



HRD OPERATIONAL READINESS TEST (ORT)

The need for a specialist, single-purpose dog trained only to locate human remains has become very obvious. SDONA feels that the following performance evaluation will result in a canine which can search for human remains in many situations insists on the following absolutes:

- **The dog must search intensively and with endurance for the scent of human remains**
- **NO DIFFICULTY will distract the dog from searching; including such challenges as:**
 - **Rugged terrain**
 - **Distracting scents**
 - **Other teams, noise, or distractions**
- **The dog must recognize the scent of human remains, differentiating it from all other possible odors and must indicate its location to its handler (by the handler reported Trained Final Response).**

Recognizing the above absolutes, the training and evaluation of a **HUMAN REMAINS DETECTION DOG team** must be rigorous and thorough. Recognizing also that this training and evaluation must be periodically checked for applicability, therefore, this document will undergo regular review (yearly review).

HUMAN REMAINS DETECTION DOGS must be trained and TESTED in order that user agencies be ensured that they are using a quality team. Training and testing are inseparable. Quality cannot be tested into a dog team. Testing serves only as a quality control measure. Training is at the core of the validity of a detector dog team and is the foundation of that team's service.

Testing standards must be developed according to the job the team will perform in actual situations. All situations cannot be covered but most common scenarios can be accommodated. The testing should measure the abilities of both dog and handler. Therefore, testing standards should have situations which require decision making on the part of both the handler and the dog. SDONA has attempted to develop standards which are both practical and challenging. A team which is comprised of a well-trained and capable dog and handler will have no problem successfully completing these tests. It is at the core of SDONA philosophy that a canine team which is trained for a single purpose will be most successful. Any comment of these standards will be appreciated and considered in future revisions.

Requirements for First-Time Application to Participate in the HRD Operational Readiness Test (ORT)

1. The handler must be at least 18 years of age.
2. The dog must be at least 18 months of age.
3. The dog must be a single-purpose dog, trained for ONLY Human Remains Detection.
4. The dog must be tattooed or micro chipped for positive identification – if the dog is not tattooed or microchipped a photograph (taken by a SDONA official) will be attached to the testing documentation for positive identification.
5. Proof of Rabies Vaccination or certified titers.
6. The handler must present evidence of completion of the following classes and courses or an affidavit signed by an official of the handler's unit:
 - a. Basic First Aid
 - b. CPR
 - c. Navigation with map and compass and GPS
 - d. Successful completion of a National or State level certification in Human Remains detection
 - e. Crime Scene recognition and preservation
 - f. Hazmat Awareness – recommend Hazmat Operations course
 - g. Confined Space Awareness
 - h. Blood borne Pathogens
 - i. NIMS and ICS Training courses – IS-100, IS-200, IS-700 and IS -800
7. The handler must hold a current background check run within 1 year of ORT date or obtain an official background check. Backgrounds checks are to be completed by a law enforcement agency (ie: State Police, FBI, etc..) and must include local, state, and national searches.

Written Test:

A written test will be administered prior to the ORT. Questions on all phases of Human Remains Detection may include, but are not limited to:

1. Navigation
2. Strategy and Tactics
3. Safety
4. Working with other SAR and governmental resources
5. Decision making questions
6. Ethics
7. Documentation

Questions will be formatted as multiple choice and short essay questions. An oral test may be given under special conditions. A score of 80% or greater is needed to pass the test.

The ORT is valid for two years from the date of completion. Re-certification must meet all prior requirements with the exception of a current National or State level certification in Human Remains detection, providing that the SDONA ORT re-certification falls within a 90-day grace period of the previous test date.

Test rules:

1. The tests will be delivered over a 24-48 hour period.
2. The test will be administered with an Incident Command System in place
3. A Dog/handler team may apply and attempt the HRD ORT but must hold a current National or state certification.
4. All tests will have a minimum of 7 exercises
5. Dog/handler teams may be randomly assigned to a group which will operate together. However, a group member will not be allowed to observe another group member searching.
6. Target odors – numbers and types of Target odors will be determined by random throw of a dice
7. A dog/handler team may be assigned a safety/observer.
8. All Trained Final Responses (TFRs) by the dog must be clearly articulated to each evaluator and must follow the requirements below:

Acceptable Trained Final Responses (TFR):

1. “Passive” (sit, down, or stay and bark with NO disturbance of target odor). Once the dog responds with its TFR, it may not move away from the target until the handler gets to the dog.
2. The “refind” TFR will be accepted but is discouraged.
3. All TFRs must be performed independently by the dog with no assistance by the handler.

General Ground Rules for Participation:

1. A food or toy reward is allowed at the discretion of the handler (food must not be dropped or left at a target odor).
2. Muzzles are not permitted in any phase of the evaluation process.
3. No short lead, traffic lead, training tabs or other weighted object may be attached to the collar at any time during searching, however, the handler may utilize a six (6) foot to twenty-five (25) foot leash to search
4. No prong, choke or electronic collars. GPS tracking collars may be used. If they are combined with an electronic “shocking” collar (ie: Garmin Alpha) the training element must be disabled/turned off.
5. The handler must maintain control of the canine at all times.
6. Abuse (e.g., physical, mental, verbal, *etc.*) of the canine is not acceptable at any time. If abuse is determined, the handler will be removed from the test.
7. The handler is responsible for the care and safety of the canine at all times.
8. Safety procedures will be followed at all times.
9. Aggression by dog or handler will not be tolerated at any time.
10. Testing teams may withdraw from testing without prejudice at any time.
11. For double-blind testing, an observer/safety flanker may be assigned to a team during a search. This flanker will not supply any information to the handler and will not know the

location of Human Remains targets. The flanker's role is to verify that there has been no disturbance to the area around the TFR, confirm the dog performed the handler described TFR without handler assistance, and that the handler did not attempt to visualize the odor source (ie: no digging, opening of doors, etc.)

12. The testing team must introduce themselves to the evaluator(s) at the Odor Recognition test. This introduction must include their name and their dog's name.

HRD Operational Readiness Test (ORT) Elements:

<u># of HR odors</u>	<u>Search Element</u>	<u>Maximum Time</u>
1	Log book review	As needed
1	Odor Recognition (pre-requisite for Operational Readiness Test) – 5 odors across HR decomposition spectrum + 5 distracter odors + 5 blank (no odor)	15 minutes
1	Hasty search/ Roadside – 500 M – single blind ²	45 minutes
1	Car search – 5-7 cars Single blind ²	2 minutes per car
2	3-acre wilderness/open area Single or double blind ²	30 minutes each search
1	Building search (1500 to 2500 square feet) Double blind ²	30 minutes
1	20-acre wilderness/open area Single or double blind ²	60 minutes
1	Deposition	30 minutes

Number and type of target odors distracter odors will be determined by random throws of dice. At least two elements will NOT have a target odor.

Odor Recognition:

1. Part one of the SDONA ORT is an Odor Recognition test that will use five (5) one-gallon metal paint cans, which may be fastened to a 12-inch square piece of half (1/2) inch plywood. Each of the one-gallon cans will have a quart sized metal paint can inserted inside it. The quart sized metal paint can will have lids with ten (10) quarter (1/4) inch in diameter. The one-gallon metal paint 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 one-two (1-2) HRD odors and one-two (1-2) “distractor” cans and one-two (1-2) empty/blank cans in a random order.
2. The weight of each HRD target odor will be between 30 grams to 100 grams and will be in different stages of decomposition.
3. One-two (1-2) of the quart cans must contain distractor items and come from but not limited to the below list.
 - a. animal feces
 - b. animal remains – horn, fur, “road kill”, etc
 - c. common target odor containers
 - d. nitrile, latex, vinyl or food handler’s gloves
 - e. PVC and other plastics
 - f. glass containers with metal lids
 - g. food items
4. All odors will be in place for a minimum of 30 minutes.
5. The five (5) one-gallon cans will be placed in a circle, each can placed /positioned 5 - 10 feet apart. Or in a straight line 5 – 10 feet apart.
6. A K-9 team will be allowed two passes of each of the cans, with a maximum of 10 minutes to complete the test.
7. When a K-9 indicates on a can, the handler will tell the evaluator(s) 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 HR target odor. If the K-9 is correct, the judge will say “reward your dog”. If the K-9 has made a false indication, the judge will say “do not reward your dog”.
8. During the OR test, the team must correctly identify ALL HR odors with no false alerts on distractor or blank cans. If the team has a false alert, the team will be allowed one additional attempt to pass the ORT. The second attempt should take place after every other participant has completed the test. Should a second attempt result in failure, the team will be prohibited from advancing to the operational tests.
9. The dog may test either on or off lead.

10. THE TEAM MUST PASS THE ODOR RECOGNITION TEST TO CONTINUE THE OPERATIONAL READINESS TEST (ORT)

Operational Readiness Test Elements Guidelines

Hasty Search:

- The search path may be a trail, logging road or a rarely used road approximately 500 meters long.
 - o HR target odors will be placed within 20 – 40 feet of either edge of the trail or road
 - o distractor odors may be randomly placed
- This test will be performed single blind¹ and observed by the evaluator(s)
- The team will have 30 minutes to complete this search

Vehicle Search:

- 5-7 vehicles
- Total time is determined by – 2 minutes per car X number of cars (eg 5 cars X 2 minutes = 10 minutes)
 - o 0 -1 target odor in one vehicle
 - o 1-2 distractor odors in 1 or 2 vehicles
- Vehicles must be positioned 5-10 feet apart
- Vehicles will be positioned in a straight line configuration
- This test will be performed single blind¹ and observed by the evaluator(s)

3 Acre Wilderness/Open Area:

- 3 acres ± 200 square feet of moderate terrain, including some woods, open areas, and underbrush as suitable to the regional terrain.
 - o 0-2 target odors
 - o 1-3 distractor odors
- These tests will be performed double blind¹
- The team will have 30 minutes to complete the search

20 Acre Wilderness/Open Area:

- 20 acres of moderate terrain, including some woods, open areas, and underbrush as suitable to the regional terrain.
 - o 0-2 target odors

- 1-3 distractor odors
- The handler will articulate their search plan and their rationale, including a discussion of weather and terrain conditions. If this changes during the search, handler must articulate this to the evaluator, again with justification for this change.
- The time will start immediately after the handler introduces themselves to the evaluator
- This search may be double blind¹
- The team will have 60 minutes to complete the search

Building search:

- Building will be approximately 1500 - 2500 square feet and may contain multiple rooms.
 - 0-1 target odors
 - 1-2 distractor odors
- This test may be performed double blind¹
- The team will have 30 minutes to complete the search

One test area (randomly selected) will be considered a “crime scene” – The handler will be judged on their recognition of the crime scene, their preservation of the crime scene, and any attributes they may consider at that crime scene. The “crime scene” search will be randomly selected. From the above searches

Deposition:

1. The handler will be subject to a mock deposition (as would be done by a defense attorney).
2. The training logs of the dog and the search report of the ORT will be part of the deposition.
3. If at all possible the evaluator will be a practicing attorney and may reflect the stress of an adversarial testimony.

¹ “Single blind” – the handler does not know the placement (or not) of the target odor but the evaluator may know its location.

² “Double blind” – the handler does not know the placement (or not) of the target odor AND the evaluator (if present) does not know its location. Double blind serves to eliminate any possible influence of any person in the search area.

Random selection of number and type of Target odors

For 0-1 requirement - using a dice

- Even numbers (2, 4, 6) = 1 target odor
- Odd numbers (1, 3, 5) = 0 target odors

Random selection of number of “Distractor odor

For 0-2 requirement – using a dice

- 1 or 2 = 0 distractors odor
- 3 or 4 = 1 distractor odor
- 5 or 6 = 2 distractor odors

Target Odor (Human Remains) and Distractor Odor Source Guidelines:

1. All human remains and distractor odors must be concealed and protected.
2. Any significant disturbance of a Human Remains or distractor target will be a failure of the test.
3. Human Remains target odors:
 - a. Will range from 30 – 100 grams
 - b. Will range from relative little decomposition to dry bone.
 - c. Must contain tissue and/or bone and may not be only blood.

Scoring:

1. All HR target odors must be located.
2. Dog must perform their handler described TFR with no assistance by handler.
3. No urination or defecation within 5 feet of HR target odor.
4. Absolutely no disturbance of HR target odor or immediate area (within 5 feet)
5. NO “non-productive TFRs” (ie: false alerts, TFR where there is no target odor)

All HR odors must be found with no disturbance of the “crime scene” and no “false positive” TFRs to pass the HRD ORT. Disturbance is defined as touching in any way, dropping saliva onto, or digging at the odor

Guidelines for Odor Placement Coordinator

1. In charge of determining numbers and placement of target odors and distractor odors.
2. In charge of obtaining and controlling target odors and distractor odors.
3. Responsible for proper handling and security of human remains targets and distractor odors in a manner that does not allow for any cross-contamination.
4. Provides an observer to accompany the team who does not know location of HR target odor (or absence of that odor or presence of a distractor odor) who will report :
 - a. Disturbance of area around TFR
 - b. Confirm the dog performed the handler described TFR without handler assistance.
 - c. Handler did not attempt to visualize the odor source (ie: no digging, opening of doors, etc.)
5. This document will be regularly reviewed and revised as necessary.

