



HUMAN REMAINS DETECTION CANINE SEARCH SPECIALIST

The AERIE Human Remains Detection Canine Search Specialist Certification Examination (CE) is designed to accurately and uniformly assess a canine team's ability to effectively search for, accurately locate, and indicate various scent sources of human remains, both above and below ground and in both rural and urban settings. This certification recognizes the need for further training to acquire the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to become a fully competent canine handler in a wide variety of land search operations.

General Guidelines

- Scent sources will be of human origin and may be placed in a container (e.g., PVC pipe, jar, bag, etc.).
 - Scent source containers must be of a size that will prohibit or restrict a canine's ability to swallow the source.
 - Containers should be used that are as permeable as possible to allow for scent movement.
- The types of materials used as well as the vehicles used to contain them will be determined by the examiners. Types of material used are:
 - Bone with tissue
 - Tissue
 - Decomposing blood
 - Burnt tissue (not cremains)
 - Teeth mixed with other approved scent material
- Positive scent sources may not include:
 - Clothing items or cloth from a decomposing body
 - Soil sample from where a body has decomposed
 - Dry, bleached bone only
 - Ashes
 - Synthetic scent
 - Human urine/feces

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT

The AERIE Human Remains Detection CSS Fundamental Skills Assessment (FSA) is designed to assess the handler and canine's ability to search a small area and the canine's ability to perform a trained final response a distance away from the handler. This assessment must be completed prior to attempting other AERIE Human Remains Detection CSS examinations.



Human Remains Detection Canine Search Specialist FSA

- The candidate and dog will be evaluated using an area of approximately 20 square meters (215 square feet).
- The candidate and dog will be evaluated using a maximum time limit of five (5) minutes including breaks.
- The canine must perform a trained final response at scent source and remain at source for 10 (ten) seconds.
- The source of odor will be between 5 and 15 grams.

Examination Guidelines

1. The search area will be 20 x 20 meters square (215 square feet), clearly delineated by flagging or cones at all four corners. The area should be flat and clearly visible to the handler from all boundaries. The odor source should be placed as near to the center of the area as possible. The odor source will be concealed (e.g., in a bark box, under pallets, etc.). There should be no known distractions in the area. The handler will be able to determine the location of odor sources.
2. The odor source shall be in place at least 10 minutes before the canine is sent. The canine will not be allowed access to the odor source.
3. The canine must perform its trained final response at the location of the positive scent source. Trained final response may be either active or passive.
4. The canine must stay at the positive scent source and does not return to the handler until after the 10 second period is complete.

The following behaviors will result in an immediate fail at any point in the exercise (including after the 10 second alert period, before and as dog is removed from the area):

- Eating, rolling in, or urinating/defecating on the scent source.

Handler Guidelines

1. The team will have five (5) minutes to perform the exercise. The handler may send the canine from any location outside the search area. The handler will remove the canine's leash before the exercise begins. The canine may be given a hand signal and/or voice command to send the canine to the odor source location. If the canine does not go directly to the odor source location, the handler may use additional commands, as necessary, to direct the canine to the odor source location. The handler may not enter the search area but may move around the perimeter as necessary.
2. The handler may direct the canine toward the odor source location but once the canine has reacted to the odor, the handler may not communicate with the canine in any way. The handler must not cue the dog to perform its final response in any way.
3. Once the canine has committed to the odor source location, it must remain focused and perform a trained alert for ten (10) seconds.



4. There will be two official timers. One timer will start timing the exercise as soon as the handler sends the canine. The second timer will start timing as soon as the canine begins the alert. The handler will be told when he or she may go to the canine. The exercise is considered complete after the 10 second alert period.
5. When the exercise is over, the handler may praise or reward the canine, put on the leash and quickly leave the area.

Testing Criteria for the Human Remains Detection CSS FSA

Handler Skills

- Did the handler articulate the dog's final response?
- Is the handler in tune with their dog's needs?

Dog Skills

- Did the dog stay focused on the search?
- Is the dog willing to leave its handler to follow up scent?
- Did the dog demonstrate its final response and remain at source for 10 seconds?



HUMAN REMAINS DETECTION CANINE SEARCH SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

Prerequisites: AERIE Human Remains Detection Canine Search Specialist FSA or a current certification by a nationally recognized organization that meets or exceeds the criteria of the FSA.

There are two separate Human Remains Detection Canine Search Specialist CEs

- Human Remains Detection Canine Search Specialist – Level 1 CE -- 5 to 15 grams
- Human Remains Detection Canine Search Specialist – Level 2 CE -- 15 to 50 grams

The certification examination will consist of three (3) components:

- Above Ground Evaluation
- Buried Evaluation
- Urban Evaluation

All of these examinations meet or exceeds the industry standard and the criteria of FEMA 508-8 Typed Resource Definitions – Search and Rescue Resources 11/14/2007

General Guidelines

- Excessive urinating/defecating to mark areas will result in the failure of the canine team.
- The canine may not compromise the human remains material at any time. Compromise is defined as eating, rolling in, or urinating/defecating on the scent source. If at any time during the evaluation the canine compromises the scent source, the canine team will automatically fail the examination.
- Examiners will make every effort to ensure that the scent of the positive scent source and the dead animal scent sources do not overlap.
- Taking into the account both terrain and weather conditions, the handler must be able to determine and identify the location, within reasonable proximity, of all positive scent sources
- All scent sources (including distractions) are to be placed a minimum of 24 and a maximum of 48 hours prior to the start of the evaluation.
- Trained final response may be either active or passive.
- The canine may search on or off-lead
- A minimum of 90% of the positive scent sources must be located and the canine must perform their trained final response.



Above Ground Component

- Three 2-acre (.8 hectacre) search areas composed of fields, wooded areas, and a variety of vegetation and terrain features with marked boundaries.
- Two of the search areas will contain a minimum of one (1) and a maximum of two (2) positive scent sources. The positive scent sources may or may not be accessible to the dog (e.g., bones may be placed in a cage in order to preserve the material).
- The third test area will contain **no** positive scent source. An empty container (e.g., PVC, bag, etc.) with no human remains material contamination will be placed in this test area. This container will never have held human remains.
- There will be a total of five (5) disturbed areas (e.g., false holes) spread across the three (3) search areas.
- All positive scent sources are to be placed a minimum of 24 and a maximum of 48 hours prior to the start of the evaluation.
- All scent sources will be placed out of plain sight.
- At least 1, but no more than 2 of the positive scent sources will be elevated and should be placed between 2 and 4 feet off of the ground.
- At least 1, but no more than 3 of the positive scent sources will be placed at ground level.
- One of the search areas will contain a dead animal scent source.
- Candidates will have maximum of one (1) hour to search each area.

Buried Component

- Two ½ - acre (.2 hectacre) sites comprised of fields, wooded areas to include a variety of vegetation and terrain features.
- One of the search areas must contain one (1) scent source. The other search area may contain zero (0) to one (1) scent sources.
- Each search area must contain a minimum of one (1) false hole. There will be no more than three (3) false holes in either search area.
- Scent sources will be covered by a minimum of six (6) inches and a maximum of 10 inches of loose soil and/or vegetation. The area immediately around the buried scent source should blend in with the surrounding soil and vegetation.
- One (1) of the search areas will contain a dead animal scent source.
- Candidates will have a maximum of 30 minutes to search each area.

Urban Component

- The test sites must include two of the following: building (barns, out buildings), lumber pile, crawl space, debris pile, vehicles or dumpsters.



- The total search area, which includes both areas, must be a minimum of 500 (46.5 square meters) and a maximum of 1,000 (93 square meters) square feet.
- The search area will contain 1 to 3 positive scent sources.
- The positive scent sources will be placed between six (6) inches below the surface and 48 inches above the surface. Any buried positive scent sources will be covered with loose soil and/or non-hazardous man-made materials.
- The positive scent source may or may not be accessible to the dog.
- An empty container (e.g., PVC, bag, etc.) with no human remains material contamination will be placed in this test area. This container will never have contained human remains.
- The search area will contain a dead animal scent source.
- Candidates will have a maximum of 45 minutes to search the area.

Examination Criteria for the Human Remains Detection CSS – Level 1 & 2

Handler Skills

- Is the handler adequately attired and equipped?
- Did the handler develop the appropriate strategy based on information acquired?
- Did the handler articulate the dog's alerts/indications prior to entering the field?
- Did the handler interpret the dog's alert/indication in the field?
- Did the handler articulate the dog's final response?
- Was the handler alert to visual clues?
- Does the handler demonstrate good land navigation field skills?
- Was the handler able to justify their search tactics?
- Did the handler accurately debrief the task with an estimated P.O.D?
- Was the handler able to articulate the relevant meteorology?
- Is the handler in tune with their dog's needs?

Dog Skills

- Did the dog stay focused on the search?
- Is the dog easily refocused after being distracted?
- Is the dog willing to leave it's handler to follow up a scent?
- Does the dog search independently and effectively?
- Did the dog make a self-directed find on target source(s)?
- Did the dog demonstrate its final response and direct the handler to target source(s)?

Team Skills

- Did the dog and handler make an effective team?
- Did the dog demonstrate obedience through its reactions to handler commands?
- Was the search completed within the time limit for the evaluation?