

MEMORANDUM

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C.



FEMA 20472

DATE: 04 November 2007

FOR: Rory Rehbeck, Chair
Search Working Group

FROM: Canine Sub-Group

SUBJECT: Evaluator Telecon Minutes

Please find the attendance and agenda items addressed on the Evaluator conference call held on October 25 and 30, 2007:

MEETING DATE(s)		25, 30 October 2007		Call # 08	
MEMBERSHIP / ATTENDANCE					
CSG Members		Y/N		Evaluators	
					Y/N
Teresa MacPherson, Chair		Y		Garrett Dyer	Y
Darren Bobrosky		Y		Pat Grant (excused)	N
Joe Caputo		Y		Tom Haus	Y
John Dean		Y		Gary Hay	Y
Mike Marks		Y		Sonja Heritage	Y
Cathy Schiltz		Y		Athena Robbins	Y
Debra Tosch		Y		Bob Macaulay (excused)	N
				Anne McCurdy	Y
Evaluators				Tom Moore (absent)	N
Ron Sanders		Y		Susan Martinez	Y
Nancy Hachmeister (excused)		N		Justin Poarch (absent)	N
Sam Balsam (excused)		N		Lee Prentiss	Y
Jeaneen McKinney		Y		Amy Rising	Y
Bob Sessions		Y		Tracy McDonald	Y
Ron Weckbacher		Y		Teresa Ortenburger	Y
Pat Kaynaroglu (excused)		N		Elaine Sawtell	Y
Tony Zintsmaster (excused)		N		Lee Turner	Y
Mary Flood (excused)		N		Lisa Berry	Y
Linda Neimeier		Y		Ann Wichmann	Y
Cyndie Fajardo (absent)		N		Lee Dunn	Y
Elizabeth Kreitler		Y		Steve Driscoll	Y
John Gilkey (excused)		N		Rex Ianson	Y

MEETING DATE(s)		25, 30 October 2007		Call # 08	
MEMBERSHIP / ATTENDANCE					
Evaluators		Y/N		Evaluators	
				Y/N	
Jen Massey		Y		Rob Cima – excused	
Karen Meadows		Y		Jackie McCarty	
Rory Rehbeck		Y		Adam Skiver	
Julie Noyes (excused)		N		Carla Collins	
Sheila McKee		Y		Roxanne Dunn	
Lynne Engelbert		Y		Gail McCarthy	
Tommy Kelley		Y		Rose De Luca	
Janet Merrill (excused)		N		Kristian Catapano	
Shirley Hammond (excused)		N		Bill Monahan (excused)	
Marc Valentine (excused)		N		Steve Swaney (excused)	
Deresa Teller (excused)		N		Mike Agnew	
Elena Sweet (excused)		N		Zairath Perez (absent)	
Susann Brown		Y		Craig Radelman	
LaFond Davis		Y		Bob Deeds	
Mark Dawson		Y		Peter Sellas (excused)	
Linda D’Orsi		Y		Monica Barger	
Deborah Burnett		Y		Brian Smithey	
Steve Dolezal		Y		Bud Souza	
Rich Grant		Y		Sharon Gattas (excused)	
Sharon Grant		Y			
Randy Gross (excused)		N			
Hilda Wood		Y			
Sally Timms (excused)		N			

AGENDA ITEMS/DISCUSSION

- 1) Roll Call, Telecon Protocol
- 2) Roles and Responsibilities of the Evaluator
- 3) Document Updates
- 4) 2008 Evaluator schedule

- 5) AARs/Scoresheets
- 6) Pre-eval and post-eval telecons
- 7) FSA
- 8) Appeal Process
- 9) Q&A (All)

PROPOSED ACTIONS

1) Roll Call, Telecon Protocol

- Mute phone unless speaking. State name before speaking. Don't interrupt a person speaking.
- Members of the Canine Sub-Group (CSG) will speak first. Questions and comments to follow.
- Due to the wildfires in California, CA evaluators are excused from the call.

2) Roles and Responsibilities of the Evaluator

- See Attachment A

3) Document Updates

CHANGES TO CSSCP

Section II

Handler Information

- Added "from the starting point" to the end of "...he or she must immediately leave the site at the direction of the evaluators and restart the search."

Section III

Evaluation Procedures

- Changed "It is recommended that non-testing, CE certified canines pre-test search sites" to "A non-testing, certified canine team will pre-test all search sites."

Handler Information

- Added "toy and food rewards are permitted."

Search Procedures

- Changed "After the first bark the handler may not verbally communicate to the canine until the canine barks three (3) times at the same victim."

To “The bark alert consists of a minimum of three (3) barks at the same victim. Between the first and third bark, if a handler verbally communicates with his dog in order to keep him barking at a victim, the team loses that victim.

This change occurs in both full access and limited access sections.

CHANGES TO GENERAL POLICIES

- Added section regarding motivational site. “Task forces hosting a CE/CP may elect to provide a motivational site (e.g., alert tube) for teams to work after they have tested or during down time at a CP.”

4) 2008 Evaluator Schedule

- The 2008 budget is not yet finalized. The current calendar has 9 canine CEs/CPs. If more funding becomes available, canine may be allotted more CPs/CEs. Until (and if) this changes, there will be nine evaluator groups for 2008. Everyone on the 2008 group was not in a group in 2007 (though some may have evaluated as “picks”).
- The Jan CE may move to July—stand by and stay tuned.
- The Alternate list is now prioritized by “date last evaluated”
- When choosing TF “picks”, be aware that the evaluator cadre must include 2 Leads (apart from the Chief) and no more than one evaluator from any one TF (if they have a team testing). The cadre must not consist of more than 2 non-handlers (apart from the Chief). At least two handler evaluators must be assigned to each site.
- On the Division tab of the roster, Leads are highlighted in yellow.

5) AARs and Score sheets

- If you accept the role of Chief Evaluator you are responsible for preparing the AAR. If you do not have the computer skills needed to do this you either need to have someone willing to do it for you or turn down the position.
- The AAR needs to be computerized, not hand written. This is a formal, legal document and needs to be done professionally.
- The site maps can be drawn by hand and then scanned into the AAR but the maps need to be well drawn.
- If you do not have the capability to scan the score sheets into one document, they can all be sent to Debra Tosch and she will scan them and email. The score sheets can then be sent electronically to the handlers, evaluators and the TF. This eliminates the need for addressing envelopes, making copies and the cost of postage and supplies.

- The peer review forms can be done the same way so that they can be sent to the CSG in one document.
- The AAR should be completed within 10 days of the test.

6) Pre-eval and post-eval telecons

- The CGS facilitates a telecon before every CE/CP. All evaluators should be included, in addition to the IC of the event and any other host members who wish to be on the call.
- A template of the minutes is attached which shows the bulleted items that will be addressed on these calls. (See Attachment B)
- These calls provide an opportunity for everyone involved in the test or prep to speak with one another.
- Post-evaluation telecons may be set up to discuss a team's performance and/or means for improvement. A request for a post-eval telecon must be directed to the CSG by a Canine Coordinator/Program Manager/TFL. It may include all or some of the evaluators.

7) The FSA

- The FSA's in the East, West and Central should all be the same assessment. A TF can certainly require of their canine teams other measurements of readiness, apart from the FSA. The FSA is a benchmark—it may be taken by an 18 month old dog, who will need more training before attempting certification. Or it may be a refresher assessment for a recertification. Even though the two teams may vary widely in experience, the assessment should be the same for both.
- It is to be administered as written. It is not to be diminished or augmented.

8) Appeal Process

- Now an official part of the CSSCP, Appendix F

9) Questions and Answers

- Q. Dog barks at evaluator on Limited Access site and handler accesses pile. How is this handled?
- A. Handler must pinpoint or return to start
- Q. Review definition and consequences of talking in between the 3 barks.
- A. Handler loses that victim if he talks to his dog after the first bark and before the third to keep him barking. A handler may talk to his dog at any time to stop him or to move him for safety reasons. A handler may command his dog to search again, if there is a long delay after one or two barks.

- Q. Can a handler mark the same victim more than once if the dog indicates in more than one location and the handler cannot be sure that its on the same victim?
- A. Yes, the handler can mark that indication with no penalty. Even if the total count of victims is higher than the number of placed victims, due to marking the same victim more than once, the handler will not be penalized. As long as the dog is indicating on a victim and the handler correctly calls it as such, it is not a false alert. Victims must be at least 20 feet apart, but scenting conditions may vary and cause the scent from the same victim to escape in multiple places.
- Q. Is there a template for an Interim Certificate?
- A. Yes, this is covered on the pre-eval calls.
- Q. If a handler returns to the start point, does the dog have to go with him?
- A. No.
- Q. Is there a list of what needs to be covered at the briefings?
- A. Yes, there is a PowerPoint to be used at all CEs/CPs on the night-before briefings. This is also addressed on the pre-eval calls.

**~Evaluators~
Roles, Rules and Responsibilities**

Roles:

- Evaluators are salaried employees, representing the Program Office and must behave accordingly.
- The hosting Task Force is the support system for the evaluation. Evaluators work in conjunction with the hosting Task Force.
- The Chief Evaluator is the primary liaison to the hosting task force and overall leader of the Evaluator Cadre.
- The Lead Evaluators provide oversight for their pile and are the liaisons to the Chief Evaluator.

Rules:

- The testing teams are evaluated according to the CSSCP. The teams are evaluated as to their performance on test day only.
- Evaluators should not bring dogs to evaluations unless requested to do so by the hosting task force IC. If an occasion arises whereby an evaluator must bring a dog, not requested by the host, it is the responsibility of the evaluator to ensure it does not impact the test. The evaluator will interface with the Chief Evaluator for arrangements to bring an unauthorized dog, not the hosting Task Force.
- Professionalism is mandatory. Comments should be made in the proper forums. Under no circumstances should off-hand or undermining comments be made about testing teams, other evaluators or the hosting Task Force. Training advice should be given only upon request.
- All evaluators are required to complete the Peer Reviews.

Responsibilities of all Evaluators

- Bring the items necessary to do the job.
 - Stopwatch
 - Clipboard
 - Be prepared for rain and have a method to keep forms dry
 - Writing utensils (must be ink pen, no pencils)
 - Powder or other item to check air movement
 - A copy of the current CSSCP and any updates
 - PPE
- Be available for the briefing meetings prior to the CE or CP
- Be available for debrief
 - Evaluator debrief
 - Review cover sheets and determine results
 - Discussion between Chief Evaluator and Lead Evaluators if necessary (all evaluators will be present)
 - Handler debrief
 - Certification announcements
 - Distribution of score sheets to handlers
 - Opportunity for handlers to discuss score sheets with evaluators

- **Collection of score sheets by Chief Evaluator**
- **Mentor the shadow evaluators as assigned**
- **Assist with the test set-up as requested by Chief Evaluator**
- **Documentation**
 - **Documentation must be complete**
 - **Documentation must be observations of the teams performance**
 - **State observations**
 - **No subjective comments or judgments**

Responsibilities of Lead Evaluators:

- **Responsible for all evaluators and shadows on their pile**
- **Approves the victim location(s) on their pile**
- **Responsible for a consensus of pass/fail of pile from all three evaluators**
- **Interfaces with the Chief Evaluator and informs him of any issues**
- **Ensures the site map is drawn properly and all information noted for the AAR**
- **Ensures victims have been briefed properly**
- **Ensures Safety knows his role:**
 - **Where to stand on pile**
 - **When to check on victims**
 - **Remove flagging tape/markers**

Responsibilities of Chief Evaluator

- **Establish contact with hosting Task Force**
- **On site, plan test site layout and brief other evaluators and other site personnel regarding site set-up and suitability, timelines, evaluation order, protocols, and other matters related to the evaluation.**
- **Coordinate with Incident Commander (IC), who will be in charge of concerns regarding site safety, transportation, site control, procurement, briefing and transport of victims, and other matters related to logistics.**
- **Coordinate with other evaluators and Safety Officer to make final selection, approval, and pre-testing of selected victim placement holes.**
- **Ensure that the safety equipment check list (required PPE) is completed prior to entering test site.**
- **Ensure that all evaluators adhere to established testing procedures.**
- **The Chief in conjunction with Leads will resolve issues**
- **Delegate responsibility for the shadow evaluators to an experienced evaluator or the shadow mentor.**
- **Forward a shadow evaluator report to the Subcommittee**
- **Ensure that the Peer Reviews are collected and forwarded to the Subcommittee for inclusion in the After Action Report. (The peer reviews are optional for testing handlers, but mandatory for all participating evaluators)**
- **Ensure that all paperwork is complete and consistent.**
- **Forward completed score sheets to the Program Manager, Canine Coordinator, and handler.**
- **Complete and forward the After Action Report to the Canine Subcommittee.**

Attachment B (draft)

In order to assist evaluators in the standardization of disbursement of Certification Evaluation (CE) Guidelines; the below listed information will be read to all testing Canine Handlers by the Chief Evaluator at all Certification Evaluation (CE) Briefings.

Ground Rules: (Ref: CSSCP, Sec III, Page 23)

- No collars or vests on canine while searching.
- Muzzles are not permitted in any phase of the evaluation process.
- Abuse (e.g., physical, mental, verbal, *etc.*) of the canine is not acceptable at any time.
- No access to search sites after setup of test.
- Handler is responsible for care and safety of the canine at all times.
- Safety procedures will be followed. The following safety gear is required for the rubble site: helmet, gloves, long pants, long sleeve shirt, eye protection, safety toe, steel shank safety boots and knee protection.
- Aggression will not be tolerated at any time.

Element Description: (Ref: CSSCP, Sec III, Page 23 -24)

Rationale

- The Canine Search Specialist team must work together in disaster search operations to detect live victims. The handler will be evaluated on his ability to function as a Canine Search Specialist. The canine will be evaluated on his ability to search independently. The canine must alert by barking to enable handler to mark the area of indication of live human scent.

Required Skills

- Canine
 - Searches, detects and indicates live human scent with at least 3 repetitive barks
- Handler
 - Correctly identifies the area of indication of live human scent
 - Maintains control of canine
- Team
 - No false alerts
 - No more than one missed victim

Additional Handler Skills: (Ref: CSSCP, Sec III, Page 24)

(Evaluator Note: Any violations of these skills are not grounds for failure.)

- Site Assessment and Search Plan
 - Handler completes site assessment
 - Handler establishes an initial search strategy
- Flagging/marking of indication location
 - Handler correctly flags/marks canine's indication location
- Search Markings/Victim Markings
 - Handler draws search markings and victim markings according to the current standard.
- Site Sketch/Map
 - Handler draws an accurate map according to the guidelines given under "Search Procedures" herein.
- Debrief
 - Site sketch/map (full access site)
 - Search/Victim marking (either site)
 - Follow-up search recommendations (both sites)

Handler Information: (Ref: CSSCP, Sec III, Page 24)

- The CE will consist of one element — Canine Disaster Search.
- **To successfully complete the evaluation, the team must search each site, locate and identify the areas of live human scent with no more than one miss, have no false alerts, complete the required skills and comply with the Pass/Fail Ground Rules.**
- **The objective of the limited access pile is to test the canine's ability to search and alert independently of the handler.**
- **The objective of the full access pile is to test how the handler and canine work as a team when the opportunity to work in close proximity is offered and the canine can be in the handler's view at all times.**

Search Procedures: (Ref: CSSCP, Sec III, Page 26 -27)

- Search sites:

- Full Access
 - Site is completely accessible to the handler.
 - Handler may access site from any point.
 - **After the first bark the handler may not verbally communicate to the canine until the canine barks three (3) times at the same victim. Barking may be interspersed with digging, scratching or any other attempt to get to the victim. Canine may reposition itself while alerting at the victim location. If the canine leaves the victim location before barking three (3) times, the alert process (3 bark requirement) starts over.**
 - If a handler correctly calls a false alert, **there is no penalty.** Once an alert is marked, it is final.
- Limited Access
 - Site will provide access to only one well-marked portion of the perimeter. The canine must search the area out of the handler's sight in order to locate the victim(s). The handler may access the rubble to mark the alert location and restart the canine. The handler may remain within a five-foot radius of the alert location or return to the starting point (via the path given by the evaluator) while the canine continues to search for victims. If the handler returns to the starting point he may not access the pile until the dog alerts again. **Upon access, the handler must promptly call the alert location after the three barks or return to the place he just left (the starting point or the last alert location).**
 - **After the first bark the handler may not verbally communicate to the canine until the canine barks three (3) times at the same victim. Barking may be interspersed with digging, scratching or any other attempt to get to the victim. Canine may reposition itself while alerting at the victim location. If the canine leaves the victim location before barking three (3) times, the alert process (3 bark requirement) starts over.**
 - If a handler correctly calls a false alert, **there is no penalty.** However, if the handler accesses a site by virtue of a false alert, **he must return to his starting point and restart** after having correctly called the false alert. Once an alert is marked, it is final.

Successful Evaluation Completion: (Ref: CSSCP, Sec III, Page 28)

- **Certification will be based on compliance with the Pass/Fail Ground Rules and completion of the Required Skills, including locating and identifying the areas of live human scent within the allotted time, with no more than one missed victim, and no false alerts. At least one victim must be found by the canine on the Limited Access Pile while the handler is at the starting point and the handler must correctly identify the location of the alert. The Additional Skills and Additional Ground Rules will be included in the process, but will not fail a team.**