing dogs, trained to scent discriminate, will be taken to the "point last seen" (PLS), the location where the subject was last known to be. This may be a trail junction, a vehicle, or other more general location. The trailing dog/handler team will be used to determine direction that the subject traveled away from the PLS and continue to follow where the subject has been as long as possible. A scent article or footprint belonging to the subject must be preserved for the dog to do this. Because scent dissipates and deteriorates with time, it is important to get a trailing dog on scene as soon as possible. In our dry climate a 24-hour-old trail is usually at the limit a dog can work, but in good conditions (cool, moist, at night) a dog may be able to work a 48-hour-old trail. Scent will be least detectable in the heat of the day. Generally only one trailing dog is used on a search mission since usually there is only one PLS and one trail to follow.

Trailing is also a difficult discipline for the dog to master since it requires intense concentration. To become a SARDOC certified trailing dog/handler team, the team must follow an unmarked 1-1/2 to 2 mile long trail that is at least 8 hours old. On the test, two people must have crossed the subject's path, in order to test the dog's ability to scent discriminate. Additionally, the subject drops articles along the trail - clues that the dog should find as well. In addition to finding the subject in a reasonable amount of time, the team must demonstrate endurance, strategy, and navigational skills.

**Airscent.** Airscent dogs, on the other hand, are trained to detect scent from a human subject that is carried on the wind. Most dogs certify in wilderness search using this technique in our region due to the vast amounts of terrain that have to be covered while searching for a subject. Airscent dogs are worked perpendicular to the wind in organized

grids to completely cover assigned areas. The dog checks the air for scent coming directly off the subject or clothing he or she may have dropped. When the dog detects scent, he is said to have an “alert”. An alert is a change in the dog’s behavior that is recognized by handler. Handlers must train for hundreds of hours in order to learn to “read” their dog’s particular behaviors and correlate that behavior to the presence of the scent. Scent coming off of a person is carried away from them on the wind, which disperses the scent into a cone that gets wider with distance. (Think of a plume of smoke coming off a smokestack). Airscent dogs learn to orient to the “scent cone” such that they follow the gradient of scent into the wind where the scent is stronger, until they reach the source at the subject. When the person is found, the dog is rewarded with his favorite toy.

Airscent dogs are trained to scent discriminate when given a scent article, but they will also find all humans if no scent article is available. As long as a scent source could still be in a search area, airscent dogs can be used to find it. These dogs have been used to locate cadavers months after the initial search ended. Since airscent dogs are assigned a specific geographical area to work on a mission, several dog/handler teams can be fielded at one time. The search managers plot clues from several dog teams on a map. Alerts from different dogs in different areas can be used to triangulate where the subject is most likely to be.

Wind obviously affects the efficiency of an air scenting dog team as well as a trailing team. Handlers must know how time of day, terrain, secondary wind patterns and prevailing wind speed will influence their coverage of areas. For example, night winds are generally more stable than winds during midday. If a dog alerts and then loses the alert, the handler has to maneuver the dog back into a position where the dog can pick up the scent again. If this is not possible, the handler has to be aware of the wind direction at the time of the alert and look at the terrain to try to determine the possible area of the scent source. Experienced dogs often learn to get themselves back into a position to relocate the scent. Despite its challenges, airscenting is an extremely efficient way to cover large areas on a search – far more efficient than human searches alone.

SARDOC requires an air scent dog/handler team to demonstrate endurance, strategy and navigational skills on three separate tests. The first test is to find a subject in a 1/2 square mile area within a reasonable amount of time. The second test is to search an area 1/4 mile square looking for 2 to 3 subjects without using scent articles. The handler must determine if all subjects have been located and give a probability of detection. The third test is searching a 1/16 square mile area for one subject at night.

**Specialties.** Once dog/handler teams certify in wilderness search, they may expand their search expertise to specialty areas such as avalanche, water, disaster, and evidence and cadaver.

**Avalanche.** Scent discrimination is not used for avalanche work. The dog searches for any human scent under the snow and will alert on the scent rising to the surface. Three dogs can cover in 4 hour's time the same area it would take forty probe searchers approximately 8 hours to cover. A well-trained dog should be able to detect a person 6 to 10 feet under the snow. One dog in California located a woman buried 15 feet under snow and debris.

**Water.** Dogs are being used more and more in water search to narrow the possible search area for a drowned subject. As in avalanche work, the human scent rises to the surface and the dog alerts on the scent. Water search can be difficult as underwater currents, wind currents, and surface water currents can carry the scent. Dogs have detected subjects more than 100 feet below the water surface.

**Evidence.** Dogs are also called upon to locate articles or find clues such as clothing or footprints. In this case scent discrimination is very important. The dog is given the scent of the person whose articles are missing. It could be any kind of article including a weapon. The dog should either retrieve the located article or guide the handler to it.

**Cadaver.** Dogs are utilized in the location of human remains, both above the ground and under the ground. Discrimination work may or may not be required, depending on the situation. This specialty is primarily utilized as a criminal investigation team.

**Search Dog Support Personnel.** Because the handler is busy watching the dog for alerts, he or she needs a support person to handle the radio communications, navigational duties, and the mapping of wind direction, alerts, and covered area. Since the team is moving along at "dog speed" there often is no time to pinpoint the team's position by triangulation so it is crucial to know the location of the team at all times. Dog navigators are expected to accurately navigate primarily by terrain feature association every step of the way. This is where you, the navigator, become an **invaluable** part of the dog/handler team.

However, being a support person for a dog/handler team requires more than just navigating. The navigator should also be able to read the dog and know when the dog is alerting as the handler cannot watch the dog 100% of the time. A missed alert can mean a missed subject. Because each dog/handler team has its own unique working style, navigators should attend dog practices regularly to become familiar with each team. Dog practices are listed on the training schedule. Another way of supporting the team is by helping to keep the dog hydrated; you may be requested to help carry water for the dog. In addition, a good support person will notice potential clues and watch for footprints, particularly with a trailing dog. Finally, all team members fielded with a dog/handler team should keep downwind of the dog so their scents are not interfering with the dog's ability to detect the subject's scent.

There are a limited number of SAR dogs throughout the state, so the dogs are often requested to respond to other counties or surrounding states. Most handlers find an experienced, capable support person invaluable and will ask that he or she accompany them out of county.

# Expectations for New Handlers

Welcome to SARDOC! We are glad that you have decided to try and train yourself and your dog in search and rescue (SAR). We hope to be able to assist you in any way that we can, however, most of the work must come from you.

The biggest problem that most beginning SAR dog handlers have is understanding how to reach their final goals. A great deal of time and motivation is required of the handler, especially in the first four to six months. We have written this outline to help beginning SAR dog handlers understand what they should expect from themselves and their dog.

## A. Early stages of search training

1. The puppy or dog you are considering to train should have the primary characteristics of the working, herding, sporting, or hound breeds and be of sound physical structure and temperament, and of (or will be of) adequate size and strength to negotiate the terrain encountered in wilderness areas.
2. We recommend that you start with a puppy or a dog less than four years of age. You have a higher probability of success with a puppy, but if your adult dog has the correct temperament, you should be able to train him or her. Puppies should be at least 8 weeks of age. Consider enrolling in a local “puppy kindergarten” class in order to properly socialize your pup and start training him in basic obedience. The key to successfully training a search dog is to develop a good working relationship with your pup.
3. The first time you come to a SARDOC team practice, you may socialize your dog and observe other teams in the field. At this first practice, however, you will not start training your dog. We feel it is important for you to observe one practice and be able to think about the program for a week or two before committing to training your dog.

If you return for a second practice SARDOC members will help you start to train your dog. We hope that you will then start training on your own, between regular SARDOC practices, 3-5 times a week (necessary for the beginning dog). We do understand, however, that you may not yet be sure of your commitment. Take the training at your own pace for the first month.

4. We suggest that if distance and work permit, plan on conferring with an experienced SARDOC team member or attending a local SARDOC team practice at least twice a month. At the SARDOC practices, follow and observe at least two certified teams while they practice each time you attend. Also observe as many other teams as possible. This will help you

understand the different stages of training. Any time you attend a SARDOC training, ASK THE HANDLERS A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT TRAINING! This is the best way for you to get a feel for the commitment that you are in for!

5. After the first few weeks, we strongly recommend that you train your beginning dog 3-5 times a week. Each training session will take one half to one hour. Experience has demonstrated to us that if you do not carry on such a rigorous training schedule, you WILL NOT succeed in your eventual goal of becoming a certified search team. Keep a training log of your practices (required of SARDOC members by SARDOC standards, see samples on pages XX of this packet). Bring your training log to each SARDOC practice. This will allow a SARDOC member to review your progress and further direct you in your training.
6. One of your greatest challenges will be getting people to be "victims" for your dog to find. Sources include family, friends, co-workers, and local SAR team members. People who must perform court ordered community service hours can be a wonderful, non-imposing source of "victims". Contact your local county or city court to find out if you would be able to utilize community service people.
7. The SARDOC bylaws, standards, and policies manuals are available on the SARDOC website ([www.sardoc.org](http://www.sardoc.org)) You should review these in detail as you will be required to follow these by-laws, policies and procedures as a member of SARDOC, should you choose to join.
8. **Note: You may attend SARDOC practices for 2-3 months without joining the organization. After that point, however, you must decide if you are going to commit to training your dog by formally joining SARDOC or else you may not continue to attend SARDOC trainings.** Please find the SARDOC application form in the appendix of this packet. Mail the completed form along with the non-refundable \$30 application fee.

#### B. Puppy training progression

1. A large part of training a SAR dog is training the handler! We strongly recommend that you read Scent and the Scenting Dog by William Syrotuck within the first couple of months; it is a short book. A second book, Search Dog Training by Sandy Bryson, is also recommended. Upon joining SARDOC these books are available from our library for a deposit, but eventually you will probably want to buy the books for yourself as reference guides. See the Suggested Reading List on page XX.

2. Within three months of rigorous training, your dog should be able to find a stranger, on a 500-foot long fresh, straight trail with the handler knowing the direction of travel. If you are having problems reaching this goal, confer with a SARDOC member about different training strategies.
3. Every couple of months your dog handling skills will be casually evaluated by a SARDOC trainer during one of the regular practices. These are not tests! We need an opportunity to evaluate both your progress and your dog's progress. See pages XX for more details. These evaluations are designed only to be constructive.
4. A commonly asked question is, "How long will it take to certify my dog?" This generally depends on how much time you put into the training. Puppies usually learn more quickly than dogs but are not physically or emotionally mature enough to be fielded before they are eighteen months to two years old, depending on the breed. SARDOC will not certify a team until the dog is eighteen months to two years old. If you start training an older dog, plan on training from six months to a year before certification for air-scenting; for trailing, six months to one and one-half years may be necessary. Both of these estimates are extremely optimistic and very much depend on how much you work your dog and on the temperament of the dog.

#### C. Skills required of all SAR personnel

1. If you are starting out with a puppy, it will be at least two years before you are certified as a SARDOC dog team. In the meantime you will be expected to certify as a Wilderness Support person. A Support person assists the certified handler on SAR missions by navigating and doing radio communications for the dog team. **To become operational as a Support person, and later as an operational handler, you must first be a fieldable member in good standing with some sort of fielding agency (search and rescue team, ski patrol, park service, etc.).** Going on missions as a Support person will allow you hone your search skills prior to fielding as a certified dog team.
2. Map reading (navigation) skills are required of all handlers before they can be certified. Start learning or demonstrating them from the very start. Some handlers have spent years training their dogs only to discover their lack of navigation skills keeps them from being certified even though their dogs are ready. Ask the handlers in your area to tell you which topographic maps cover your training areas and bring your map and compass to all trainings. A SARDOC member will help evaluate your skills if requested. The book, Map and Compass, The Orienteering

Handbook by Bjorn Kjellstrom is a good reference (not available through SARDOC).

3. First-aid and CPR training are required of certified SARDOC support and handlers. This need not be done in the first six months of training, but do not put it off until certification. Course availability and costs vary from place to place. Contact your local American Red Cross chapter for that information. We strongly encourage you to gain some knowledge of first aid for dogs too. Some available books are, First Aid for Pets by Robert W. Kirk, D.V.M. and Dog Owner's Encyclopedia of Veterinary Medicine by Allan H. Hart, B.V.Sc. (neither are available through SARDOC).
4. You must be physically fit in order to competently pursue this new endeavor. On most searches you will not be walking on trails but up and down wherever the search dictates. You will be carrying a 30 to 60 pound pack depending on the weather, traveling at least 10 miles a day, and searching over 12 hours each day and therefore, must get and/or stay in very good shape. You must pass a physical fitness test in order to become a voting member of SARDOC. Your physical ability is tested again on all of the certification tests. SARDOC will not send a weak team member into the field to become a victim themselves. Develop a regular exercise routine and, during SARDOC practices, follow as many teams into the field as you can.
5. Keep in mind that volunteering in search and rescue is expensive! In the first four to six months the costs are minimal: driving to and from practices (depends on distance), outdoor clothing (depends on what you already own), dog harness and leads (\$20.00-\$30.00), flags (\$10.00), SARDOC annual membership dues (\$30.00 for new members, \$20.00 for renewing members), and books you may choose to purchase. Before certification, the costs go up significantly. Driving to and from searches, extensive outdoor clothing and equipment, first aid courses, radio equipment, first aid supplies, and optional seminar attendances are costs you can expect to incur. These costs over time can easily reach into the thousands of dollars. Tax benefits may exist; check with an accountant.

#### D. Canine etiquette

1. Dogs should be on leash unless they are working off-leash or you have been instructed that you can let your dog off-leash to play. The amount of off-leash play and socialization time after practices varies from area to area. Ask other handlers about when and if you can let your dog off-leash at a SARDOC training.

2. Your dog must not attack other dogs and must come when you call! If problems continue to exist in either of these areas, you may be asked not to bring the dog to training any more. Obedience guidelines for SARDOC dogs are outlined in the Standards manual. Much more extensive obedience is required for disaster training.
3. Friendly dogs may become aggressive when toys are brought out in a group of loose dogs. Do not throw toys for your dog while other dogs are in the area.
4. Bitches in heat will not be allowed to any SARDOC practices. Any handler coming to practice with a bitch in heat will be asked to remove the dog from the practice area immediately. Bitches in heat may not sit in cars during practice; they still distract the other dogs making practice ineffective for all members. This, of course, goes double for actual searches. We recommend that you spay or neuter your dog for effective search work.
5. Sick dogs will not be allowed at any SARDOC practices. All dogs must be current on their vaccinations before attending a SARDOC training.
6. You must always scoop your poop! Locations vary for SARDOC practices; often times they are held on public land, however, sometimes they are held on private land or in heavily used public parks. Training in these areas is a privilege. Set a good example for others by picking up after your dog.

We hope that these recommendations will help you more realistically understand what you must do in order to successfully train a SAR dog. Included in this packet is a check-off sheet (Member Requirements Form) to monitor your progress toward certification. Please fill in the date that you achieve each requirement for certification. SARDOC is currently experimenting with a mentoring program (assigning certified handlers to assist new SARDOC members with their training). Hopefully this program will help new handlers to stay “on track” with their training.

Remember that all SARDOC team members are there to help you. This is a volunteer organization and all are welcome. We will help you overcome what deficiencies you may have. Please help us by working hard and asking for help when you need it.

If you have questions between SARDOC practices, please call one of us!

## What to Do at a SARDOC Practice

1. Keep dogs on leash unless they are working.
2. Dress for the weather.
3. Bring a scent article. To make an ideal scent article, take your socks off the night before practice and put them in a zip-loc bag.
4. Arrive at the meeting place on time.
5. Sign in on the sign-in sheet. Include: your name, your dog's name, if they are a trailing or air scent dog, length/age of trail needed, note if you are leaving early, check off when finished working your problem, check out when leaving.
6. Stay for the entire practice. Part of SAR is making sure all of your teammates are out of the field safely. Observe as many dogs as possible each practice – that is where you learn the most about search dog training. If you must leave early, notify the handler in charge of the practice.
7. **WHEN YOU ARE THE SUBJECT:**
  - Ask if you don't understand where you are to go.
  - Take a radio if available.
  - Bring a pad to sit on.
  - Bring a book to read.
  - Stay put until found; don't move unless requested to do so.
  - Sit or recline and hide behind a rock, tree, or bush.
  - When found, don't move until dog returns with the handler.
  - When handler is present help praise the dog.
  - Learn to flag trails (how to tie the flags for easy removal).
8. **WHEN GOING WITH A HANDLER AND DOG AS SUPPORT OR OBSERVER:**
  - Do not get ahead of the dog.
  - Keep up so you can watch the dog work.
  - Ask questions if you don't understand what is happening.
  - Stay together.
  - When the subject is found, EVERYONE should praise the dog.
  - Debrief about what went right and what went wrong. Be honest.
  - Return to base quickly as some members of the group may be needed to work additional dogs. This keeps large practices moving.



# Early Training Progression Guidelines

All puppies and dogs new to search training will first learn how to trail. Listed below are several variations of trailing scenarios that get progressively harder for the dog. For this reason, these steps should be attempted in roughly this order. Always confer with SARDOC handlers about your training progression.

Overview of basic trailing scenario scenario:

- Training session will consist of 3 short (approximately 50-100 feet) trails.
- Each trail should be a straight line with flags spaced about 10 feet apart.
- Initially, have the subject lay the trail downwind or crosswind - not into the wind. After dog has an idea that it is to keep its nose to the ground, vary wind direction (including into the wind) so as not to train the dog to "chase" the scent--a problem once the dog switches to air scenting.
- Dog should be on a 6-10 foot lead attached to a harness.
- Put the harness on the dog just before first trail (before subject walks away) and take it off immediately after last trail exercise as you are giving praise and reward.
- Offer scent article to the dog at the start of each trailing exercise.
- Handler **MUST** follow the dog. The lead should run from the harness along the dog's back directly to the handler, not to one side or the other.
- Everyone should enthusiastically praise the dog after each trailing exercise!!! Remember, this is FUN!
- When possible, have a third person pick up the flags as you go. **DO NOT** "backtrack" after you are through with the exercise.

STEP 1: Dog watches OWNER walk away (forwards) while frantically speaking loudly. (Do not use any commands or the dog's name). Walk a straight line for 50 feet and sit in sight of the dog.

STEP 2: Dog watches owner walk away quietly after saying goodbye. If enthusiasm is good, owner may lie down or sit behind an obstacle to be out of sight of the dog.

STEP 3: Owner says goodbye and walks away without the dog watching.

STEP 4: Owner walks away without saying goodbye. Dog does not watch.

STEP 5: FRIEND or family member says goodbye and walks away as the dog watches.

STEP 6: Friend or family member says goodbye and walks away without the dog watching.

STEP 7: Friend or family member walks away quietly without the dog watching.

- STEP 8: STRANGER says goodbye and walks away without the dog watching.
- STEP 9: Stranger quietly walks away without the dog watching.
- STEP 10: ADD VARIETY: Change subjects, vary the terrain (still walking a straight line), change the length of the trails, use 2 longer trails instead of 3 short ones.

Be sure to always keep a training log of each practice session. Discuss the pros and cons of everyone's observations - preferably immediately after the practice session. Having completed all 10 steps above, you and your pup should be ready to take the D-T1 Trailing Evaluation. See the next section of this packet for more details.

It is always tempting to rush through training steps, however, keep in mind that training a SAR dog is a long, dynamic process. A good rule of thumb is that you should be able to do each step in your training correctly ten times in a row or you are not ready to move to the next level. If you are unsuccessful you should start again at one and try to achieve correctly ten times in a row. Be patient! It is much easier to build your building blocks correctly at a slower pace than it is to rush through and then have to go back and correct errors in training that could have been avoided.



# Dog Team Evaluations

Currently, these evaluations are not required in order to request SARDOC Certification testing for you and your dog; however, these evaluations may become a requirement prior to Certification sometime in the future. They are also currently under review for modifications and additions. Below are descriptions of evaluations for both trailing and air scent dogs; there are four levels in each discipline. Once you and your dog have achieved a training level (passed the test) you can begin training for the next level. For example, you should pass the D-T1 test before you start working on trails with turns.

(Note: While all puppies and dogs new to search work are started on trailing, many dogs are switched to work as airscents at some time within the first two years of trailing. This decision is based on many factors – consult the SARDOC handlers who work with you and your dog for their advice.)

Upon completion of all four tests in your discipline, you should be well on your way toward SARDOC Trailing or Airscent Certification. For SARDOC Trailing Certification you and your dog should be working 20 hour-old trails before you consider testing. In preparations for SARDOC Air Scent Certification you and your dog should be working 1 mile by 1-mile areas for a minimum of 3 to 4 hours at a time before you consider testing.

## Trailing Evaluations

The following is a description of the training levels for trailing and the four evaluations for those levels.

### DOG-T1 Evaluation

1. Known last seen point.
2. Known direction of travel.
3. The trail is a straight line.
4. Trail starts as soon as subject is in position.
5. Subject should be an unknown person to the dog.
6. Trail is about 500 feet long.
7. Scent article will be provided.
8. Trail is marked only by natural passage of the subject.
9. All natural obstacles will be considered fair and judged. It is up to the dog handler to be able to read their dog.
10. How the handler applies their search strategy and works the area is as important to the outcome of the test as the dog making a find. The dog finding the subject does not automatically determine a positive outcome to the test.
11. An experienced (Dog Committee approved) handler will observe and approve the test.

## **DOG-T2 Evaluation**

1. Known last seen point.
2. Known direction of travel
3. Minimum of 2 turns (at least, 1 left turn and 1 right turn).
4. Trail is a minimum of 1/2 mile long.
5. Trail is a minimum of 1/2 hour old.
6. Trail is over a variety of terrain (water, mountains, and fields).
7. Subject is an unfamiliar person to the dog.
8. Scent article will be provided.
9. Trail is marked only by natural passage of the subject.
10. All natural obstacles will be considered fair and judged. It is up to the dog handler to be able to read their dog.
11. How the handler applies their search strategy and works the area is as important to the outcome of the test as the dog making a find. The dog finding the subject does not automatically determine a positive outcome to the test.
12. An experienced (Dog Committee approved) handler will observe and approve the test.

## **DOG-T3 Evaluation**

1. Known last seen point.
2. Dog establishes direction of travel.
3. Trail is a minimum of 1 mile long.
4. Trail is a minimum of 1 hour old.
5. Trail is marked only by natural passage of the subject.
6. Trail is over a variety of terrain (water, mountains and fields).
7. Trail shall have at least two (2) right turns and two (2) left turns.
8. At least one person will cross the trail at different points (aged less than original trail) for scent discrimination.
9. Scent article will be provided.
10. All natural obstacles will be considered fair and judged. It is up to the dog handler to be able to read the dog.
11. How the handler applies their search strategy and works the area is as important to the outcome of the test as the dog making a find. The dog finding the subject does not automatically determine a positive outcome to the test.
12. An experienced (Dog Committee approved) handler will observe and approve the test.

## **DOG-T4 Evaluation**

1. Approach last seen point and establish the direction of travel.
2. Trail is from 1 to 1 & 1/2 miles long.
3. Trail is at least 4 hours old.
4. Trail is over a variety of terrain (water, mountains and field).
5. Trail may have any number of turns.
6. Two other people should cross the trail at different points for scent discrimination (laid fresher than original trail).
7. Trail is marked only by the natural passage of the subject.
8. Scent article will be provided.
9. All natural obstacles will be considered fair and judged. It is up to the dog handler to be able to read their dog.
10. How the handler applies their search strategy and works the area is as important to the outcome of the test as the dog making a find. The dog finding the subject does not automatically determine a positive outcome to the test.
11. Two experienced (Dog Committee approved) handlers will observe and approve the test.

## **Airscent**

You begin training the dog in a small area with a short/small grid pattern. As the dog understands what he is doing, the grids can get bigger and bigger. When the handler and dog are comfortable with the grids and are making good alerts and finds you are ready to try the following evaluations. The following is a description of the training levels for air scent and the evaluations for those levels.

## **DOG-A1 Evaluation**

1. The dog team must locate by air scent a single subject in an area 1/8 by 1/8 mile or equivalent in varied terrain.
2. You will have an assigned search area or given boundaries.
3. The subject will be within the given boundaries.
4. Your assignment will be to cover the area with your dog within a given time limit 45 minutes to 1 hour. Time to be set in relation to the terrain.
5. It will be up to the dog handler to determine the best way to work their dog in the situation he/she is given.
6. Dog handler may not request help from team members and team members may not offer suggestions on ways to use the dog. Team members would be people that wish to observe the test.
7. Dog handler will be given a scent article if he/she wishes. However, scent discrimination is not an issue.
8. All natural obstacles will be considered fair and judged. It is up to the dog handler to be able to read their dog.

9. How the handler applies their search strategy and works the area is as important to the outcome of the test as the dog making a find. The dog finding the subject does not automatically determine a positive outcome to the test.
10. An experienced (Dog Committee approved) handler will observe and approve the test.

### **DOG-A2 Evaluation**

1. The dog team must locate by air scent a single subject in an area 1/4 by 1/4 mile or equivalent in varied terrain.
2. You will have an assigned search area or given boundaries.
3. The subject will be within the given boundaries.
4. Your assignment will be to cover the area with your dog within a given time limit (1 hour to 1 & 1/2 hours). Time to be set in relation to the terrain.
5. It will be up to the dog handler to determine the best way to work their dog in the situation he/she is given.
6. Dog handler may not request help from team members and team members may not offer suggestions on ways to use the dog. Team members would be people that wish to observe the test.
7. Dog handler will be given a scent article if he/she wishes. However, scent discrimination is not an issue.
8. All natural obstacles will be considered fair and judged. It is up to the dog handler to be able to read their dog.
9. How the handler applies their search strategy and works the area is as important to the outcome of the test as the dog making a find. The dog finding the subject does not automatically determine a positive outcome to the test.
10. Two experienced (Dog Committee approved) handlers will observe and approve the test.

### **DOG-A3 Evaluation**

1. The dog team must locate by air scent 2 subjects in an area 1/8 by 1/8 mile or equivalent in varied terrain.
2. You will have an assigned search area or given boundaries. The team will be allowed to make only one series of sweeps in the area, no repeating of previously searched areas. You may follow through with alerts and enter a previously searched area, but only if dog alerts and enters the area on his own. The handler can not guide the dog into a previously searched area.
3. Your assignment will be to cover the area with your dog within a given time limit 1 hour to 1 & 1/2 hours. Time to be set in relation to the terrain.
4. It will be up to the dog handler to determine the best way to work their dog in the situation he/she is given.

5. Dog handler may not request help from team members and team members may not offer suggestions on ways to use the dog. Team members would be people that wish to observe the test.
6. No scent articles will be available.
7. All natural obstacles will be considered fair and judged. It is up to the dog handler to be able to read their dog.
8. How the handler applies their search strategy and works the area is as important to the outcome of the test as the dog making a find. The dog finding the subject does not automatically determine a positive outcome to the test.
9. Two experienced (Dog Committee approved) handlers will observe and approve the test.

### **DOG-A4 Evaluation**

1. The dog team must locate by air scent 3 to 5 articles (1 to be larger article of clothing, the others to be smaller) hidden in an area 1/10 by 1/10 mile or equivalent in varied terrain. The actual quantity will be unknown to the handler.
2. You will have an assigned search area or given boundaries. The team will be allowed to make only one series of sweeps in the area, no repeating of previously searched areas. You may follow through with alerts and enter a previously searched area, but only if dog alerts and enters the area on his own. The handler can not guide the dog into a previously searched area.
3. Your assignment will be to cover the area with your dog within a given time limit (1 hour to 1 1/2 hours). Time to be set in relation to the terrain.
4. It will be up to the dog handler to determine the best way to work their dog in the situation he/she is given.
5. Dog handler may not request help from team members and team members may not offer suggestions on way to use the dog. Team members would be people that wish to observe the test.
6. Dog handler will be given a scent article if he/she wishes. However, scent discrimination is not an issue.
7. All natural obstacles will be considered fair and judged. It is up to the dog handler to be able to read their dog.
8. All articles must be put out at least 24 hours in advance of the test.
9. How the handler applies their search strategy and works the area is as important to the outcome of the test as the dog making a find. The dog finding the articles does not automatically determine a positive outcome to the test.
10. Two experienced (Dog Committee approved) handlers will observe and approve the test.

## Member Requirement Form

The following two pages contain a form on which you can record the vital information about your training progress. A copy of this form should be submitted to your Area Director any time you request a change in status from one level to another. This form is your responsibility to fill out as you progress; likewise, you are ultimately responsible for progressing through the steps necessary for certification. It is your responsibility to talk to your area director, other SARDOC handlers in your area or to your mentor **at least every three to six months** to evaluate your progress, set up fitness tests, training evaluations, etc....

REQUIREMENT	OTHER INFORMATION
Probationary Period (1 year) <i>(candidate status--non-voting member)</i>	Starting Date:  Ending Date:
Physical Fitness Test <i>(must complete before moving out of candidate status)</i>	Date:  Tester:  Location:
Medical Training <i>(minimal of Basic First Aid required to become operational support or handler)</i>	Certification:  Expiration Date:
SAR Team Affiliation <i>(must be a fielding member of some type of fielding agency to become operational support or handler. Must submit letter from agency)</i>	Name of Team:  Contact Person and phone number:
Wilderness Support <i>(must have wilderness support prior to becoming operational handler)</i>	Date Confidence forms requested:  Date Written test completed:  <b>Send copy of this completed requirements form (when asking for test and confidence forms) to: SAR Dog Coordinator, P.O. Box 1036, Fort Collins, CO 80522</b>  Date of Air Scent navigation test: Date of Trailing navigation test: Date of Night navigation test: (include list of testers)



## Sample Training Log Forms

The following training log forms are provided for your convenience. Copy them as needed or make up your own! Whatever you decided to do, remember that you are required to keep a log of your training. This is important to track your progress and can also be used to record your mileage/expenses for tax purposes too!



## Suggested Reading List

- Scent** by Milo Pearsall and Hugo Vruggen  
Alpine Publications  
1901 S. Garfield Ave.  
Loveland, CO 80537
- Search Dog Training** by Sandy Bryson  
The Boxwood Press  
183 Ocean View Blvd  
Pacific Grove, CA 93950
- Scent and the Scenting Dog** by William G. Syrotuck  
Arner Publications Inc.  
P.O. Box 307, Graves Road  
Westmoreland, NY 13490
- Tracking Dog Theory and Methods** by Glen R. Johnson  
Arner Publications Inc.  
P.O. Box 307, Graves Road  
Westmoreland, NY 13490
- Go Find** by L. Wilson Davis  
Howell Book House Inc.  
230 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10169
- Bring Your Nose Over Here** by Wentworth Brown  
ASAP Printing  
Albuquerque, N.M.  
3rd Edition 1984
- The Koehler Method of Training  
Tracking Dogs** by William R. Koehler  
Howell Book House Inc.  
230 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10169

**Ready to Serve Ready to Save**

by Susan Bulanda

Doral Publishing, Inc  
8560 SW Salish Lane  
Wilsonville, OR 97070  
1-800-633-5385

**First Aid for Pets**

by Robert W. Kirk, D.V.M.

E.P. Dutton, Inc.  
2 Park Avenue  
New York, NY 10016

**Dog Owner's Encyclopedia of  
Veterinary Medicine**

by Allan H. Hart, B.V.Sc.

TFH Publications, Inc.  
P.O. Box 27  
Neptune City, NJ 07753

**Map And Compass  
The Orienteering Handbook**

by Bjorn Kjellstrom

Orienteering Services/U.S.A.  
Laporte, IN

**Land Navigation Handbook  
The Sierra Club Guide to Map  
and Compass**

by W. S. Kals

Sierra Club Books  
730 Polk Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

**Fundamentals of Mantracking**

by Albert "Ab" Taylor and Donald C.  
Cooper

Emergency Response Institute, Inc.  
and  
National Rescue Consultants, Inc.  
4537 Foxhall Drive, N.E.  
Olympia, WA 98506  
(206)491-7785 or (509)782-4832

**The ABCs of Avalanche Safety  
Second Edition**

by Edward R. LaChapelle

The Mountaineers  
306 Second Ave W.  
Seattle, WA 98119