

## GOVERNING RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION

### EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINES

**While handlers are permitted to reward their dogs during the certification process, handlers should use their agency's operational procedures during real-world situations.**

The purpose of this test is to evaluate the ability of a trained canine team to detect and find explosives concealed in various locations. The General Rules and Definitions for Detector Dogs, stated earlier, will also govern testing unless specifically stated otherwise. All certifications are good through December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year. (ie – if you certify on April 1<sup>st</sup>, your certification will not expire until December 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year.)

An optional CROWD SCREENING ENDORSEMENT will be offered to all participants of the existing USPCA Explosive dog Certification test. Participants MUST participate in and pass all existing testing as an Explosive Detection Dog. The Crowd Screening endorsement will be offered at the conclusion of the Explosive Certification and this endorsement will be noted on the Certificate of Certification as: "Explosive Detection Dog with Crowd Screening". See Crowd Screening Endorsement Rules.

#### 1. **TESTING:**

This test will be comprised of two parts: ODOR RECOGNITION (ORT) WITH SIX (6) ODORS AND OPERATIONAL TESTING WITH SIX (6) ODORS IN THREE VENUES. A maximum total score of 300 is possible, with certification at 210 points. (And you must find 5 of 6 hides.)

## 2. **JUDGES:**

The Chief Judge for this test must have a background in explosive detection, either as an explosive detection dog trainer, explosive detection dog handler, or has successfully completed the ATF evaluators course or the USPCA sponsored Advanced Explosive Canine Team & Evaluators Course. A minimum of three (3) judges will be used for the operational phases and the optional Crowd Screening phase of this test. Only one (1) judge required for the Odor Recognition Phase.

## 3. **ODORS:**

For certification purposes, it is recommended that at least one (1) odor from each group be represented in the operational testing. Any explosive odor used beyond the list supplied below, must be agreed to by both Region participants and Chief Judge before the testing begins. The six (6) odors used for the ORT phase will be the same six (6) odors used in the operational testing.

### GROUP 1: TNT

Military Block TNT	TNT Flake or Granular
Composition B	

### GROUP 2: Chlorates/Nitrates

Black Powder	Pyrodex®	Potassium Nitrate	Potassium Chlorate
Ammonium Nitrate Prill or Powder	Black Powder Substitute Powders	Potassium Perchlorate	

### GROUP 3: PETN-Based and Smokeless Powders

FLEX-X	Single Base Smokeless Powder	Double Base Smokeless Powder
Detasheet	Sheet Explosives	Semtex (A1, S, 10 or SE)

GROUP 4: RDX-Based Explosives

RDX A-5 pellets or powder	C-4
HMX	

4. **PART ONE:** Odor Recognition Phase

A. Part one of this test is an ORT that will use eighteen (18) one-gallon metal paint cans, securely fastened to a 12-inch square piece of half (1/2) inch plywood. Each of the one-gallon cans will have a quart sized or smaller container or can inserted inside it. (The inside container or can must be uniform in all 18 one-gallon cans) The quart sized, or smaller containers will have lids either with ten (10) quarter (1/4) inch sized holes, or with "ATF" style punched holes. The one-gallon sized cans will be open without lids. All one-gallon sized cans will be numbered by placing a number on the floor in front of the can with chalk, crayon or some other marking utensil. Within the quart sized or smaller containers, there will be six (6) explosive compounds, eleven (11) distractors and one (1) empty can in any order.

B. The weight of each explosive will be approximately three (3) to four (4) ounces.

C. Eleven (11) quart cans must contain distractor items and must come from the list below. One (1) quart can will be empty.

Rubber Bands	Crayon	Batteries
Coins	Electrical Tape	Nail or screw
Packing Tape	Stick of Gum	Chalk
Band Aid	Cotton Ball	Sugar Substitute
Aspirin	Vitamin C	Leather piece
Paper Clips	Latex Glove	Piece of Paper

D. The ORT phase will have a thirty (30) minute MINIMUM set time for all explosives placed for this exercise.

E. The eighteen (18) one-gallon cans will be placed in a circle with a minimum 30 foot inside diameter, and each can should be a minimum of three (3) feet apart. Should a large number of teams participate, it shall be up to the Chief Judge to use more than one (1) circle of cans or configurations.

- F. A K-9 team will be allowed two (2) revolutions of the circle, either inside or outside.
- G. When a K-9 indicates on a can, the handler will tell a judge the can's number before the K-9 is rewarded. Any time a handler tells the judge a number, they are stating that they believe their K-9 has indicated to an explosive odor. If the K-9 is correct, the judge will say "reward your dog". If the K-9 has made a Non-Productive Response (NPR), the judge will say "do not reward your dog".
- H. During the ORT, the team must correctly identify the six (6) explosive odors with no more than two (2) NPRs. If the team is taking the test and misses an odor(s) on the first pass, the judge shall have the team run only a section(s) of cans which contains the missed odor(s). If the team has MORE than two (2) NPRs, the team will be allowed one retest to pass the ORT. This retest shall take place after all other participants have completed the ORT. During this retest, the team must retake the entire ORT. Should the retest result in failure, the team will be prohibited from obtaining a certification. At the discretion of the Chief Judge, the team may participate in the operational tests for experience only.
- I. To certify, a K-9 team must complete the operational phase within 48 hours of passing the ORT phase.

5. **PART TWO:** General Guide for Operational Phase

- A. The Operational testing involves three different search venues with two (2) hides at each venue.
- B. The soak time or set time for the target explosives will be thirty (30) minutes MINIMUM in place for all explosives used.
- C. **The same six (6) explosive compounds from the ORT will be used in the operational testing.**
- D. The explosives used will not be in airtight packaging. If the explosives are in an airtight package, they will be fully opened before it is placed. All hides shall be placed in such a manner that odor will be available to canine teams.
- E. There will be no maximum weight of explosives. However, care should be taken not to use a large amount which would excessively contaminate the search venue.
- F. A minimum of eight (8) ounces will be utilized for each of the six (6) hides.

G. SCORING: For certification scoring, the hide will be considered a miss if the average score of all scoring judges is 17.5 points or less, out of 35 possible points. (response + alert + find). **To certify, a team must locate five (5) of the six (6) hides in the operational phase, pass the ORT AND score more than 210 points.** \*Clarification to wording 1-20-2025.

H. An NPR (indicated by the dog's alert and called by the handler) will be judged as a miss by judges. **If a dog responds but it is not called by the handler, it will be judged against the dog as a distraction.**

I. Judges will not indicate to the handlers the accuracy-of the team's performance except on the score sheet during the operational phase testing.

J. If the explosives are intentionally disturbed or retrieved by the dog, the team will be disqualified from certification.

## 6. OPERATIONAL TESTING: ROOMS

A. The indoor search will consist of three (3) rooms. Each room will be a minimum of 200 square feet. There will be a time limit of one and one half (1.5) minutes for every 100 square feet. Large rooms can (optional) be sectioned off with a makeshift or temporary barrier to reduce it to the 200 square foot minimum. The unused part of this room cannot be used as one of the three required searchable rooms. (i.e. A large classroom can be divided off to create a 200 ft search area, but the rest of the room cannot be used for the trial)

B. The rooms must be furnished and can be kitchens, workshops, offices, schoolrooms or other rooms containing furnishings and/or equipment.

C. There will be two (2) hides contained within the three rooms. Only one (1) hide in a room.

D. For inside/room searches, no hide may be higher than six (6) feet from the ground or floor.

E. There will be a 2-minute warning given before the expiration of time. At the expiration of time, the handler will call his/her finds. The handler can elect to end search before time expires and must call the location of the hidden explosives.

F. The handler can use allotted time to search any of the rooms at their discretion.

## 7. OPERATIONAL TESTING: PARCELS

A. The parcel/package test will be conducted indoor or outdoor as space permits, with at least fifteen (15) items to be searched.

- B. These items should be placed on the floor in any pattern, three (3) to four (4) feet from each other as search space permits.
- C. There will be a 3-minute time limit for this venue, with a thirty (30) second warning given prior to ending.

## 8. **OPERATIONAL TESTING: VEHICLES**

- A. Five (5) vehicles will be used. The vehicles may be of any type or model and may include autos, trucks, buses.
- B. **The recommendation is that the vehicle search phase for explosives be held outdoors when possible, but if good cause exists and is supported by the Chief Judge, it may be held indoors. (Examples of good cause: Safety, extreme weather or venue availability) \*May 2026**
- C. The explosive can be placed on the outside of the vehicle or placed inside where scent is available to the canine from the outside.
- D. No two (2) hides will be placed on the same vehicle.
- E. The vehicles will be spaced fifteen (15) to twenty (20) feet apart and can be placed in any order or position, as long as the team has access to them.
- F. Only the outside of the vehicles are to be searched. There will be a 10-minute time limit total with a 2-minute warning given at the 8-minute mark.

## 9. **CROWD ENDORSEMENT SCREENING (OPTIONAL) Sept 2018- Huntsville**

This testing will be offered to all participants of the existing USPCA Explosive dog Certification test. Participants must participate in and pass all existing explosive dog testing and will then receive a certificate of certification as an Explosive Detection Dog. The Crowd Screening endorsement will be offered at the conclusion of the Explosive Certification and will be noted on the Certificate of Certification as "Explosive Detection Dog with Crowd Screening."

- A. Odor- The Chief Judge shall select an odor from the above approved list of explosive odors shown earlier in #3.
- B. The Crowd Screening phase involves one venue with one find. The dog will demonstrate the ability to locate a moving or static odor, which is person born, while searching (straight line as well as at an angle) a crowd of people. This phase requires at least three judges, with pass/fail scoring.

C. A minimum of 1 pound and a maximum of 5 pounds of any of the above listed odors will be worn or carried (hidden) on a decoy pedestrian. The odor will be placed on the decoy by the decoy himself, or by an assistant who will **not** be in the venue during testing. The odor must be placed or secreted on the decoy in such a way as to not be visually detected by the handler or the canine. If a backpack is used, other pedestrians must also carry backpacks. Take care to ensure that there is no explosive odor on any backpacks, purses or bags (other than the target) on the pedestrians.

D. The soak time or set time will be a minimum of 30 minutes. Care should be taken to ensure that the "target decoy" does not mingle with the other pedestrians or judges. It is obvious that all volunteer pedestrians will not have any explosive odor on or about their person. If the target decoy has to be exchanged with a 2<sup>nd</sup> decoy, the exact same odor and amount will be used. The original target decoy is exempt from further participation as a pedestrian.

E. There should be a minimum of 15 (counting the target decoy) pedestrians. (Maximum number being 40) Pedestrians can be other bomb dog handlers (who are not testing in the crowd screening) and other judges. Volunteers can be used as long as there are no apprehension trained dogs doing the testing. Pedestrians can walk around, either alone or with other pedestrians, or they may choose to stand and talk with other pedestrians. Pedestrians and volunteers should behave normally, walking at a normal pace, with other pedestrians or by themselves- or they may choose to stand in a group of people. (**never alone when standing**) They will not attempt to avoid the working k9, but if walking, should continue progress as they would if they were walking through an airport, mall or sports venue.

F. The venue will be a minimum of 5,000 square feet. This can be a long hallway, warehouse, gym, stadium area, etc.

G. When a K9 indicates on the decoy, the handler will tell the judge that their dog has alerted to a trained odor and will identify the specific decoy by description or by pointing at the decoy. If the K9 is correct, the judge will say "yes" or "reward your dog". If the dog is incorrect, the judge will say "do not reward your dog" or "no". (this will be considered a false alert)

H. The team is allowed ONE false alert. A second false alert will be considered a fail. (no Certification) Crowd screening testing should be conducted within 48 hours of the other Explosive testing. (after obtaining USPCA Explosive certification)

- I. The Crowd Screening test has a 15- minute time limit.
- J. The Crowd Screening certification will not be an option at National Dog Trials.

*Teams failing to successfully certify will not immediately be given a second chance. Multiple tests of the same team will not be conducted. The team has to undergo a period of retraining, documenting successful performance, before any attempt at re-certification. Only official Certificates of Certification (Provided by the National Office) will be issued to participants who successfully pass a USPCA Certification test.*

**Chief Judges are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the paperwork**

Upload or E-mail completed program or trial paperwork to include: (within 30 days of the trial)

- Original Master score sheet
- Judges and Scorekeepers list with events judged
- The high-low sheets showing the scores of all judges.

Upload to: [www.uspcak9.com](http://www.uspcak9.com) or  
E-mail to: [secretary@uspcak9.com](mailto:secretary@uspcak9.com)