

# **GREATER ATLANTIC RESCUE DOGS**

## **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

(This version adopted 7-23-03)  
(Revised 10-22-03 and 11-12-03)

### **I. Objectives** (Revised 7-26-03)

The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) shall be used as a guide for members of Greater Atlantic Rescue Dogs (GARD) who participate in training, educational, and search activities. SOPs shall also be used as a guide for prospective members who seek to meet the requirements for membership. All members and prospective members are expected to follow these SOPs when representing GARD. These procedures are designed to facilitate an organized, efficient, and professional response by members of this team to a search and to facilitate organized, efficient, and professional training and educational exercises by both members and prospective members of GARD. While these guidelines shall be specific, operational base personnel and operational dog handlers responding to a search shall be allowed flexibility within reason to tailor activities to meet the needs of a particular search task. At no time shall non-operational members or prospective members violate these SOPs of their own volition either in training, educational, or search response settings.

### **II. Callout Procedures** (Revised 7-26-03)

1. All Operational and Candidate GARD members shall carry a pager provided at his/her own expense and programmed with the GARD CAP code.
2. One GARD member shall be designated as the dispatcher. If possible, the dispatcher shall be a non-operational member. Upon receiving a page from the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), the dispatcher shall, within twenty (20) minutes, respond to the page via telephone. The dispatcher shall obtain basic information from the DEM dispatcher and shall page all Operational and Candidate GARD members using GARD's CAP code. If possible, the dispatcher shall send a text message summarizing the mission and giving a number for members to call. If equipment to send a text message is not readily available, the dispatcher shall send a digital page with a phone number to which members may respond.
3. In the event that Operational and Candidate members have not received a page from the dispatcher within twenty (20) minutes of receiving the DEM page, a secondary dispatcher shall assume the dispatcher is unavailable and shall respond to the DEM page as above. This person shall then assume the responsibilities of the dispatcher.
4. Within fifteen (15) minutes of receiving this page from the dispatcher, Operational and Candidate members shall call the dispatcher at the number provided and give information regarding their availability to respond to the mission. Members shall also provide information regarding estimated response time to the scene.

5. After receiving this information, the dispatcher shall call DEM and accept or decline the mission, depending on member availability, and shall notify DEM of the number and classification of persons responding and the estimated time of arrival of personnel at the search site. The dispatcher is responsible for obtaining and passing on information regarding location of and directions to the search base of operations. The dispatcher is responsible for informing responding members of any change of status, including, but not limited to, moving of base of operations, termination of search, etc. The dispatcher is also responsible for obtaining a mission number from DEM.

6. The dispatcher shall keep records of all responding members, noting time deployed, time of arrival at scene, time leaving scene, and time of arrival back home. The dispatcher is responsible for assuring that all responding members are accounted for at the end of the search and for initiating emergency response procedures to account for any missing responders.

7. In the event that GARD is requested to respond to a search by someone other than DEM, the member receiving that request shall immediately contact the designated dispatcher. The member shall provide the dispatcher with information regarding who is making the request so that the dispatcher can contact DEM for a mission number. The requesting agency shall be encouraged to contact DEM directly and shall be provided with the appropriate phone number. The dispatcher shall then initiate call-out procedures as noted above.

8. After all Operational and Candidate members have been activated, the dispatcher shall begin calling non-operational members and qualified applicants to respond as ground team members or base support personnel. The number of non-operational members and applicants dispatched shall be determined by the dispatcher based on the needs of the particular search mission. Accountability for non-operational members and applicants responding to the mission shall lie with the dispatcher.

9. All responding GARD members and applicants shall check in with the dispatcher at appropriate intervals to obtain any information regarding change in location of base, cancellation of search, etc. The check-in interval shall vary depending on response time to search site but in no case shall it exceed two hours.

### **III. Search Operations** (Revised 7-26-03)

1. The first Operational GARD member to arrive at base shall report to the Incident Commander (IC). He/she shall inform the IC of the number and type of personnel responding and the estimated time of arrival. In the event an IC has not yet arrived on the scene, the GARD member shall report to the Responsible Agent (RA). This person shall act as mission leader until/unless a more senior GARD member arrives.

2. If available, a GARD Base Operations person shall serve as mission leader.

3. If a GARD Base Operations person is not available, the senior-most responding operational GARD member shall serve as mission leader. He/she may delegate this responsibility to another qualified GARD member.

4. The mission leader's duties shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Perform the duties of the mission Incident Commander (IC) if no other IC has been designated or if the IC is still en route.
- b. Coordinate all GARD search activities with the designated incident staff and or responsible agent.
- c. Maintain a record of all GARD search activities to include the master map and task log.
- d. Ensure that all GARD members receive all appropriate information regarding the search.
- e. Coordinate with the GARD dispatcher to ensure accountability of all responding GARD personnel.
- f. Designate a replacement mission leader if he/she must leave before the conclusion of the search efforts.
- g. Assure all GARD members receive all needed support services.
- h. Assist incident staff (if requested) with overall search strategy, including, but not limited to:
  - (1) planning and making task assignments
  - (2) debriefing field teams
  - (3) briefing arriving teams
- i. Obtain additional equipment as needed.
- j. Arrange for meals and lodging when needed.
- k. Arrange for transportation during search operations.

5. Operational dog handlers shall serve as Field Team Leaders. Upon arrival, they shall notify the mission leader and/or IC of their availability and shall sign in on appropriate logs. Dogs shall be crated, on leash, tied or in a down-stay at all times at base.

6. Non-operational members and applicants shall serve in any needed capacity for which they have been properly trained, including base support, walker, field team member, and any other support capacity. The member or applicant shall be responsible for bringing his/her daypack. Members shall respond in uniform. Applicants shall dress neatly in attire appropriate for the search task. Upon arrival, they shall notify the mission leader and/or IC of their availability and shall sign in on appropriate logs. Non-operational members and applicants shall not bring a dog to any search mission.

7. All members shall carry at all times a handheld radio or other means of communications with base and other search team members.

8. After completion of a task, team members shall report to the command post and debrief with the individual designated to that task.

9. Prior to leaving a search, each member or applicant shall have:

- a. debriefed with the appropriate person if applicable
- b. filled out appropriate task sheets if applicable
- c. signed out on the GARD mission attendance sheet and the IC log sheet

10. After leaving a search, each member or applicant shall notify the designated dispatcher upon arriving safely at home. If the member or applicant chooses not to return home, he/she shall notify the dispatcher that he/she has obtained shelter and is safe.

#### **IV. Evaluation Standards** (Revised 7-26-03)

Preface:

The purpose of these standards for Evaluation is to delineate the criteria that must be met in order to ensure that all GARD members and applicants responding to search missions are qualified to perform the duties they are assigned. These standards will (1) outline the skills and knowledge required of dogs, handlers, and base operations personnel and support personnel for Applicant, Candidate and Operational levels; (2) delineate the methods for evaluating and assessing the progress and maintenance of search skills of all levels; (3) specify training and educational requirements to improve and maintain search skills of all levels.

#### **Section A: Prospective Members** (Revised 7-26-03)

1. Prospective members are anyone who has expressed an interest in GARD and has requested, and been granted, permission to attend one or more training sessions to learn more about canine search and rescue and GARD.
2. Prospective members may be invited to attend training only by a Candidate or Operational Member.
3. Prospective dog handlers will be instructed not to bring their dogs to the first training session.
4. Prospective members will observe only at the first training and will not be allowed to actively participate as a subject or other training aid.
5. Prospective members are encouraged to ask questions to help them determine their level of interest. GARD members and applicants are encouraged to answer any questions the prospective members may have.
6. At the end of the first training session, prospective members may be invited to attend additional training sessions. Prospective dog handlers will be provided with a veterinary health care letter and form to be filled out by their regular veterinarian. Prospective dog handlers are requested not to bring their dogs to training sessions until this veterinary form has been filled out and returned to GARD.
7. Having a GARD veterinary form on file does not guarantee the suitability of any dog for GARD. Prospective dogs must be in good health and of suitable temperament. Any prospective dog that demonstrates any inappropriate aggressive tendencies towards people or other animals may be terminated from the program at any time. The suitability of the dog's temperament for search work is made solely at the discretion of GARD. Prospective dog handlers whose dog has been deemed of unsuitable temperament may be asked not to bring the dog to further training sessions. Further, any dog showing signs of ill health or injury may be terminated from the program at any time. The health or injury status of

the dog for purposes of inclusion in or exclusion from GARD training sessions is made solely at the discretion of GARD. If GARD feels that a dog's health or injury status is of a temporary nature, the prospective member may ask for reevaluation of the dog after a suitable rehabilitation period. Prospective members whose dog has been determined unsuitable due to temperament, health or injury status may attempt to find a suitable dog, decide to work towards operational status as base support personnel, or may elect to discontinue their association with GARD.

8. Prospective members must attend at least four training sessions before filling out an application and requesting Applicant status. Filling out an application is not a guarantee that Applicant status will be granted. Applicants are voted to Applicant status by a two thirds (2/3) majority vote of the active membership as provided in the by-laws.

9. Prospective members may attend trainings for up to one (1) quarter (three (3) months or approximately twelve (12) training sessions) before applying for Applicant status. At the end of that period, the prospective member is expected to apply for Applicant status. Prospective members who decide not to apply are asked to no longer bring their dogs to training. This regulation is designed to ensure that training time is devoted to those who are serious about GARD and that it is not used as recreational time for those who are not progressing towards operational status in one of the available categories.

10. Although there are no specific attendance requirements for prospective members, they are encouraged to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of the trainings during the quarter. This allows GARD members to judge the dedication of prospective members and to determine whether promotion of an individual to Applicant status is in GARD's best interest. It also enables operational dog handlers to better advise prospective dog handlers on a particular dog's suitability for search work.

11. The application of prospective members will be reviewed by and voted on by the active membership by the end of the following quarter. Prospective members may continue attending training pending the outcome of such vote.

## **Section B: Wilderness Dog Handlers** (Revised 7-26-03)

### **1. Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers:**

- a. An Applicant Wilderness Dog Handler is a prospective member who has attended the required number of trainings as outlined in Section A: Prospective Members and whose application has been reviewed and approved by the active membership. Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers must have on file a completed GARD veterinary form before being voted to Applicant status.
- b. Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers are required to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of training sessions per quarter and fifty percent (50%) of business meetings per quarter to maintain Applicant status **and be eligible for testing.**
- c. Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers are given a six (6) month period to meet the requirements for Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler status as noted in Section B.2.

d. At the end of this six (6) month period, Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers may: a. request promotion to Candidate status after completing the requirements noted in Section B.2.; b. request a six (6) month extension to meet the requirements for Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler status; c. terminate their application; d. apply for Applicant status as Base Operations Personnel or other support personnel.

e. Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers are encouraged to take a Call-Out Qualified (COQ) class or to pass the walker checklist. After completing this requirement, Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers will be allowed to respond to searches as a walker or base support person.

f. Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers are expected to train their dog in basic obedience and to pass the GARD Basic Obedience Test as outlined in Section E Part 3. After passing the Basic Obedience Test, the Applicant may take his/her dog to demonstrations. Puppies under six months of age are permitted at demonstrations before passing the test. Puppies between six and ten months of age must pass the test prior to attending demonstrations, but are exempt from the “stay” element of the test. It is the responsibility of the Applicant Wilderness Dog Handler to formally request a Basic Obedience Test when he/she feels his/her dog is ready. Operational Dog Handlers will schedule the test so as not to interfere with group training schedules.

g. Dogs being trained by Applicant Wilderness Dog Handlers will be constantly evaluated by Operational Dog Handlers. Applicants may periodically ask for an evaluation by Operational Dog Handlers of the dog for suitability for search work. Such evaluations will be informal and are no guarantee that the dog will or will not pass formal evaluation tests.

h. If at any time any dog shows inappropriate aggressive behavior towards people or other animals, the dog’s inclusion in training may be terminated by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors.

i. While Operational Dog Handlers or other designated instructors will conduct training sessions, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Applicant Wilderness Dog Handler to ensure that his/her dog receives the training it needs.

j. Applicants are expected to learn land navigation and search strategy sufficient to pass the 20/20 Field Evaluation necessary to reach Candidate status. While training sessions will include discussions of these topics, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Applicant Wilderness Dog Handler to ensure that he/she learns the skills necessary. The GARD lending library, Field Team Member (FTM) and other classes, orienteering courses, and formal courses given by other SAR groups are some means of obtaining these skills.

k. When the Applicant Wilderness Dog Handler feels ready, he/she may formally request a 20/20 Field Evaluation. This field evaluation will be conducted according to the standards delineated in Section E 5.

l. After successfully completing the 20/20 Field Evaluation and the Basic Obedience Test, the Applicant Wilderness Dog Handler may request promotion to Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler status.

m. While not required for Applicant status, an Applicant may participate in the Survival Night Evaluation (Section E 2), the GARD Canine First Aid Course, and Red Cross first aid and CPR courses in partial fulfillment of Operational status requirements.

## **2. Candidate Wilderness Dog Handlers:**

a. A Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler is a member who has passed the requirements for Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler as delineated in Section B.1.1 above and who has been voted to Candidate status. A Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler is a voting member as noted in the by-laws.

b. Candidate Wilderness Dog Handlers are required to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of training sessions per quarter and fifty percent (50%) of business meetings per quarter to maintain Candidate status.

c. Candidate Wilderness Dog Handlers are given a six (6) month period to meet the requirements for Operational Dog Handler status as noted in Section B.2.

d. At the end of this six (6) month period, Candidate Wilderness Dog Handlers may: a. request promotion to Operational status after completing the requirements noted in Section B.2.; b. request a six (6) month extension to meet the requirements for Operational Dog Handler status; c. terminate their application; d. apply for Applicant status as Base Operations Personnel or other support personnel.

e. Candidate Wilderness Dog Handlers are required to take Field Team Member (FTM) class to reach Operational status.

f. Candidate Wilderness Dog Handlers are expected to train their dog in advanced obedience and agility and to pass the GARD Advanced Obedience and Agility Test as outlined in Section E 4. It is the responsibility of the Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler to formally request an Advanced Obedience and Agility Test when he/she feels his/her dog is ready. Operational Dog Handlers will schedule the test so as not to interfere with group training schedules.

g. Dogs being trained by Candidate Wilderness Dog Handlers will be constantly evaluated by Operational Dog Handlers. Candidates may periodically ask for an evaluation by Operational Dog Handlers of the dog for suitability for search work. Such evaluations will be informal and are no guarantee that the dog will or will not pass formal evaluation tests.

h. If at any time any dog shows inappropriate aggressive behavior towards people or other animals, the dog's inclusion in training may be terminated by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board of Directors.

i. While Operational Dog Handlers or other designated instructors will conduct training sessions, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler to ensure that his/her dog receives the training it needs.

j. Candidates are expected to learn land navigation and search strategy sufficient to pass the 40 Acre Night Field Evaluation and 160 Acre Field Evaluation necessary to reach Operational status. While training sessions will include discussions of these topics, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler to ensure that he/she learns the skills necessary. The GARD lending library,

Field Team Member (FTM) and other classes, orienteering courses, and formal courses given by other SAR groups are some means of obtaining these skills.

k. When the Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler feels ready, he/she may formally request the 40 Acre Night Field Evaluation and the 160 Acre Field Evaluation. These field evaluations will be conducted according to the standards delineated in Section E 6 and 7 at a time not to interfere with regular training.

l. Candidate Wilderness Dog Handlers must pass the state's written Canine SAR test, must have completed a Red Cross certification course in first aid and CPR (or equivalent or higher training), must attend GARD's Canine First Aid Course, and must pass the Survival Night Evaluation prior to applying for promotion to Operational Status.

m. The requirements delineated in e., f., k., and l. above may be completed in any order.

n. After successfully completing the 40 Acre Night Field Evaluation, the 160 Acre Field Evaluation, the State SAR Written test, the Survival Night Evaluation, a Field Team Member class, an American Red Cross First Aid and CPR Class (or equivalent), the GARD Canine First Aid Course, and the Advanced Obedience and Agility Test, the Candidate Wilderness Dog Handler may request promotion to Operational Dog Handler status.

### **3. Operational Wilderness Dog Handlers:**

a. An Operational Wilderness Dog Handler is a member who has passed the requirements for Operational Wilderness Dog Handler as delineated in Section B.2.n above.

b. Operational Wilderness Dog Handlers must re-certify every two years by passing the 40 Acre Re-Certification Field Evaluation as delineated in Section E.8. This reevaluation may take place no sooner than three (3) months prior to the two (2) year date and no later than three (3) months after the two (2) year date.

c. An Operational Wilderness Dog Team that fails the re-certification evaluation may retake the evaluation within two (2) months of the first test. Should the team again fail to pass the evaluation or the two (2) month period elapses, the dog team shall be removed from Operational status.

d. Operational Wilderness Dog Handlers may respond to searches with their dogs as delineated in Section III: Search Operations.

e. Operational Wilderness Dog Handlers who lose or retire a dog shall remain operational within the parameters set in Article III, Section 1.1-1b of the by-laws.

f. Operational Wilderness Dog Handlers who fail to meet the requirements to maintain active membership status must meet the requirements of Article III, Section 3.1 of the by-laws to be returned to Operational status.

## **Section C: Base Operations** (Revised 7-26-03)

### **1. Base Operations Applicants:**

- a. A Base Operations Applicant is a prospective member who has attended the required number of trainings as outlined in Section A: Prospective Members and whose application has been reviewed and approved by the active membership.
- b. Base Operations Applicants are required to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of training sessions per quarter and fifty percent (50%) of business meetings per quarter to maintain Applicant status.
- c. Base Operations Applicants are given a six (6) month period to meet the requirements for Base Operations Candidate status as noted in Section C.2.
- d. At the end of this six (6) month period, Base Operations Applicants may: a. request promotion to Candidate status after completing the requirements noted in Section C.2; b. request a six (6) month extension to meet the requirements for Base Operations Candidate status; c. terminate their application; d. apply for Applicant status as a Dog Handler or other support personnel.
- e. Base Operations Applicants will walk with a minimum of two different Operational Dog Handlers during training sessions. It will be left to the Applicant to inform the individual in charge of a training session if he/she has already walked with a particular dog handler.
- f. Base Operations Applicants will work at base with an Operational member for at least some portion of three (3) training sessions. This should include: the use of GARD radios using appropriate radio protocol; demonstration of a working knowledge of the phonetic alphabet; demonstration of general information on search procedures; demonstration of elementary map and compass skills.
- g. Base Operations Applicants must attend a Field Team Member (FTM) course and receive a satisfactory evaluation.
- h. Base Operations Applicants must satisfactorily complete the FEMA Emergency Management Institute's Independent Study course, IS-195 Basic Incident Command System.
- i. Base Operations Applicants are expected to learn land navigation and search strategy sufficient to pass the 20 Acre Field Evaluation. This field evaluation will be conducted according to the standards delineated in Section E, Part 9.
- j. Base Operations Applicants must assist an Operational member of GARD or another state-certified group as approved by the Board of Directors on at least three (3) missions for a minimum field time of twelve (12) hours. Two (2) missions may be mock searches.

k. After successfully completing the requirements delineated in e, f, g, h, i, and j above, the Base Operations Applicant may request promotion to Base Operations Candidate status.

l. While not required for Applicant status, an Applicant may participate in the Survival Night Evaluation, the GARD Canine First Aid Course, and Red Cross first aid and CPR courses in partial fulfillment of Operational status requirements.

## **2. Base Operations Candidates**

a. A Base Operations Candidate is a member who has passed the requirements for Base Operations Candidate as delineated in Section C.1.1 above and who has been voted to Candidate status. A Base Operations Candidate is a voting member as noted in the by-laws.

b. Base Operations Candidates are required to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of training sessions per quarter and fifty percent (50%) of business meetings per quarter to maintain Candidate status.

c. Base Operations Candidates are given a six (6) month period to meet the requirements for Operational Base Operations status as noted in Section C.2.

d. At the end of this six (6) month period, Base Operations Candidates may: (1) request promotion to Operational status after completing the requirements noted in Section C.2; (2) request a six (6) month extension to meet the requirements for Operational Base Operations status; (3) terminate their application; (4) apply for Applicant status as a Dog Handler or other support personnel.

e. Base Operations Candidates are expected to learn land navigation and search strategy sufficient to pass the Field Evaluation for Base Operations necessary to reach Operational status. While training sessions will include these topics, it is ultimately the responsibility of the Candidate to ensure that he/she learns the skills necessary. The GARD lending library, FTM and other classes, orienteering courses, and formal courses given by other SAR groups are some means of obtaining these skills.

f. Base Operations Candidates must satisfactorily complete a VDEM-sponsored Managing Search Operations (MSO) course. The completion of VDEM-sponsored Practical Search Operations (PSO) is strongly recommended.

g. Base Operations Candidates must assist an Operational member in Base Operations on a minimum of two (2) missions or simulations/mock searches.

h. Base Operations Candidates must pass the Base Operations Evaluation at a mock search/simulation or on an actual mission. This evaluation will be conducted according to the standards delineated in Section E, Part 11. If this evaluation is conducted during an actual mission, at no time will the evaluative process interfere with the actual search operation.

i. Base Operations Candidates must participate in a Map Problem Evaluation as delineated in Section 12.

j. The Candidate must pass GARD's written test, must have completed a Red Cross certification course in first aid and CPR (or equivalent or higher training), and must pass the Survival Night Evaluation prior to

applying for promotion to Operational status. While not required, completion of GARD's Canine First Aid Course is strongly recommended.

k. After successfully completing the Field Evaluation for Base Operations, the Survival Night Evaluation, the GARD written test, an American Red Cross First Aid and CPR Class (or equivalent), a Managing Search Operations course, the Base Operations Evaluation, the Map Problem Evaluation, and after fulfilling the requirement in section "g" above, the Base Operations Candidate may request promotion to Operational Base Operations status.

## **Section D: Specialty Dog Teams** (Adopted 10-22-03)

The main emphasis of Greater Atlantic Rescue Dogs is to provide operational wilderness dog/handler teams to requesting agencies to aid in the search for persons missing in wooded areas. Once a handler reaches operational status with a wilderness dog, he/she may opt to begin training that, or another, dog in a specialty area. This section shall delineate the standards for two specialty dog categories: Cadaver Dogs (Land and Water Certifications) and Urban Search Dogs.

**1. Cadaver Dog Handlers**—The Cadaver Dog/Handler Team consists of a dog and handler specially trained to find human remains above and below ground, in vehicles, and in buildings. More highly specialized training in the location of human remains underwater may also be undertaken.

### a. Applicant Cadaver Dog Handlers

(1) An Applicant Cadaver Dog Handler is a member who is either currently operational, or has previously been operational, as a Wilderness Dog Handler with GARD and who fills out an application to begin training a cadaver dog. The application must be approved by the active membership. Prior to approval of the application, the prospective Cadaver Dog Handler must meet the requirements of number (5) below.

(2) Applicant Cadaver Dog Handlers are required to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of business meetings per quarter to maintain Applicant status. Additionally, Applicant Cadaver Dog Handlers are required to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of cadaver training sessions per quarter as delineated in Section D.1.a.(6) below.

(3) Applicant Cadaver Dog Handlers are given a six (6) month period to meet the requirements for Candidate Cadaver Dog Handler status as noted in Section D.1.a.(7) below.

(4) At the end of this six (6) month period, Applicant Cadaver Dog Handlers may: (a) request promotion to Candidate status after completing the requirements noted in Section D.1.a (7) below; (b) request a six (6) month extension to meet the requirements for Candidate Cadaver Dog Handler status; (c) terminate their application.

(5) Applicant Cadaver Dog Handlers are expected to train their dog in basic obedience and to pass the GARD Basic Obedience Test as outlined in Section E.3. It is the responsibility of the Applicant Cadaver Dog Handler to formally request a Basic Obedience Test when he/she feels his/her dog is ready. Operational Dog Handlers will schedule the test so as not to interfere with group training schedules. If the

dog being trained for Cadaver work is currently or previously an operational wilderness dog, the basic obedience test need not be taken.

(6) GARD shall schedule at least two specialty cadaver training sessions per quarter at the convenience of the current Applicant, Candidate, and Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers. Additionally, Applicant, Candidate and Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers shall train individually or with others on cadaver problems at least once weekly. A training log shall be maintained to document these individual and group sessions.

GARD will attempt to provide suitable cadaver scent sources to aid in training, but it is ultimately the responsibility of the handler to obtain suitable training aids. All training, whether in GARD group sessions or individual training, shall utilize legally obtained, legally possessed training aids only. At no time shall any GARD member train on illegally obtained or illegally possessed cadaver scent sources. Appendix A lists those sources which can legally be used in Virginia.

(7) When the Applicant Cadaver Dog Handler feels ready, he/she may formally request a Line Indication Evaluation and the One Acre Above Ground Evaluation as delineated in Section E.13 and E.14. After successfully completing these evaluations, and, if applicable, the Basic Obedience Test delineated in Section E.3, the Applicant may request promotion to Candidate Cadaver Dog Handler status.

#### b. Candidate Cadaver Dog Handlers

(1) A Candidate Cadaver Dog Handler is a member who has passed the requirements for Candidate Cadaver Dog Handler as delineated in Section D.1.a.(7) above and who has been voted to Candidate status.

(2) Candidate Cadaver Dog Handlers are required to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of business meetings per quarter to maintain Candidate status. Additionally, Candidate Cadaver Dog Handlers are required to meet the training requirements delineated in Section D.1.a.6 above.

(3) Candidate Cadaver Dog Handlers are given a six (6) month period to meet the requirements for Operational Cadaver Dog Handler status as noted in Section D.1.b.(8) below.

(4) At the end of this six (6) month period, Candidate Cadaver Dog Handlers may: (a) request promotion to Operational status after completing the requirements noted in Section D.1.b.(8); (b) request a six (6) month extension to meet the requirements for Operational Cadaver Dog Handler status; (c) terminate their application.

(5) Candidate Cadaver Dog Handlers are expected to train their dog in advanced obedience and agility and to pass the GARD Advanced Obedience and Agility Test as outlined in Section E.4. It is the responsibility of the Candidate Cadaver Dog Handler to formally request an Advanced Obedience and Agility Test when he/she feels his/her dog is ready. Operational Dog Handlers will schedule the test so as not to interfere with group training schedules. If the dog being trained for cadaver work is currently or previously an operational wilderness dog, the Advanced Obedience and Agility Test need not be taken.

(6) When the Candidate Cadaver Dog Handler feels ready, he/she may formally request the Building Evaluation, the Fifteen (15) Acre Above Ground Evaluation, and the Six (6) Acre Buried Evaluation as

delineated in Section E.15, E.16, and E.17 respectively. These evaluations will be scheduled so as not to interfere with regular training.

(7) Candidate Cadaver Dog Handlers must attend an approved Crime Scene Prevention Class and at least one approved Cadaver Dog workshop or seminar prior to applying for promotion to Operational status. Approval of such classes shall be given by a majority vote of the active membership.

(8) After successfully completing the Building Evaluation, the Fifteen (15) Acre Above Ground Evaluation, the Six (6) Acre Buried Evaluation as delineated in Section E.15, E.16, and E.17 respectively, and, if applicable, the Advanced Obedience and Agility Test delineated in Section E.4, and after meeting the requirements in Section D.1.b.(7) above, the Candidate Cadaver Dog Handler may request promotion to Operational Cadaver Dog Handler status.

### c. Operational Cadaver Dog Handler

(1) An Operational Cadaver Dog Handler is a member who has passed the requirements for Operational Cadaver Dog Handler as delineated in Section D.1.b.(8) above and who has been voted to Operational status.

(2) Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers are required to attend at least fifty percent (50%) of business meetings per quarter to maintain Operational status. Additionally, Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers are must meet training requirements as delineated in Section D.1.a.6 above.

(3) Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers must re-certify every two years by passing the Three (3) Acre Buried Re-certification Evaluation as delineated in Section E.18. This reevaluation may take place no sooner than three (3) months prior to the two (2) year date and no later than three (3) months after the two (2) year date.

(4) An Operational Cadaver Dog Team that fails the re-certification evaluation may retake the evaluation within two (2) months of the first test. Should the team again fail to pass the evaluation or the two (2) month period elapses, the dog team shall be removed from Operational status.

(5) Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers may respond to searches with their dogs as delineated in Section III: Search Operations.

(6) Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers who lose or retire a dog shall remain operational within the parameters set in Article III, Section 1.1-1b of the by-laws.

(7) Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers who fail to meet the requirements to maintain active membership status must meet the requirements of Article III, Section 3.1 of the by-laws to be returned to Operational status.

## **2. Urban Search Dog/Handler Teams (Currently Under Development)**

## **Section E: Evaluation Tests** (Revised 7-26-03)

### **1. Written Test**

- a. Wilderness Dog Handler Candidates must achieve a passing score on GARD's written test for Wilderness Dog Handlers
- b. The test will be provided by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management with questions being randomly selected from questions supplied by the SAR Dog Standards Committee.
- c. The test will be administered by the unit's evaluator(s) and kept with the unit's records.
- d. The test will cover topics including, but not limited to, the following:
  1. Scent transport theory
  2. Canine first aid
  3. Land navigation
  4. Search theory
  5. Subject characteristics
  6. Topographical maps
  7. Search strategy
  8. ASRC grid
  9. Clue and site protection procedures

### **2. Survival Night Evaluation**

- a. The purpose of the overnight survival night exercise is to test the individual's and dog's ability to spend the night in the outdoors and still be able to function adequately the next day.
- b. The reason for this requirement is that search and rescue personnel may find themselves in a situation in the field where they are forced to spend the night with whatever equipment they happen to have with them.
- c. Applicants or Candidates may participate in the Survival Night Evaluation. Applicants or Candidates for Wilderness Dog Handler must participate with their dog.
- d. Prior to participating in the Survival Night Evaluation, participants **MUST** first attend a survival night lecture. A survival night lecture and survival night evaluation shall be scheduled at least once annually.
- e. The following guidelines shall apply:
  1. The individual's equipment should be restricted to what they normally carry in a "day pack" during actual searches.
  2. The bivouac area should be typical terrain found in searches and far enough from roads and vehicles to create some sense of realism.
  3. Access to vehicles and equipment caches during the bivouac shall be denied.
  4. The individual must demonstrate the ability to build a fire and shelter.

5. The bivouac shall not become an exercise in raw survival. The evaluators shall inspect each person's equipment and help ensure that it is at least minimally adequate for the environment.

6. Safety is of paramount importance. The participating individuals shall be monitored carefully during the night to ensure that problems such as hypothermia do not develop. The evaluators shall have contingency plans for emergencies.

### **3. Basic Obedience Test for Wilderness Dog/Handler Teams**

Applicants and their dogs shall be required to demonstrate basic obedience skills using voice and/or hand signals. Puppies under ten months of age need not pass the stay element. Puppies under six months of age need not pass the basic obedience test in order to attend demonstrations. The following skills will be tested:

a. Heel on Lead: The dog will start from a sitting position. The handler will give the command to heel and step forward. The dog should remain at the side of the handler with its head near the handler's leg. The dog should always be on a loose lead. The handler shall walk the dog in a pattern called by the evaluator to include the following elements:

- 1) Forward
- 2) Left Turn
- 3) Right Turn
- 4) Halt with Sit
- 5) Fast Pace
- 6) Slow Pace
- 7) About Turn

The dog must get either an Excellent or Good on elements 1) and 4) in order to pass the heeling element.

b. Recall Element: The dog shall be placed on a stay or wait command in a sitting or down position. The handler shall walk away from the dog at least twenty-five (25) yards. The handler shall wait for the evaluator's cue to call the dog. The dog shall proceed directly to the handler and stop in a sit position either directly in front of or at the side of the handler at no more than an arm's length away.

c. Stay Element: The handler shall place the dog on a sit or down stay off lead. The handler shall walk away from the dog at least twenty-five (25) yards. Handler may remain in sight of the dog and may offer verbal commands/reinforcements to the dog if needed. The dog shall remain on the stay for five (5) consecutive minutes to begin when the handler leaves the dog. The dog shall remain within one body length during the stay period. The dog shall remain in position until the handler returns to the heel position and releases the dog after being so instructed by the evaluator.

d. Aggression Element:

1) Dog Aggression: The handler shall tie the dog to his/her vehicle and go out of sight of the dog. Another person shall heel a (preferably unknown) dog past the back of the vehicle within ten (10) feet of the tied dog. The dog shall not exhibit any aggressive behavior to include lunging, growling, snarling, baring of teeth or barking aggressively. The dog shall not be under a wait or stay command during this test.

2) People Aggression: The handler shall tie the dog to his/her vehicle and go out of sight of the dog. Another person (preferably unknown to the dog) shall approach the dog, hook him/her to a lead and walk away from the vehicle. The dog shall not exhibit any aggressive behavior to include lunging, growling, snarling, baring of teeth, barking aggressively or biting. The dog shall not be under a wait or stay command during this test.

#### **4. Advanced Obedience/Agility Test for Wilderness Dog/Handler Teams**

Candidates and their dogs shall be required to demonstrate advanced obedience and agility skills using voice and/or hand signals. The following skills will be tested:

a. Heel on Lead Through a Crowd: The dog will start from a sitting position. The handler will give the command to heel and step forward. The dog should remain at the side of the handler with its head near the handler's leg. The crowd shall consist of at least three people. The dog should always be on a loose lead. The handler shall walk the dog in a pattern through a crowd called by the evaluator to include the following elements:

- 1) Forward
- 2) Left Turn
- 3) Right Turn
- 4) Halt with Sit
- 5) Fast Pace
- 6) Slow Pace
- 7) About Turn

The dog must get either an Excellent or Good on elements 1) and 4) in order to pass the heeling element.

b. Recall Element: The dog shall be placed on a stay or wait command in a sitting or down position. The handler shall walk away from the dog at least twenty-five (25) yards. The handler shall wait for the evaluator's cue to call the dog. The dog shall proceed directly to the handler and stop in a sit position either directly in front of or at the side of the handler at no more than an arm's length away.

c. Stay Element: The handler shall place the dog on a sit or down stay off lead in a group of at least three dogs. The handler shall go out of sight of the dog. The dog shall remain on the stay for five (5) consecutive minutes to begin when the handler leaves the dog. Distractions will be present and shall include the throwing of dog toys and playing with another dog. At no time shall the distractions come within ten (10) feet of the dog being tested. The dog shall remain within one body length during the stay period. The dog shall remain in position until the handler returns to the heel position and releases the dog after being so instructed by the evaluator.

d. Aggression/Behavior Element:

1) Dog Aggression/Behavior element: The dog and handler shall load into the back of a vehicle with at least two (2) other dog teams. The vehicle shall be driven at least one (1) mile. The dog must not display aggressive or uncontrolled behavior.

2) People Aggression: The handler will stand with the dog in the heel position. A stranger will approach and engage the handler in conversation. The dog must not show aggressive behavior towards the stranger.

e. Halt on Command Element: The handler shall place the dog in a sit or down and walk approximately twenty-five (25) yards away. On the evaluator's signal, the handler shall call the dog. While in motion, the handler shall command the dog to stop. The dog must stop within ten (10) feet of the handler's command. Any position is acceptable.

f. Agility Element: The following agility elements must be performed by the dog without physical aid from the handler:

- 1) The dog will jump onto a surface at least two and one half (2 ½) feet high.
- 2) The dog will walk across a board at least twelve (12) feet long and at least three (3) feet off the ground. The board shall be no more than twelve (12) inches wide. Tests one and two may be combined.
- 3) The dog will go through a thirty-six (36) inch or smaller diameter passageway at least eight (8) feet long.

### **5. 20/20 Field Test for Wilderness Dog/Handler Teams**

**A. Purpose:** Applicants and their dogs shall pass a 20/20 Field Evaluation test in order to be voted to Candidate status. The objective of the 20/20 Field Evaluation is to assess the progress of Applicants in attaining the skills necessary to become an Operational Wilderness Dog/Handler Team.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Applicant needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Candidate status:

1. The handler shall be expected to demonstrate subject awareness. Specifically, the handler should ask questions which may provide clues in locating the subject.
2. The handler shall outline to the evaluators and carry out a search strategy that will adequately cover a 20-acre sector and take into account wind and terrain conditions.
3. The handler shall describe his dog's alerts and shall advise the evaluators whenever he believes his dog alerts during the evaluation.
4. The handler shall describe his dog's indication upon finding the subject and shall demonstrate that indication to the evaluators prior to beginning the evaluation.
5. The handler shall demonstrate the following map and compass field skills:
  - a. Follow a compass bearing
  - b. Follow a contour
  - c. Identify and locate terrain features
  - d. Provide map coordinates
  - e. Trace route of travel on map
  - f. Identify a bailout plan
6. The handler shall debrief with the evaluators at the completion of the task.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills that the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Candidate status:

1. The dog must be actively searching. He should move out in front of or away from the handler. The dog should not be constantly behind or close to the handler.

2. The dog should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment (i.e. livestock, wildlife, noise, etc.). Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.
3. After alerting, the dog must be willing to approach the subject.
4. After finding the subject, the dog must give the previously described indication that he has found.
5. For teams with refinds, the dog and its handler must return to the subject.
6. During the evaluation, the handler may be asked to call his dog. The dog must return promptly to the handler.

#### **D. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate the subject. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in the failing of the evaluation. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the evaluation. If either the dog or the handler fails, the subsequent evaluation shall retest both.
2. A 20 acre site will be chosen by the evaluators. The evaluation site shall contain mostly woods with at least some light to moderate underbrush. The area should not contain large areas of extreme terrain such as dense underbrush, swamps, or large streams, or be extremely steep. It should not contain large areas of open fields. The area should contain a variety of terrain features such as ridges, drainages, knolls, etc.
3. The evaluation will take place during daylight hours. Weather conditions should not be extreme, such as heavy rain or snow or high winds. The test will last no longer than two and one half (2 ½) hours.
4. The handler shall be given a map with a 20-acre area outlined on the map. Evaluators will provide a basic scenario, but the handler should demonstrate at least some subject awareness by asking questions about the subject. The handler will then outline a search strategy. The search strategy should be based on wind and terrain. The handler will not be expected to take subject characteristics or scent movement into consideration when developing a search strategy.
5. The handler shall follow the search strategy he/she has outlined without the dog. The handler will be asked to demonstrate basic land navigation skills during this part of the evaluation.
6. After completing the search sector without the dog, one of the evaluators shall place a subject in the sector. The handler will then follow the same search strategy again. The handler will be expected to describe his/her dog's alert. The dog should make a self-directed air scent find and indicate to the handler when he finds the subject.
7. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in searching a small area. Applicants and evaluators should critique the performance in each part. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail after completion of the evaluation.

## **6. 40 Acre Night Field Evaluation for Wilderness Dog/Handler Teams**

**A. Purpose:** Candidates and their dogs shall pass a 40 Acre Night Field Evaluation test in order to be voted to Operational status. The objective of the 40 Acre Night Field Evaluation is to assess the ability of the dog team to function effectively at night.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Candidate needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Operational status:

1. The handler shall be expected to assess the scenario provided by the evaluators and ask appropriate questions which may influence his/her search strategy.
2. The handler shall outline and carry out an effective search strategy based on the search area, wind conditions, time of day, and the scenario provided by the evaluators
3. The handler shall describe his dog's alerts and shall advise the evaluators whenever he believes his dog alerts during the evaluation. The handler shall be able to differentiate between animal and human alerts, if applicable.
4. The handler shall describe his dog's indication upon finding the subject.
5. The handler shall accurately mark on his map his path of travel, wind direction, clues, alerts, and finds.
6. The handler shall demonstrate a working ability to land-navigate utilizing map and compass.
7. The handler shall demonstrate radio skills and communicate to Base the coordinates of any clues and/or finds.
8. The handler shall debrief at the end of the task and give a POD of the search area.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills that the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Operational status:

1. The dog must be actively searching. He should move out in front of or away from the handler. The dog should not be constantly behind or close to the handler.
2. The dog should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment (i.e. livestock, wildlife, noise, etc.). Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.
3. After alerting, the dog shall approach the subject.
4. After finding the subject, the dog must give the previously described indication that he has found.
5. For teams with refinds, the dog and its handler must return to the subject without excessive urging from the handler.
6. During the evaluation, the handler may be asked to call or halt the dog. The dog must respond to the handler's commands.

**D. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate the subject. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in

the failing of the evaluation. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the evaluation. If either the dog or the handler fails, the subsequent evaluation shall retest both.

2. A 40 acre site will be chosen by the evaluators. The evaluation site shall contain mostly woods with at least some light to moderate underbrush. The area should not contain large areas of extreme terrain such as dense underbrush, swamps, or large streams, or be extremely steep. It should not contain large areas of open fields. The area should contain a variety of terrain features such as ridges, drainages, knolls, etc.
3. The evaluation will take place during nighttime hours. Weather conditions should not be extreme, such as heavy rain or snow or high winds. The test will last no longer than three (3) hours. The evaluators will place one (1) or two (2) subjects in the search area.
4. The handler shall be given a map with a 40-acre area outlined on the map. Evaluators will provide a basic scenario, but the handler should ask appropriate questions. The handler will then outline a search strategy. The search strategy should be based on wind and terrain as well as subject characteristics and scent movement.
5. The handler shall follow the search strategy he/she has outlined. The handler will be asked to demonstrate basic land navigation skills during the evaluation. The handler shall revise the search strategy as appropriate based on alerts, changes in weather, etc. The handler will notify the evaluators of the dog's alerts and indications. The dog should make at least one self-directed air scent find and indicate to the handler when he finds the subject(s).
6. Upon making a find, the handler shall demonstrate appropriate radio communications skills in notifying Base of the find. The handler shall give Base coordinates of any clues and finds. The handler shall provide Base with appropriate evaluation of the subject and request the appropriate equipment to get the subject back to Base.
7. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in searching at night. Candidates and evaluators should critique the performance in each part. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail after completion of the evaluation.

### **7. 160 Acre Field Evaluation for Dog/Handler Teams**

**A. Purpose:** Candidates and their dogs shall pass a 160 Acre Field Evaluation test in order to be voted to Operational status. The objective of the 160 Acre Field Evaluation is to assess the ability of the dog team to effectively search a large area for an extended period of time.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Candidate needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Operational status:

1. The handler shall be expected to assess the scenario provided by the evaluators and ask appropriate questions which may influence his/her search strategy.
2. The handler shall outline and carry out an effective search strategy based on the search area, wind conditions, time of day, and the scenario provided by the evaluators

3. The handler shall describe his dog's alerts and shall advise the evaluators whenever he believes his dog alerts during the evaluation. The handler shall be able to differentiate between animal and human alerts, if applicable.

4. The handler shall describe his dog's indication upon finding the subject.

5. The handler shall accurately mark on his map his path of travel, wind direction, clues, alerts, and finds.

6. The handler shall demonstrate a working ability to land-navigate utilizing map and compass.

7. The handler shall demonstrate radio skills and communicate to Base the coordinates of any clues and/or finds.

8. The handler shall debrief at the end of the task and give a POD of the search area.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills that the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Operational status:

1. The dog must be actively searching. He should move out in front of or away from the handler. The dog should not be constantly behind or close to the handler.

2. The dog should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment (i.e. livestock, wildlife, noise, etc.). Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.

3. After alerting, the dog shall approach the subject.

4. After finding the subject, the dog must give the previously described indication that he has found.

5. For teams with refinds, the dog and its handler must return to the subject without excessive urging from the handler.

6. During the evaluation, the handler may be asked to call or halt the dog. The dog must respond to the handler's commands.

7. The dog must show a willingness to continue to work after he has made a find.

**D. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate the subject. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in the failing of the evaluation. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the evaluation. If either the dog or the handler fails, the subsequent evaluation shall retest both.

2. A 160 acre site will be chosen by the evaluators. The evaluation site shall contain mostly woods with at least some light to moderate underbrush. The area should not contain large areas of extreme terrain such as dense underbrush, swamps, or large streams, or be extremely steep. It should not contain large areas of open fields. The area should contain a variety of terrain features such as ridges, drainages, knolls, etc.

3. The evaluation will take place during daylight hours. Weather conditions should not be extreme, such as heavy rain or snow or high winds. The test will last no longer than six (6) hours. The evaluators will place two (2) or three (3) subjects in the search area.

4. The handler shall be given a map with a 160-acre area outlined on the map. Evaluators will provide a basic scenario, but the handler should ask appropriate questions. The handler will then outline a search strategy. The search strategy should be based on wind and terrain as well as subject characteristics and scent movement.
5. The handler shall follow the search strategy he/she has outlined. The handler will be asked to demonstrate basic land navigation skills during the evaluation. The handler shall revise the search strategy as appropriate based on alerts, changes in weather, etc. The handler will notify the evaluators of the dog's alerts and indications. The dog should make at least one self-directed air scent find and indicate to the handler when he finds the subject(s).
6. Upon making a find, the handler shall demonstrate appropriate radio communications skills in notifying Base of the find. The handler shall give Base coordinates of any clues and finds. The handler shall provide Base with appropriate evaluation of the subject and request the appropriate equipment to get the subject back to Base.
7. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in searching a large area for an extended period of time. Candidates and evaluators should critique the performance in each part. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail after completion of the evaluation.

### **8. 40 Acre Re-certification Field Test for Dog/Handler Teams**

**A. Purpose:** The purpose of the 40 Acre Re-certification Field Test is to assess whether the dog/handler team has maintained the skills necessary to be an effective search team.

**B. Handler and Dog Skills:** The handler and dog skills expected are the same as those delineated for the 160 Acre Field Test in Section 7 above.

#### **C. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate the subject. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in the failing of the evaluation. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the evaluation. If either the dog or the handler fails, the subsequent evaluation shall retest both.
2. A 40 acre site will be chosen by the evaluators. The evaluation site shall contain mostly woods with at least some light to moderate underbrush. The area should not contain large areas of extreme terrain such as dense underbrush, swamps, or large streams, or be extremely steep. It should not contain large areas of open fields. The area should contain a variety of terrain features such as ridges, drainages, knolls, etc.
3. The evaluation will take place during daylight hours. Weather conditions should not be extreme, such as heavy rain or snow or high winds. The test will last no longer than three (3) hours. The evaluators will place zero (0) to two (2) subjects in the search area.

4. The handler shall be given a map with a 40-acre area outlined on the map. Evaluators will provide a basic scenario, but the handler should ask appropriate questions. The handler will then outline a search strategy. The search strategy should be based on wind and terrain as well as subject characteristics and scent movement.

5. The handler shall follow the search strategy he/she has outlined. The handler will be asked to demonstrate basic land navigation skills during the evaluation. The handler shall revise the search strategy as appropriate based on alerts, changes in weather, etc. The handler will notify the evaluators of the dog's alerts and indications, if any.

6. Upon making a find, the handler shall demonstrate appropriate radio communications skills in notifying Base of the find. The handler shall give Base coordinates of any clues and finds. The handler shall provide Base with appropriate evaluation of the subject and request the appropriate equipment to get the subject back to Base.

7. The evaluators shall assess whether the dog/handler team has maintained the skills necessary to be an effective search team and will not pass them if the weaknesses are such that the team cannot effectively search an area. Handlers and evaluators should critique the performance in each part. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail after completion of the evaluation.

### **9. 20 Acre Field Evaluation for Base Operations**

**A. Purpose:** Base Operations Applicants shall pass a 20 Acre Field Evaluation for Base Operations in order to be voted to Candidate status. The objective of the 20 Acre Field Evaluation for Base Operations is to assess the progress of Applicants in attaining the skills necessary to become an Operational Base Operations Person.

**B. Applicant Skills:** The following are the skills the Applicant needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Candidate status:

1. The Applicant shall be expected to demonstrate subject awareness. Specifically, the Applicant should ask questions which may provide clues in locating the subject.
2. The Applicant shall outline to the evaluators and carry out a search strategy that will adequately cover a 20-acre sector and take into account wind and terrain conditions.
3. The Applicant shall demonstrate the following map and compass field skills:
  - a. Follow a compass bearing
  - b. Follow a contour line
  - c. Identify and locate terrain features
  - d. Provide map coordinates (UTM and ASRC format)
  - e. Trace route of travel on map
  - f. Identify an appropriate evacuation route
  - g. Calculate compass declination

### **C. Test Procedure:**

1. The Applicant shall arrive on time and with appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the Applicant must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form.
2. A 20 acre site will be chosen by the evaluators. The evaluation site shall contain mostly woods with at least some light to moderate underbrush. The area should not contain large areas of extreme terrain such as dense underbrush, swamps, or large streams, or be extremely steep. It should not contain large areas of open fields. The area should contain a variety of terrain features such as ridges, drainages, knolls, etc.
3. The evaluation will take place during daylight hours. Weather conditions should not be extreme, such as heavy rain or snow or high winds. The test will last no longer than two and one half (2 ½) hours.
4. The Applicant shall be given a map with a 20-acre area outlined on the map. Evaluators will provide basic information, but the Applicant should demonstrate at least some subject awareness by asking questions about the subject. The Applicant will then outline a search strategy. The search strategy should be based on subject characteristics, wind, and terrain. The Applicant will not be expected to take subject characteristics or scent movement into consideration when developing a search strategy.
5. The Applicant shall follow the search strategy he/she has outlined. The Applicant will be asked to demonstrate basic skills during this part of the evaluation.
6. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the Applicant in searching a small area. Applicants and evaluators should critique the performance. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail after completion of the evaluation.

### **10. Field Evaluation for Base Operations**

**A. Purpose:** Base Operations Candidates shall pass a Field Evaluation for Base Operations test in order to be voted to Operational status. The objective of this test is to ensure that Base Operations personnel understand how dog/handler teams work in the field so that they may effectively assign search sectors for dog/handler teams during searches.

### **B. Candidate Skills:**

1. The Candidate shall be expected to explain why the dog handler worked the area the way he/she did.
2. The Candidate shall accurately mark on his/her map the path of travel, wind direction, clues, and subject location.
3. The Candidate shall suggest other possible tactics that could be used for this area.

### **C. Test Procedure:**

1. The Candidate shall arrive on time and with appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the Applicant must pass eighty (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form.

2. This evaluation shall take place in conjunction with a dog/handler team's 40 Acre Night Field Evaluation, 160 Acre Field Evaluation, or a 40 Acre Re-certification Evaluation following the standards delineated in Section E, Parts 6, 7, and 8 respectively.

3. The Base Operations Candidate shall request permission from the Dog Handler Candidate (for 40 Acre Night Field Evaluation or 160 Acre Field Evaluation) or Operational Dog Handler (for 40 Acre Re-certification Evaluation) to walk on the evaluation. The dog handler has the right to decline permission.

4. The Base Operations Candidate shall participate as a walker on the dog handler's evaluation. The Base Operations Candidate is expected to follow all instructions for walkers given by the dog handler.

5. At the end of the evaluation, the Base Operations Candidate shall turn in a map marked with the route of travel, location of clues, wind direction, and location of subject(s). The Candidate shall also explain why the handler worked the area the way he/she did and shall suggest other possible tactics that could be used for this area.

### **11. Base Operations Evaluation for Base Operations Candidates**

**A. Purpose:** Base Operations Candidates shall pass a Base Operations Evaluation prior to being voted to Operational status. The objective of this test is to assess the Candidate's ability to perform basic base operations duties.

**B. Candidate Skills:** The following are skills the Candidate needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Operational status:

1. The Candidate shall be expected to maintain a communications log.
2. The Candidate shall be expected to perform the initial investigation at a mock search/simulation.
3. The Candidate shall be expected to determine the Probability of Area (POA).
4. The Candidate shall be expected to segment the search area into workable sectors.
5. The Candidate shall be expected to conduct briefings and debriefings of search teams.
6. The Candidate shall demonstrate the ability to move available assets when deemed appropriate to do so.
7. The Candidate shall demonstrate the ability to complete all necessary documentation for a mission.
8. The Candidate shall demonstrate the ability to mark task and master maps appropriately.
9. The Candidate shall demonstrate the ability to organize an evacuation plan.
10. The Candidate shall demonstrate the ability to evaluate resource requirements.
11. The Candidate shall demonstrate the ability to maintain control of the search environment.

### **C. Test Procedure:**

1. The Candidate shall arrive on time to the base site of a mock search.
2. The Candidate shall arrive with all documents, forms and maps necessary to effectively run base operations for the planned mock search.

3. The Candidate shall conduct the initial investigation by asking appropriate questions of the Responsible Agent or any other persons needed to gather information necessary to effectively run base operations for the planned mock search.
4. The Candidate shall evaluate resource requirements needed to conduct an effective search.
5. The Candidate shall segment the search area into workable sectors and assign search tasks.
6. The Candidate shall brief and debrief each search team before and after each search task.
7. The Candidate shall reassign available assets when appropriate to do so.
8. The Candidate shall organize an evacuation plan.
9. The Candidate shall determine POA and use this determination to assign tasks.
10. The Candidate shall complete all paperwork customarily used in Virginia search missions.
11. The evaluators shall assess the ability of the Candidate to conduct base operations tasks for a mock search. Candidates and evaluators should critique the performance of the Candidate. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail after completion of the evaluation.

## **12. Map Problem Evaluation for Base Operations**

This test is currently still under development.

(Tests 13 through 18 Adopted 10-22-03)

## **13. Line Indication Evaluation**

**A. Purpose:** Applicant Cadaver Dog/Handler Teams shall pass a Line Indication Evaluation in order to be voted to Candidate status. The objective of the Line Indication Evaluation is to assess the ability of the dog to methodically check objects at the direction of the handler, to accurately identify valid cadaver scent sources by giving its trained indication, and to refrain from giving inappropriate indications on non-valid sources. Additionally this will assess the ability of the handler to accurately read the dog's alerts and indications and to assess the effectiveness of the handler in appropriately rewarding the dog for valid indications. These skills are an essential foundation to successfully training a cadaver dog. This test ensures that the foundation is solid before the dog/handler team progresses to more advanced training and area searches. This test is a prerequisite to the One (1) Acre Above Ground Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Applicant needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Candidate status:

1. The handler shall, prior to beginning the test, accurately describe the dog's expected change in body carriage (alert) when acquiring valid human remains scent. Such description shall include what the dog does from the tip of nose to the tip of tail and from the ears to the feet—i.e. the handler should be able to describe exactly and completely how the dog acts when acquiring valid human remains scent.
2. The handler shall, prior to beginning the test, accurately describe the dog's expected trained indication when acquiring valid human remains scent.
3. The handler shall, prior to beginning the test, describe the dog's reward system as it will be used during the test.
4. The handler shall describe the dog's reaction to each scent source presented during the test, to include whether or not the dog alerts and whether or not the dog indicates.

5. The handler shall demonstrate the ability to direct the dog to each scent object in the line so that each object is thoroughly checked before moving on to the next.

6. The handler shall demonstrate the ability to appropriately reward each valid indication.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Candidate status:

1. The dog shall demonstrate a willingness to check each scent object as directed by the handler.

2. The dog shall alert and indicate on each valid human remains scent source. Failure to give its trained indication on a valid human remains scent source shall result in failure of the test.

3. The dog should check, but **SHALL NOT** indicate on, an invalid scent source. Giving a trained indication on an invalid scent source shall result in failure of the test.

**C. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with the appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must check each presented object for scent, must indicate on both valid scent sources, and must not indicate on any blank object. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in failure of the test. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation shall result in a failure of the test. If either dog or handler fails, both must be retested.

2. The evaluation will take place during daylight hours. Weather conditions shall not be extreme. The site shall be grassy or have thin underbrush. In either case, the scent objects shall be in plain sight of the dog, handler, and evaluators.

3. One or (preferably) two approved evaluators shall administer the test. Approved evaluators shall include GARD Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers, Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers from other reputable canine search groups, or a certified dog trainer from any law enforcement agency provided that trainer has experience in training and testing scent detection dogs such as explosives, narcotics, or cadaver dogs.

4. Only legally obtained, legally possessed scent sources shall be used. These scent sources may be provided by GARD or by an outside evaluator, as decided prior to the test. The sources shall **NOT** be provided by the handler being tested.

5. Seven similar objects shall be placed on the ground in a straight line spaced ten feet apart. The line shall be perpendicular to the wind to minimize scent drifting from a valid scent source to a blank object. Two of the seven objects shall contain a valid human remains scent source; the remaining five shall be blanks. These blanks shall have **NEVER** been used as a valid scent source container. The placement of the valid sources shall be blind with respect to the handler. After placement of the objects, at least ten minutes shall pass before beginning the test to allow a small scent pool to form.

6. All valid human remains scent sources shall be contained in such a way as to prevent the dog from making direct contact with the scent source. The handler shall at no time touch the scent source or its container.

7. The test shall be done on-lead with the lead not to exceed six feet in length. The handler shall direct the dog on-lead along the line of scent objects. The dog may work ahead of or beside the handler. The handler shall direct the dog, either verbally, physically or both, to check each scent object before passing on to the next.
8. The dog must give its trained indication on each valid human remains scent source in order to pass the test.
9. The dog must NOT give its trained indication on any invalid scent source. Giving a trained indication on an invalid scent source shall result in failure of the test.
10. The handler must NOT prompt an indication at any time. Prompting an indication on any source, valid or invalid, shall result in failure of the test. Verbal prompts, hand signal prompts, or other body language prompts are all prohibited.
11. The handler shall describe any alerts or indications given during the test. If an alert is given but not followed by an indication, the handler shall give his/her interpretation of the dog's behavior.
12. The handler shall reward the dog for each valid indication. Once the indication is given the evaluators will tell the handler immediately that the source is valid so that an appropriate reward can be given. The handler should wait for the evaluator's assurance that the source is valid to avoid inappropriately rewarding the dog for a false indication.
13. If the dog fails to indicate on both valid sources or indicates on an invalid source, the handler has the right to ask for a demonstration of the validity of the scent source by using an operational cadaver dog to perform the same test.
14. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in checking objects for human remains scent and in accurately indicating valid scents and bypassing invalid scents. The evaluators shall also assess the effectiveness of the dog's reward system and the effectiveness of the handler's timing in rewarding the dog appropriately. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail which will be recorded in the Applicant's training records.

#### **14. One (1) Acre Above Ground Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation**

**A. Purpose:** Applicant Cadaver Dog/Handler teams must pass the One (1) Acre Above Ground Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation in order to be voted to Candidate status. The purpose of the One (1) Acre Above Ground Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation is to assess the progress of Applicants in teaching their dogs to locate and indicate on human cadaver scent.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Applicant needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Candidate status:

1. The handler shall be expected to demonstrate basic interview techniques that may provide clues in locating the cadaver scent source.
2. The handler shall outline and carry out a search strategy that will adequately cover the search sector taking into account wind and terrain conditions.
3. The handler shall, before the evaluation begins, advise the evaluators what type of indication the dog will give when it locates the scent source.
4. The handler shall describe the dog's alerts and shall advise the evaluators whenever he/she believes the dog alerts during the evaluation.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve Candidate status:

1. The dog must be actively searching and must move out away from (in front of) the handler. The dog should not be consistently behind or close to the handler.
2. The dog must be focused during the search and should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment (i.e. livestock, wildlife, noise, etc.). Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.
3. After alerting, the dog must be willing to approach the scent source.
4. After finding the scent source, the dog must give the previously described indication that he has found. For teams with refinds, the dog and its handler must return to the scent source. Based on the dog's indication and behavior, the handler must be able to pinpoint the location of the scent source within two feet.
5. During the evaluation, the handler may be asked to call the dog. The dog must return promptly to the handler. The evaluators will not ask the handler to call the dog during an active alert or refind unless a dangerous condition exists.

**C. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with the appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate the scent source and the handler must be able to pinpoint its location within two feet based on the dog's indication and behavior. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in failure of the test. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the test. If either dog or handler fails, both must be retested.
2. One or (preferably) two approved evaluators shall administer the test. Approved evaluators shall include GARD Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers, Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers from other reputable canine search groups, or a certified dog trainer from any law enforcement agency provided that trainer has experience in training and testing scent detection dogs such as explosives, narcotics, or cadaver dogs.
3. Only legally obtained, legally possessed scent sources shall be used. These scent sources may be provided by GARD or by an outside evaluator, as decided prior to the test. The sources shall NOT be provided by the handler being tested.

4. A one (1) acre site shall be chosen by the evaluators. The evaluation site shall contain mostly woods with light to moderate underbrush. The terrain shall not be excessively steep or contain any bodies of water.
5. The evaluation shall take place during daylight hours. Weather conditions shall not be extreme. There will be a one (1) hour time limit to find the scent source.
6. The evaluators will place one valid human remains scent source in the test area. The source shall be contained in such a way as to prevent the dog or handler from coming in direct contact with the scent source. The source shall be placed on the ground but shall not be in plain view. A light covering of leaves, branches, etc. is permissible to conceal the source. The evaluators shall NOT place any distracting food or dead animal scents within the test area and shall attempt to check the test area for such distractions before beginning the test.
7. The handler shall be given a brief scenario. The handler shall then ask questions to aid in the formulation of a search strategy. The handler shall then outline and carry out a search strategy, notifying the evaluators of any alerts and indications.
8. Upon making the find, the handler shall pinpoint the source within two feet based on the dog's indication and behavior.
9. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in searching a small area and in appropriately finding and pinpointing the source of human remains scent. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail which will be recorded in the Applicant's training records.
10. Should the dog not find the source, the handler has the right to request a demonstration of the validity of the scent source using an operational cadaver dog.

### **15. Building Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation**

**A. Purpose:** Candidate Cadaver Dog/Handler Teams shall pass a Building Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation in order to be voted to Operational status. The objective of the Building Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation is to assess the ability of the dog/handler team to search for disarticulated human remains in confined areas.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Candidate needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve operational status:

1. The handler shall assess the scenario provided by the evaluators and shall ask appropriate questions to aid in the formulation of a search strategy.
2. The handler shall outline and carry out an effective search strategy based on the scenario, the search area, wind conditions, time of day, etc.
3. The handler shall describe the dog's alert and indication prior to the test and shall advise the evaluators when the dog alerts and indicates during the test.

4. The handler must be able to differentiate when the dog is interested in human remains scent and when the dog is interested in dead animal scent.

5. The handler must be able to read the dog and must be able to describe the scent boundaries for cases in which the dog cannot pinpoint the source of scent.

6. The handler must demonstrate the ability to preserve a crime scene.

7. The handler must be able to control the dog both on and off lead.

8. The handler must debrief at the end of the task and give a POD of the search area.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve operational status:

1. The dog must be actively searching. He should move out in front of (away from) the handler. The dog should not be consistently behind or close to the handler.

2. The dog must be focused during the search and should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment. Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.

3. The dog must give a recognizable alert to the handler. After alerting, the dog should try to locate the scent source. If unable to pinpoint the source, the dog's continued search behavior should help the handler determine scent boundaries.

4. After finding the scent source, the dog must give the previously described indication that he has found. Based on the dog's indications, the handler must be able to pinpoint the location of the scent source within two feet.

5. The dog shall NOT indicate on the dead animal scent. Doing so shall result in failure of the test.

6. During the evaluation, the handler may be asked to call the dog. The dog must return promptly to the handler. The evaluators will not ask the handler to call the dog during an active alert unless a dangerous condition exists.

**C. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with the appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate both scent sources and the handler must be able to pinpoint the location within two feet based on the dog's indication and behavior. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in failure of the test. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the test. Indicating on a dead animal distraction shall result in failure of the test. If either dog or handler fails, both must be retested.

2. One or (preferably) two approved evaluators shall administer the test. Approved evaluators shall include GARD Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers, Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers from other reputable canine search groups, or a certified dog trainer from any law enforcement agency provided that trainer has experience in training and testing scent detection dogs such as explosives, narcotics, and cadaver dogs.

3. Only legally obtained, legally possessed scent sources shall be used. These scent sources may be provided by GARD or by an outside evaluator, as decided prior to the test. The sources shall NOT be provided by the handler being tested.

4. The evaluators shall locate a building to use as the test site. Due to the difficulty in locating suitable sites, the size and condition of the building may vary. The test may be performed in one building if it is large enough or in two small buildings.
5. The evaluators shall set out two human remains scent sources, one inside the building and one outside the building. These sources shall be placed a minimum of 24 hours and a maximum of 48 hours prior to the test and shall be placed out of plain sight. At least one dead animal distraction shall be placed inside the building.
6. The handler will be given a brief scenario. The handler will then ask questions which may aid in the location of the scent sources.
7. There will be a one hour time limit to find both sources. However, at the discretion of the evaluators the time may be extended due to the variability of available buildings provided the team is actively working. The dog may work on or off lead, at the handler's discretion.
8. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in searching the interior and exterior of a building and in appropriately finding and pin-pointing the source of human remains scent. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail which will be recorded in the Candidate's training records.
9. Should the dog not find the sources, the handler has the right to request a demonstration of the validity of the scent sources using an operational cadaver dog.

## **16. Fifteen (15) Acre Above Ground Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation**

**A. Purpose:** Candidate Cadaver Dog/Handler Teams shall pass a Fifteen (15) Acre Above Ground Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation in order to be voted to Operational status. The objective of the Fifteen (15) Acre Above Ground Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation is to assess the ability of the dog/handler team to search for disarticulated human remains over an extended period of time in a large area.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Candidate needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve operational status:

1. The handler shall assess the scenario provided by the evaluators and shall ask appropriate questions to aid in the formulation of a search strategy.
2. The handler shall outline and carry out an effective search strategy based on the scenario, the search area, wind conditions, time of day, etc.
3. The handler shall describe the dog's alert and indication prior to the test and shall advise the evaluators when the dog alerts and indicates during the test.
4. The handler must be able to differentiate when the dog is interested in human remains scent and when the dog is interested in dead animal scent.

5. The handler must be able to read the dog and must be able to describe the scent boundaries for cases in which the dog cannot pinpoint the source of scent.
6. The handler must demonstrate the ability to preserve a crime scene.
7. The handler shall accurately mark on a map the direction of travel, wind direction, clues, alerts, and finds.
8. The handler shall demonstrate adequate land navigation skills using map and compass.
9. The handler shall demonstrate radio skills needed to communicate to base the coordinates of any clues and/or finds.
10. The handler must be able to control the dog both on and off lead.
11. The handler must debrief at the end of the task and give a POD of the search area.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve operational status:

1. The dog must be actively searching. He should move out in front of (away from) the handler. The dog should not be consistently behind or close to the handler.
2. The dog must be focused during the search and should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment. Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.
3. The dog must give a recognizable alert to the handler. After alerting, the dog should try to locate the scent source. If unable to pinpoint the source, the dog's continued search behavior should help the handler determine scent boundaries.
4. After finding each scent source, the dog must give the previously described indication that he has found, even if unable to pinpoint the exact source. Based on the dog's indications, the handler must be able to pinpoint the location of each scent source within two feet.
5. The dog shall NOT indicate on the dead animal scent. Doing so shall result in failure of the test.
6. During the evaluation, the handler may be asked to call the dog. The dog must return promptly to the handler. The evaluators will not ask the handler to call the dog during an active alert unless a dangerous condition exists.

**C. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with the appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate all scent sources and the handler must be able to pinpoint the location within two feet based on the dog's indication and behavior. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in failure of the test. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the test. Indicating on a dead animal distraction shall result in failure of the test. If either dog or handler fails, both must be retested.
2. One or (preferably) two approved evaluators shall administer the test. Approved evaluators shall include GARD Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers, Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers from other reputable canine search groups, or a certified dog trainer from any law enforcement agency provided that trainer has experience in training and testing scent detection dogs such as explosives, narcotics, or cadaver dogs.

3. Only legally obtained, legally possessed scent sources shall be used. These scent sources may be provided by GARD or by an outside evaluator, as decided prior to the test. The sources shall NOT be provided by the handler being tested.
4. The evaluators shall locate a fifteen (15) acre site for the test. The site shall include fields, wooded areas, and a variety of terrain features (ridges, drainages, knolls, etc).
5. The site shall be divided into three five-acre sectors. One sector shall contain no scent source. The remaining sectors shall contain zero to three scent sources at the discretion of the evaluators. All scent sources will be placed a minimum of 24 and a maximum of 48 hours prior to the test. All sources will be placed out of plain sight, but shall not be buried. One source shall be hung six (6) feet off the ground out of plain sight. One sector shall contain at least one dead animal scent source.
6. The handler will be given a brief scenario. The handler will then ask questions which may aid in the location of the scent sources.
7. There will be a one hour time limit to search each sector. Each sector will be debriefed, including estimation of POD, prior to proceeding to the next sector.
8. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in searching a large area for an extended period of time. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail which will be recorded in the Candidate's training records.
9. Should the dog not find all sources, the handler has the right to request a demonstration of the validity of the scent sources using an operational cadaver dog.

### **17. Six (6) Acre Buried Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation**

**A. Purpose:** Candidate Cadaver Dog/Handler Teams shall pass a Six (6) Acre Buried Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation in order to be voted to Operational status. The objective of the Six (6) Acre Buried Cadaver Dog/Handler Evaluation is to assess the ability of the dog/handler team to search for disarticulated human remains buried in shallow graves.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Candidate needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve operational status:

1. The handler shall assess the scenario provided by the evaluators and shall ask appropriate questions to aid in the formulation of a search strategy.
2. The handler shall outline and carry out an effective search strategy based on the scenario, the search area, wind conditions, time of day, etc.
3. The handler shall describe the dog's alert and indication prior to the test and shall advise the evaluators when the dog alerts and indicates during the test.
4. The handler must be able to differentiate when the dog is interested in human remains scent and when the dog is interested in dead animal scent.

5. The handler must be able to read the dog and must be able to describe the scent boundaries for cases in which the dog cannot pinpoint the source of scent.
6. The handler must demonstrate the ability to preserve a crime scene.
7. The handler shall accurately mark on a map the direction of travel, wind direction, clues, alerts, and finds.
8. The handler shall demonstrate adequate land navigation skills using map and compass.
9. The handler shall demonstrate radio skills needed to communicate to base the coordinates of any clues and/or finds.
10. The handler must be able to control the dog both on and off lead.
11. The handler must debrief at the end of each task and give a POD of the search area.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to achieve operational status:

1. The dog must be actively searching. He should move out in front of (away from) the handler. The dog should not be consistently behind or close to the handler.
2. The dog must be focused during the search and should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment. Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.
3. The dog must give a recognizable alert to the handler. After alerting, the dog should try to locate the scent source. If unable to pinpoint the source, the dog's continued search behavior should help the handler determine scent boundaries.
4. After finding each scent source, the dog must give the previously described indication that he has found, even if unable to pinpoint the exact source. Based on the dog's indications, the handler must be able to pinpoint the location of each scent source within fifteen feet.
5. The dog shall NOT indicate on the dead animal scent. Doing so shall result in failure of the test.
6. During the evaluation, the handler may be asked to call the dog. The dog must return promptly to the handler. The evaluators will not ask the handler to call the dog during an active alert unless a dangerous condition exists.

**C. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with the appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate all scent sources and the handler must be able to pinpoint the location within fifteen feet based on the dog's indication and behavior. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in failure of the test. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the test. Indicating on a dead animal distraction shall result in failure of the test. If either dog or handler fails, both must be retested.
2. One or (preferably) two approved evaluators shall administer the test. Approved evaluators shall include GARD Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers, Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers from other reputable canine search groups, or a certified dog trainer from any law enforcement agency provided that trainer has experience in training and testing scent detection dogs such as explosives, narcotics, and cadaver dogs.

3. Only legally obtained, legally possessed scent sources shall be used. These scent sources may be provided by GARD or by an outside evaluator, as decided prior to the test. The sources shall NOT be provided by the handler being tested.
4. The evaluators shall locate a six (6) acre site for the test. The site shall include fields, wooded areas, and a variety of terrain features (ridges, drainages, knolls, etc).
5. The site shall be divided into three two-acre sectors. One sector shall contain no scent source. One sector shall contain one scent source. The third sector may or may not contain a scent source, at the discretion of the evaluators. All scent sources will be placed a minimum of one week and a maximum of two weeks prior to the test. Each source should be buried no less than eight (8) inches and no more than twelve (12) inches from the top of the ground. The area around the source should blend in with the surrounding soil and vegetation. One sector shall contain false holes dug at the time the samples were placed. One sector shall contain at least one above ground dead animal scent source.
6. The handler will be given a brief scenario. The handler will then ask questions which may aid in the location of the scent sources.
7. There will be a one and one half hour time limit to search each sector. Each sector will be debriefed, including estimation of POD, prior to proceeding to the next sector.
8. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in searching an area and in locating buried human remains scent sources. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail which will be recorded in the Candidate's training records.
9. Should the dog not find all sources, the handler has the right to request a demonstration of the validity of the scent sources using an operational cadaver dog.

### **18. Three (3) Acre Buried Cadaver Re-Certification Evaluation**

**A. Purpose:** Operational Cadaver Dog/Handler Teams shall pass a Three (3) Acre Buried Cadaver Re-Certification Evaluation every two years in order to maintain Operational status. The objective of the Three (3) Acre Buried Cadaver Re-Certification Evaluation is to ensure that the dog/handler team has maintained the skills necessary to be an effective cadaver search team.

**B. Handler Skills:** The following are the skills the Operational Handler needs to successfully demonstrate to maintain his/her operational status:

1. The handler shall assess the scenario provided by the evaluators and shall ask appropriate questions to aid in the formulation of a search strategy.
2. The handler shall outline and carry out an effective search strategy based on the scenario, the search area, wind conditions, time of day, etc.
3. The handler shall describe the dog's alert and indication prior to the test and shall advise the evaluators when the dog alerts and indicates during the test.
4. The handler must be able to differentiate when the dog is interested in human remains scent and when the dog is interested in dead animal scent.

5. The handler must be able to read the dog and must be able to describe the scent boundaries for cases in which the dog cannot pinpoint the source of scent.
6. The handler must demonstrate the ability to preserve a crime scene.
7. The handler shall accurately mark on a map the direction of travel, wind direction, clues, alerts, and finds.
8. The handler shall demonstrate adequate land navigation skills using map and compass.
9. The handler shall demonstrate radio skill needed to communicate to base the coordinates of any clues and/or finds.
10. The handler must be able to control the dog both on and off lead.
11. The handler must debrief at the end of the task and give a POD of the search area.

**C. Dog Skills:** The following are the skills the dog needs to successfully demonstrate to maintain operational status:

1. The dog must be actively searching. He should move out in front of (away from) the handler. The dog should not be consistently behind or close to the handler.
2. The dog must be focused during the search and should continue to search despite common distractions associated with the search environment. Brief registering of interest is permissible as long as it does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the search.
3. The dog must give a recognizable alert to the handler. After alerting, the dog should try to locate the scent source. If unable to pinpoint the source, the dog's continued search behavior should help the handler determine scent boundaries.
4. After finding each scent source, the dog must give the previously described indication that he has found, even if unable to pinpoint the exact source. Based on the dog's indications, the handler must be able to pinpoint the location of each scent source within two feet.
5. The dog shall NOT indicate on the dead animal scent. Doing so shall result in failure of the test.
6. During the evaluation, the handler may be asked to call the dog. The dog must return promptly to the handler. The evaluators will not ask the handler to call the dog during an active alert unless a dangerous condition exists.

**C. Test Procedure:**

1. The handler shall arrive on time and with the appropriate gear for the evaluation. To pass the evaluation, the dog must locate the scent source (if present) and the handler must be able to pinpoint the location within fifteen feet based on the dog's indication and behavior. A dog team must pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills listed on the evaluation form. Failure of either dog or handler to pass eighty percent (80%) of the skills shall result in failure of the test. A failing mark on any starred skill on the evaluation form shall result in a failure of the test. Indicating on a dead animal distraction shall result in failure of the test. If either dog or handler fails, both must be retested.
2. One or (preferably) two approved evaluators shall administer the test. Approved evaluators shall include GARD Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers, Operational Cadaver Dog Handlers from other reputable canine search groups, or a certified dog trainer from any law enforcement agency provided that trainer has experience in training and testing scent detection dogs such as explosives, narcotics, and cadaver dogs.

3. Only legally obtained, legally possessed scent sources shall be used. These scent sources may be provided by GARD or by an outside evaluator, as decided prior to the test. The sources shall NOT be provided by the handler being tested.
4. The evaluators shall locate a three (3) acre site for the test. The site can be varied in terrain and vegetation.
5. The sector may be blank or may contain one scent source at the discretion of the evaluators. The scent source shall be placed a minimum of one week and a maximum of two weeks prior to the test and shall be buried at least eight (8) and no more than twelve (12) inches below the surface. The area around the sample shall blend in with the surrounding soil and vegetation. The sector shall contain one above ground dead animal scent source placed at the time the human scent source is placed. The sector shall also have false holes dug at the time the samples were placed.
6. The handler will be given a brief scenario. The handler will then ask questions which may aid in the location of the scent sources.
7. There will be a two and one half hour time limit to search the sector. The sector will be debriefed immediately after it is searched.
8. The evaluators shall assess the effectiveness of the dog and handler as a team in locating buried cadaver scent sources. Strengths and weaknesses should be included in the critique. The evaluators shall assign a pass/fail which will be recorded in the Handler's training records.
9. Should the dog not find the source, the handler has the right to request a demonstration of the validity of the scent source using another operational cadaver dog.

## **V. Training Standards**

The purpose of these Training Standards is to delineate the training that will be provided to members and applicants of GARD. These Standards will provide general guidelines for weekly training sessions as well as describe annual special lectures and training events. These Standards will also provide general guidelines for members and applicants to receive training in areas not specifically covered by GARD's unit training sessions.

### **Section A: Weekly Training Sessions**

1. GARD will hold weekly training sessions throughout the year except for major holiday weekends and for the last two weeks of December.
2. Prospective members, Applicants, Candidates, and Operational members shall attend weekly training sessions as required by Part IV of these SOPs.
3. A training schedule will be e-mailed to members and applicants on a quarterly basis.

4. Training sessions shall be held in areas varying in terrain. An effort will be made to train in an area no more often than once a quarter. Training sessions will be scheduled to alternate between western, eastern, and central training areas as much as practicable to prevent any undue travel burden on individual members.
5. New training areas are constantly sought to provide new and varied experiences for the dogs and handlers.
6. A topic will be assigned for each training session. Topics may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. Compass work
  - b. Land navigation (map and compass)
  - c. Scent theory
  - d. Search strategy
  - e. Subject characteristics
  - f. Cadaver
  - g. Multiple subjects
  - i. Short motivational problems
  - j. Article searches
  - k. Drive
  - l. Clue awareness
  - m. Obedience training
  - n. Interviewing
  - o. Night training
7. A Candidate or Operational member will be assigned to run each training session. On occasion, an Applicant or other person shall be assigned to run a training session provided that person is fully qualified to teach the assigned topic.
8. The emphasis of the weekly training sessions shall be to train dogs for air scent wilderness search.
9. The person running the training is responsible for making sure each person achieves his/her goals for that day.
10. Those present for training may be divided into groups to facilitate more efficient training. A senior dog handler will remain with each group to oversee training.
11. The priority for weekly training sessions shall be as follows:
  - a. Ensure that Operational Dog/Handler Teams remain competent and improve skills
  - b. Help Candidate Dog/Handler Teams work towards Operational status
  - c. Help Applicant Dog/Handler Teams work towards Candidate status
  - d. Help Prospective members work towards Applicant status
12. Dogs that have been deemed not suitable for search work should ideally not be brought to training and under no circumstances should they interfere with the training of the other dogs.

13. Prospective members, Applicants, Candidates, and Operational members are expected to wear appropriate attire at training sessions. Candidates and Operational members should wear uniforms as much as possible. Any person not appropriately attired will not be allowed to participate in training activities that require going into the woods. This includes working a dog, serving as a walker, or serving as a subject. Such persons will be asked to remain at base at all times.

a. Shirts: Long sleeves should be worn at all times in the woods. Short sleeves are strongly discouraged, even in summer, but can be worn in thin woods with light underbrush. Cotton shirts should be avoided. Synthetic and synthetic blends are preferred. Tank tops and sleeveless shirts shall not be worn in the woods.

b. Pants: Jeans and other cotton fabrics are discouraged. BDU's (preferably dark blue) are the pants of choice, preferably synthetic or synthetic blends. Shorts shall not be worn in the woods.

c. Footwear: Athletic footwear, sandals or other open-toed shoes shall not be worn in the woods. Footwear made specifically for wilderness excursions is preferred. Waterproof footwear is recommended.

d. Inclement weather clothing: Layering is strongly encouraged in cold and inclement weather.

14. All Applicants, Candidates, and Operational members are expected to arrive for training on time. This means arriving early enough to provide an appropriate break for the dog and still be ready to begin training at the appropriate time. Tardiness will result in failure of the training to count towards attendance requirements as noted in Section III, Part 4.0 in the by-laws. (Adopted 11-12-03)

15. Minor children shall not be brought to trainings. Exceptions may be made when such minor children are part of a group to include, but not be limited to, the Boy Scouts of America when their attendance is an official function of their group and when they are covered by that group's liability coverage. Other exceptions may be made on an individual basis when training is held on private property and the property owner specifically allows the presence of minor children. Additional exceptions may be made on a limited basis when a minor is over 12 years of age and has demonstrated the ability to serve as a subject for dog training purposes. Such minor shall be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian at all times. (Adopted 11-12-03)

## **Section B: Periodic Training Sessions**

1. Night training shall be scheduled at least once a quarter.

2. A Survival Lecture shall be given once yearly at a regular training session.

3. A Survival Night Evaluation shall be held once yearly.

4. A Canine First Aid Course shall be held once yearly.

5. A mock search, either exclusively GARD's or in cooperation with another search group, shall be scheduled at least twice yearly.

6. Training with another canine search group shall be scheduled at least once yearly.

## **Section C: Outside Training Opportunities**

It is not within GARD's scope to provide all training necessary to serve as an effective member of a search and rescue team. For this reason, GARD requires members to receive some training from other sources.

1. **First aid and CPR Certification:** GARD requires Operational Members to hold a current First Aid and CPR certification from the Red Cross or other agency. GARD strongly recommends that all members and applicants obtain this certification. Information on available courses is available through the American Red Cross. GARD may periodically provide a certification course when sufficient GARD members are in need of a class and an instructor can be found.
2. **Canine First Aid:** GARD requires Operational Members to attend GARD's Canine First Aid Course, held yearly. While other Canine First Aid Courses are available through such organizations as the American Red Cross, GARD requires completion of its course since it is tailored specifically to hazards and injuries that may occur as a result of being in a wilderness search environment. Its course also includes a practical portion which teaches the handler restraint techniques that must be practiced on the handlers search dog. Evaluation of how the dog responds to restraint techniques can be valuable should an actual emergency occur during training or a search.
3. **Field Team Member:** GARD requires Operational Members to attend a Field Team Member class. This class provides basic information on all aspects of search and rescue missions, including map and compass skills and an overview of the Incident Command system of search operations. This information is invaluable in helping members become acquainted with the search and rescue world and also provides information necessary to pass the written test. Outside groups such as Tidewater Search and Rescue provide FTM classes. GARD will inform interested parties of up-coming FTM classes.
4. **Independent workshops:** GARD encourages members to attend workshops held by outside independent groups. When available, GARD may provide funding to assist members (Candidate status or higher) with the costs of attending such workshops.
5. **GARD maintains a lending library of books and video tapes on SAR related topics.** These resources are available for Applicants and higher.