



TSAR K9 UNIT GUIDELINES

TSAR-K9 is a Unit of Taos Search and Rescue (TSAR), a 501(c)(3) all-volunteer organization based in Northern New Mexico. TSAR works under the auspices of the New Mexico State Police to aid sick, injured and lost individuals primarily, but not solely, in wilderness settings. These guidelines are to provide clear and consistent objectives for all members of the K9 Unit.

🌀 MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the TSAR K9 Unit furthers the Mission of Taos Search and Rescue through providing a specialty resource of exceptionally trained, professional and competent search dog/handler teams dedicated to help locate missing persons and to aid in preserving human life.

🌀 LEVELS OF K9 UNIT MEMBERSHIP

Members of TSAR K9 Unit are individuals demonstrating a team-oriented, positive and cooperative attitude while training themselves and the K9's on the Unit to the best of their ability. The TSAR K9 Unit recommends the learning process never cease and that members continue to keep current on all search and rescue techniques both during and after meeting the standards of Evaluation, always working toward developing a better resource in service to the community.

K9 Prospect: Anyone considering joining the K9 Unit is welcome to observe dog trainings. Prospective members must never bring their own dog to training, even if left in their vehicle.

K9 Applicant: In order to join the TSAR K9 Unit and enter into the K9 Unit Handler/K9 Training program, one must first be a TSAR Trainee by having their application to the team approved by the TSAR Board of Directors.

Then K9 Applicants must complete the following criteria in order to become a K9 Trainee:

- a. Complete an observance period of 3 months, attending 70% of all scheduled field & classroom trainings, serving as K9 Support. This entails taking responsibility for navigation and communication and serving as K9 subjects. Applicants **may not** bring their own K9 to any of these trainings, unless specifically asked by the K9 Unit Leader or K9 Search Training Officer to do so.
- b. Complete the following required reading: *Search and Rescue Dogs – Training the K9 Hero, second edition* by the American Rescue Dog Association (ARDA), *Tracking for Search and Rescue Dogs, a Practical Manual for Novice and Advanced Handlers* by Boguslaw P. Gorny, & *Scent & the Scenting Dog* by William Syrotuck. Optional additional reading: *K9 Search & Rescue* by Resi Gerritsen and Ruud Haak, *Schutzhund Obedience Training in Drive with Godtfried Dildei* by Sheila Booth, & *Ready! The Training of the Search and Rescue Dog* by Susan Bulanda.
- c. Applicant must own the K9 you are planning to train unless, in the circumstance of co-

ownership, the K9 Unit may consider the particular specifics of the co-ownership and deem the situation acceptable for deployment of the resource.

- d. Complete the TSAR K9 Unit Application & Dog Interview.
- e. Become a Mission Ready Trainee of TSAR.

K9 Trainees: When the above requirements have been satisfied, The K9 Applicant becomes a K9 Trainee and are expected to attend 70% of all trainings in order to remain in the K9 Unit training program. Exceptions must be agreed upon by democratic vote from the K9 Unit. Each K9 Trainee will be paired with a Mission-Ready K9 Team who will act as a Mentor during the training period. As a K9 Trainee, it can take between 1.5 to 2 years to become a Mission Ready K9 Team.

K9 Full Members: There are three types of K9 Full Members:

- a. **K9 Team** - is a K9/Handler team which has passed at least one TSAR K9 Mission Readiness Evaluation.
- b. **K9 Handler** – An experienced K9 Handler who has already achieved the status of K9 Team, but who may be between dogs due to dog’s retirement, illness, or death. The K9 Handler is no longer a Mission Ready K9 Team, but will either be working toward the status of K9 Team again with another dog that has been approved for training by the K9 Unit Leader and K9 Training Officer and/or will be helping new K9 Trainees reach that status.
- c. **K9 Support** – is a TSAR Full Member who regularly supports the K9 Unit in their trainings, classes and missions. They participate as subjects for the dogs to find and participate as field support in navigation, communications and filing observer reports. Support members are responsible to learn how to set up appropriate search problems for the dogs and must fully understand and engage in the dog reward process. These members do not train a K9, but can learn to handle a K9 in case of the Handler’s absence. (See attachment on K9 Support Members).

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

The following conduct from all K9 Unit Members is required during training, missions and public events: respectfulness, willingness to take direction, good will, compassion, good communication, teamwork, sobriety, appropriate grooming (humans and dog), and well-maintained equipment.

The ICS (Incident Command System) will be followed and respected by all members of the K9 Unit. K9 Members will not use undue or abusive corrections with any K9, mistreat a K9 or otherwise behave in a manner that would cause loss of trust in the human-K9 relationship. Loss of temper or a poor or negative attitude will be cause for immediate review and possible dismissal from the K9 Unit. Handlers are fully responsible for any damages caused by their dog and the K9 Unit will not be held liable for damage by an individual dog.

During or outside a mission, information regarding subject status is personal and confidential and should not be shared or distributed by K9 Members to the media or public unless express permission is given by the IC or PIO to do so. Sensitivity and discretion is expected when relaying information via radio for the protection of the subject and their family.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All K9 Unit Members must be in good health and reasonably fit. Individuals with minor medical conditions or physical limitations are responsible for informing members of the Unit regarding such and for monitoring themselves during trainings and missions.

AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE

K9 Handlers are required to be proficient in the following areas:

- a. **Communications** - the use of Family Service Radios and TSAR field radios. HAMM Operations License is encouraged, but not required.
- b. **Navigation** - ability to read a topo map, competent use of compass and GPS, and proficient computer mapping skills in SAR Topo.
- c. **Scent Theory** – understanding how a dog’s nose works, how human scent is deposited, conditions under which scent remains or travels in different weather & terrain, and how it is related to the Probability of Detection (POD).
- d. **ICS** - must pass NM Field Certification exam as per TSAR guidelines, which includes familiarity with ICS chain of command.
- e. **Base Camp Operations** – understanding effective dog deployment in the field, selecting search sectors for specific dogs (re: their Mission Readiness status and specific abilities), plotting dog’s progress and ROC’s/indications in the field on topo & GPS/Phone, recording communications, interface with the ICS command system, etc.
- f. **Probability of Detection (POD)** - familiarity with the formulas utilizing wind, convection currents, and humidity etc. to determine a dog’s POD and understanding appropriate use of air scenting and tracking/trailing dogs according to all search conditions.
- g. **Reliability of Clue (ROC)** – knowledge of how to assess and report ROC as it relates not only to clues found in the field, but to clues that your K9 is exhibiting through their actions and body language.
- h. **Leadership** –develop leadership skills, as the handler is the Team Leader on a mission and responsible for other SAR personnel providing support.
- i. **First Aid/Wilderness Medical** - competence in basic first aid, litter packaging and evacuation of human subjects. Experience and knowledge in K9 first aid and field evac. Completion of a Wilderness Advanced First Aid (Wafa) or Wilderness First Responder (WFR) Certification course is encouraged.
- j. **Lost Person Behavior** – understanding probable actions of various types of lost individuals, i.e. wilderness-savvy, children, Alzheimer's sufferers, etc.
- k. **Survival** - sufficient to maintain one’s and others' safety in the field in all weather conditions day or night.
- l. **Crime Scene Preservation** – know what to do when you come upon a crime scene as a find and be prepared, if needed, as a witness in a courtroom setting.
- m. **Man Tracking** – basic skills in man-tracking.

Additional Knowledge Requirements

Handlers: In order to be evaluated for Mission Readiness with their K9, Handlers must first pass the New Mexico Field Certification. Tests in scent theory and K9 first aid must also be completed and passed by the Handler.

Support: K9 Support Members must also pass the New Mexico Field Certification in accordance with TSAR Guidelines. Support Members should become well practiced in GPS operation, obtain proficiency with a map and compass, and command an understanding of all requirements of K9 navigation in addition to refining their own search skills and understanding of each dog on the team and the ability to read each dog’s indication tells and final indication.

TRAINING LOGS AND HEALTH RECORDS

Each K9 Handler will maintain a K9 Training Log, which includes:

- Training Report for each search run
- Training Report for each obedience, agility, & endurance training
- Monthly Training Report
- Training Checklist
- Evaluation Score Sheets
- Up-to-date K9 health records
- Travel info and travel letters
- Certificates from specialized seminars
- Other K9 records

K9 Handlers are required to bring his/her K9 Training Log to all meetings and trainings and have it available for evaluation any time by the K9 Unit Leader and/or Search Training Coordinator. The information maintained in the K9 Training Log is valuable to evaluate what in training needs more work, next steps in training, and when fluency is reached. K9 Trainings Logs may be required to attend an out-of-town seminar. The K9 Training Log may also be requested in a court of law, if a handler is requested to give testimony and questions arise as to the dog's training and experience. The K9 Training Log will be required at the time of all Evaluations.

FINANCES

TSAR allocates funds annually for the K9 Unit to be utilized for specialized team equipment and educational materials. The TSAR Board of Directors will decide if additional funding should be allocated in the case that individuals would like to attend additional outside K9 search training seminars. Most equipment is for personal use and will be purchased and maintained by the individual K9 Handlers. On missions, K9 Handlers are responsible for keeping their gasoline receipts when attending a mission in order to be reimbursed by the State.

SUGGESTIONS AND GRIEVANCES

Suggestions may be given to the K9 Secretary or K9 Unit Leader. Open communication among all Members of the K9 Unit is strongly encouraged and harmonious relations between Members must be maintained. Grievances should be addressed directly to those members involved. It is the responsibility of each Member to resolve any conflicts immediately, as conflict can affect the working success of the Unit – both people and dogs. If a grievance has been attempted to be resolved, but without appropriate results, the Member is required to address the situation in writing to the K9 Unit Leader. The K9 Unit Leader is then responsible to mediate and help resolve the problem in a harmonious manner. Grievances with the K9 Unit Leader should be addressed directly to the K9 Unit Leader. If satisfaction cannot be reached, a letter to the TSAR Board should be sent, description of the grievance and why it was not able to be resolved directly. The TSAR Board then becomes the mediator between the K9 Member and the K9 Unit Leader.

SCHEDULED MEETINGS & TRAININGS

TSAR K9 meets regularly:

- Once/week for field training
- Once/month for classroom training
- Once/month for a general K9 Unit meeting (Checklist sign-off and training planning)

In addition, K9 Trainees/Handlers are responsible to set up, train, and report into the K9 Training Log **at least one** additional search problem for their dog each week, especially in the first year of training. There should also be additional obedience, agility, and endurance trainings logged each month through the General Report.

K9 Trainees and K9 Teams are obligated to attend 70% of regularly scheduled TSAR K9 Unit classroom and field trainings annually. Training with other SAR Teams and attending specialty trainings across the State and beyond is supported and encouraged, but do not count toward annual Unit requirements.

Medical, personal, or business leaves of absence may be taken if agreed upon by the K9 Unit Leader or can, in certain cases, be deferred by the K9 Unit Leader to a democratic vote of the Unit. These decisions are considered on an individual basis and the K9 Member's general standing in the Unit, their status (either Mission Ready or the likelihood of them becoming Mission Ready) are taken into consideration as well as the long-term effect the leave has upon Mission Readiness. K9 Trainees/Handlers must show consistent efforts and progress toward meeting Pre-Evaluation and Mission Readiness goals despite leaves of absence.

K9S

a. Suitability

Not all dogs are suited to search and rescue work. Individual K9s vary in level of scent ability, drive, stamina, and focus. TSAR K9 will evaluate Applicant K9s for suitability before they will be allowed to enter the K9 Unit training program. As K9 Trainees, Handlers and K9s must successfully complete three Pre-Evaluations in order to remain in the K9 Unit Training program and before being eligible to take the Mission Readiness Evaluation.

b. Dog Etiquette

Good manners from K9s and safety awareness from Handlers are mandatory for K9s at trainings and on missions. K9s must be leashed, crated or inside vehicles at Training Base or Incident Base. Specific play and relief areas should be respectfully designated. K9s should not behave aggressively with other dogs or people. No K9 is perfect and the K9 Unit Leader will monitor progress in overcoming any behavior problems. Females in heat are NOT allowed at trainings or on missions.

c. General Training: Obedience, Agility & Endurance

K9s undergo rigorous obedience, agility and endurance training to maintain as high a level of professionalism and readiness as possible. This training also ensures the higher levels of safety for our K9s. All Evaluations include scoring for obedience, agility, and general fitness of the K9 in addition to search modality testing.

Obedience: K9s learn to navigate airports and other public transportation, to represent SAR at public education forums and public events, and to be under excellent voice control in all situations. Furthermore, obedience training prepares the K9 for direct-ability in the

field when needed to ensure safety or for more thorough coverage of search assignments.

Agility: ensures the K9's ability to safely and confidently navigate natural and manmade obstacles under the voice control of the Handler when necessary. It further trains desensitization to varying surfaces and noise in readiness for successful loading and transport in helicopters, aircraft, OHV's, ski lifts, water craft and raising or lowering through extreme terrain.

Endurance: This training is not required, as is Obedience and Agility, but is recommended to ensure the highest levels of performance in the K9. Running with an auto or bike are two forms of endurance training. Regular high-altitude hikes and swimming, especially in swiftwater, are other very important and useful endurance trainings.

d. **K9 Health**

Proper dietary considerations should be evaluated for working K9s, as regular dog foods may not provide enough elevated levels of nutrition required for the highly athletic working K9. Consult your vet for recommendations on for high performance dog food brands or supplementing with personally prepared foods to satisfy health-appropriate intake for your dog's breed, size and mental/physical activity levels.

K9 Insurance is also something to consider for the working K9. Insurance can help with costs in the case of illness or injury and may help Handlers get the K9 back into the field.

MISSION READINESS

K9 Teams are advised to be Mission Ready at all times, particularly since dogs may be called out for a Hasty Search. Ideally one's vehicle should be well-maintained, with sound tires, a spare tire and a full tank of gas. Keeping a full pack and canine supplies for 24 hours, radio, GPS, and spare batteries at ready in the vehicle is advised. See Attachment "Equipment" for list of additional required items above and beyond what TSAR requires you to carry. **Note:** As a volunteer, one can decline to participate in any mission for which you feel mentally or physically unprepared.

K9 Handlers are encouraged to participate in all TSAR missions, not just missions in which dog teams are utilized, as you are first and foremost an active member of TSAR. Once you have arrived at Incident Base, each K9 Team must be prepared that the IC may or may not choose to utilize the resource determined by your particular Mission Readiness Evaluation and may therefore be deployed in another manner, with your dog left in your vehicle or in a crate at IB.

Search Modalities

Mission Readiness Evaluations may be obtained in any of the following search modalities. Second & third search modalities are encouraged and may be trained either simultaneously or concurrently, depending on the K9, its aptitude and eagerness for work. However, reaching Mission Readiness is a priority and one modality should be chosen as a primary focus until that Mission Readiness has been successfully achieved

- a. **Area Search** – K9s trained to detect generic human scent and/or specific individual scent that travels via air currents and wind across the terrain. Dogs can search large areas quickly using this modality, thus the K9 can assist in the search through either locating the subject(s) if present in the area or can verify their absence, thus clearing

an area. TSAR Area K9s are trained in both wilderness and urban environments. Area K9s are additionally prepared for snow burial and elevated finds. They may be further trained for evidence location if desired, but not a requirement of certification.

- b. **Tracking/Trailing** – K9s are trained to follow scent of specific individuals deposited on or near the ground. They are trained to follow the scent more or less along the path the subject took. K9s can be used to establish direction of travel from the LKP (Last Known Point) and should be able to follow the scent path all the way to the subject in the right weather and time-sensitive conditions. TSAR Tracking/Trailing K9s are trained in both wilderness and urban environments. They may be further trained for evidence location if desired, but not a requirement of certification.
- c. **Human Remains Detection** - dogs are trained to use area search techniques to locate human remains. TSAR HRD K9's are trained in both wilderness and urban environments, building and vehicle search, and both land and water finds.

TSAR K9 Mission Readiness can be obtained in the following specialties:

- a. **Area Search: Generic, Live**
- b. **Area Search: Scent Specific, Live**
- c. **Tracking/Trailing: Scent Specific, Live**
- d. **Area Search: Human Remains Detection**
 - **Large Source, Wilderness – Above Ground**
 - **Large Source, Wilderness – Burial**
 - **Large Source, Swiftwater - Submerged**
 - **Small Source, Wilderness – Forensic Search**
 - **Small Source, Vehicle – Forensic Search**
 - **Small Source, Building – Forensic Search**

EVALUATIONS

No K9 Trainee will be deployed in the field at an actual search mission as a K9 Team until they have passed one TSAR K9 Unit Mission Readiness Evaluation and that evaluation has been approved by the TSAR Board of Directors. Once this has been accomplished by a K9 Trainee or K9 Handler, they become a TSAR K9 Team and may be deployed for a Mission in their modality of readiness.

Pre-Evaluations

The path to Mission Readiness and becoming a TSAR K9 Team requires K9 Trainees and K9 Handlers with new K9s to pass three Pre-Evaluations in a specified time-line. Each K9 Trainee/Handler must accomplish each level of Pre-Evaluation with passing scores in order to continue in the next phase of the TSAR K9 Unit training program. Pre-Evaluations are given by the K9 Unit Leader or the K9 Search Training Officer.

The field portion of each Pre-Evaluation level may be attempted twice by the K9 Trainee/Handler in order to receive a passing score. If the first attempt was not passed, the second attempt must be attempted within a two-month window of the first attempt. If the second attempt was also unsuccessful, the K9 Trainee is required to meet with the K9 Unit Leader and K9 Unit Full Members to review their Pre-Evaluation scores and determine if the K9 Trainee and/or their K9 will be allowed to continue in the K9 Unit training program. Handler and dog will be evaluated separately for their ability to continue.

Pre-Evaluation Time Line:

- **Pre-Evaluation I** – preferred goal is to schedule the first attempt within **9 months** of the first day of training.
- **Pre-Evaluation II** – preferred goal is to schedule the first attempt within **6 months** of passing Pre-Evaluation I.
- **Pre-Evaluation III** – preferred goal is to schedule the first attempt within **6 months** of passing Pre-Evaluation II.

Mission Readiness Evaluation/Obtaining MR Status

Once all three Pre-Evaluations have been successfully passed and all other requirements have been met, the K9 Trainee/Handler may schedule their Mission Readiness Evaluation.

Mission Ready Obedience and Agility Evaluations will be conducted by the K9 Unit Leader or K9 Search Training Officer and must be passed before the Field Evaluation is scheduled. All Mission Readiness Field Evaluations of TSAR K9 Trainees and Teams will be conducted by outside, experienced K9 Handlers from established SAR teams as Evaluator 1 and a TSAR K9 Full Member as Evaluator 2. Any grievance in regards to the evaluation procedure or outcome will be brought before the TSAR Board for resolution.

Mission Readiness Time Line:

- **Mission Readiness Evaluation** – preferred goal is to schedule the first attempt within **1.5 - 2 years** of the first day of training.

Once the K9 Trainee or K9 Handler has passed the Obedience, Agility and Field portions of the Mission Readiness Evaluation, the final approval of the TSAR Board must be obtained. The K9 Unit Leader will present the Evaluation scores, the K9 Log, and a report of the K9 Team to the Directors for a final vote of Mission Readiness. With a majority vote of the Board, the K9 Trainee or K9 Handler becomes a TSAR K9 Team, fully Mission Ready in the search modality in which they reached satisfactory evaluation.

Maintaining Mission Readiness Status

A K9 Team must periodically re-evaluate to verify that their knowledge and skills have been adequately maintained. The re-evaluation time-line depends on the participatory level of the K9 Team with the K9 Unit. The K9 Team must attend 70% of the scheduled K9 Unit meetings and trainings annually and 60% of the scheduled TSAR Team Trainings in order to be in compliance with attendance requirements. Special considerations will be given for K9 Unit approved leaves of absence on a case-by-case basis. A K9 Team must be re-evaluated in each particular specialty in which they have achieved Mission Readiness.

Re-Evaluation Time Line for Maintaining Mission Readiness Status:

- **K9 Teams in compliance with attendance requirements** – every three years.
- **K9 Teams not in compliance with attendance requirements** - every year.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

- A. K9 Handler Trainee Application** - pages 9-11
- B. K9 Support Member** - page 12
- C. Equipment** - page 13
- D. Delegation of Responsibilities** - pages 14-15
- E. Leadership** - pages 16-1

K9 UNIT - ATTACHMENT A K9 APPLICATION

Only those desiring to enter the K9 Unit Training Program with a K9 need officially apply to the K9 Unit through the Attachment A process. Support Members will be awarded K9 Unit Full Membership through consistent training with the Unit; by training approximately 12 times/year with the K9 Unit, serving as a subject for K9s, and providing navigation/communication support for K9 Handlers.

To become a K9 Trainee and begin the K9 training program with the TSAR K9 Unit, you must first fulfill the following criteria:

1. Applicant must be a current TSAR Trainee in good standing and must be making progress toward becoming TSAR Mission Ready and then a Full Member by attending the required trainings and learning the required subjects.
2. K9 Applicants will not be allowed to bring their K9s to any K9 Unit training until they have completed the Application process.
3. Applicant must own the K9 with which he/she is applying to train unless, in the circumstance of co-ownership, the team has considered the particular specifics of co-ownership and deemed the situation workable and acceptable.
Applicant must own reliable transportation for themselves and their K9.
4. Applicant must successfully complete the K9 Unit Application.
5. Applicant's K9 must successfully complete the K9 Interview with the K9 Unit Leader and other members of the K9 Unit.
6. Once Steps 1-6 have been met, the Interview for Applicant K9 Handlers must be successfully completed with the K9 Unit Leader and other members of the K9 Unit.
7. Applicant must complete an observance period of three months, attending 70% of all scheduled K9 field and classroom trainings as K9 Unit Support. This enables the Applicant to learn K9 navigation, communication, K9 reward systems, learn about the K9 Unit training process, exhibit good team skills, and to observe working dogs. This prevents mistakes by involving the K9 too soon before experience is gained by the Handler.
8. Applicant must properly maintain his/her TSAR pack during this period and must have their pack at all field trainings. The Applicant should start to acquire equipment needed to begin to work their K9 during this period.
9. Applicant should complete the following required reading in order to have a better understanding of the K9 Unit, its expectations, training and mission procedures and to be prepared in the proper handling of his/her K9:
 - Scent and the Scenting Dog – by William Syrotuck: ISBN# 0970049420: Barkleigh Productions Inc.
 - Search and Rescue Dogs – Training the K9 Hero, second edition – by ARDA, the American Rescue Dog Association: ISBN# 0-7645-6703-9: Howell Book House.
 - Tracking for Search and Rescue Dogs, a Practical Manual for Novice and Advanced Handlers – by Boguslaw P. Gorny: ISBN# 1-55059-242-4: Detselig Enterprises, Ltd
10. If all the above 9 Steps are completed successfully, Applicant must acquire the following K9 equipment in order to attend his/her first training with his/her K9: water bowl, leash appropriate to search modality, K9's favorite toy, dog crate or cable tie out.

INTERVIEW FOR APPLICANT K9 HANDLERS

The K9 Unit Guidelines are provided for the K9 Applicant well in Advance of the K9 Interview. The Applicant Interview will be given by the K9 Unit Leader. Other K9 Full Members may also be present during the interview process.

1. The K9 Applicant is re-briefed on the time and commitment required to successfully train a SAR K9 and reach Mission Readiness.
2. The K9 Applicant will have attended enough TSAR Trainings prior to the Applicant Interview to adequately exhibit the candidate's willingness to train, ability to commit, and serve as a valuable team member. These aspects will be evaluated and discussed in the K9 Applicant Interview.
3. After the Applicant's Interview, the K9 Unit Leader will report to the K9 Unit on the interview and the application will be discussed and voted upon by the K9 Unit Members for final acceptance of the application.

INTERVIEW FOR APPLICANT K9S

K9 Applicants will be evaluated during their interview by the K9 Unit Leader. Other K9 Full Members may also be present during the interview process. The K9 Unit Leader will be observing the K9 for general temperament, drives, focus, nerves, and physical condition.

1. The K9 Handler Applicant will bring with their K9 to the interview:
 - 6' Lead
 - Water
 - K9's favorite toy or toys
 - Treats
2. The K9 Handler Applicant will be asked to demonstrate playing with a toy with their K9 and then to transfer that toy to another person.
3. The K9 Applicant will be exposed to other people and the relationship will be observed.
4. The K9 Applicant will be exposed to other K9s on lead and the relationship will be observed.
5. The relationship between the K9 Applicant and Handler Applicant is observed.
6. The K9 Applicant may be taken through other exposures, such as surfaces or sounds.
7. The K9 Applicant may be asked to perform for the K9 Unit Leader or for another person at the Interview.
8. The Handler Applicant is asked to demonstrate the following 5 obedience commands with their K9. Success is not necessarily expected. Treats may be used.
 - Sit
 - Down
 - Stay
 - Recall
 - Heel

TSAR K9 UNIT APPLICANT QUESTIONNAIRE

HANDLER NAME _____ DATE _____

K9 NAME _____ AGE _____ BREED _____

1. Why are you interested in training a SAR K9?
2. What are the qualities of your K9 that you think make them suitable for becoming a SAR K9?
3. What qualities do you possess that will make you successful as a K9 SAR Handler?
4. What is your weekly work schedule?
5. Are you good at following directions?
6. Are you a good team player and why?
7. Are you willing to make the commitment necessary to reach Mission Readiness within the TSAR K9 Unit?
8. Are you planning to remain in Taos and how do you envision your service to TSAR and TSAR K9 over a sustainable period of time?

Attachment B

TSAR K-9 SUPPORT

A K9 Support member of the TSAR K9 Unit is a TSAR Mission Ready Trainee or TSAR Full Member who regularly supports the K-9 Unit in trainings, classes and actual missions.

K9 Support participates as subjects for the dogs in training and as field support in navigation, communications for the K9 Handler. K9 Support may also be asked to file observer reports, take photos of field trainings, or to provide Training Base. These members are responsible to fully understand the K9 reward process. K9 Support does not train a dog of their own, but may be called is as a substitute K9Handler in the absence of or at the bequest of the actual K9 Handler.

K9 Support members are required to attend a minimum of 25% of all K-9 Unit classroom and field trainings in order to maintain their K9 Unit membership status. They are given priority to be deployed as support to K9 Teams at actual missions because of their membership status and experience in the K9 Unit.

K9 Support is responsible for critical aspects of K9 training and to competently perform specific K9 support tasks during missions. Therefore, K9 Support must become versed in the following areas of knowledge and/or exhibit the following qualities:

- Has good listening skills and follows instructions well from K9 Leaders and K9 Handlers
- Understands the specifics of playing "subject" for K9s in all levels of training
- Knows how to effectively lay a variety of tracks for SAR K9s
- Knows how to properly set up an area search for SAR K9s
- Able to properly execute the various reward systems for each K9 in training or Mission Readiness and understands timing, attitudes and subtleties in delivering those reward systems
- Have excellent navigational skills with GPS
- Have excellent navigational skills with map and compass
- Have excellent radio and communication skills
- Be physically fit in order to set up a variety of search scenarios for beginning to advanced dogs: involves hiking short distances to several miles in various types of terrain and 5 minutes of vigorous, aerobic play in delivering reward systems
- During missions, the support person is the responsible team member for navigation and communication, following behind the K9 Team and responding to the K9 Team's requirements for effective search.
- Achieves and maintains a professional level of knowledge, ability and readiness with TSAR in human search modalities.

K9 UNIT - ATTACHMENT C EQUIPMENT

SAR dog handlers should have all the equipment required for TSAR pack requirements plus the following:

- K9 log book
- Crate
- K9 ID
- Radios – FRS &/or Baofeng
- GPS
- Navigational Compass
- Mapping Compass
- Extra Water - for the K9
- Extra First Aid Kit - with supplies specific to K9
- Food - for the K9 (24 hrs)
- Packable Dog Dish/Water Bowl
- K9 Vest or Harness - appropriate for visibility in day and night conditions.
- Lead:
 - ✓ track/trailing K9s are required to have a 10'-30' lead
 - ✓ area search K9s are required to have a 4' - 6' lead
- Swiss Bell (for area search & tracking off-lead only).
- Lighted Collar/Harness or Lights attached to Vest - for night searches
- Plastic Bags - for storing scent articles
- Plastic Bags - for disposing of K9 waste
- Motivational/Reward Toys
- Copy of Dog's Vaccination Record (to be kept in log book)

Optional Equipment:

- Dog Boots (if dogs pads/paws are sensitive to hot or cold surfaces)
- Insulated Vest - for short-haired K9s in winter
- K9 1st Aid Book.
- Hand-Held Weather Instrument
- K9 Lift Harness
- K9 Carry-out Harness
- K9 Ear & Eye Protection for helicopter
- GPS K9 Collar Tracking System – for area search dogs or off-lead tracking dogs

Items for K9 1st Aid Kit (The below items are additional and not a complete K9 first aid kit, however the K9 kit does not have to duplicate items which are already carried in the required TSAR first aid kit):

- Muzzle
- Vet Wrap
- Safety Pins
- Scissors
- Eyedrops
- Ophthalmix Ointment
- Needle
- Tweezers
- Sting ease
- Hot and cold packs
- Any prescription drugs already prescribed for the K9

K9 UNIT - ATTACHMENT D

DELEGATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

Leadership is fostered at all levels of the K9 Unit. Through leadership, we learn to be better followers and teammates and we develop the skills necessary as leaders of our own K9 teams at a mission.

Responsibilities are delegated by the K9 Unit Leader to all K9 Unit Members based on individual skills and preferences. All K9 Unit Members/Trainees are expected to fulfill their responsibilities to the best of their ability. If a K9 Member is unable to perform their duties due to absence, illness, or personal obligations, advanced notice must be given in writing or via email to the K9 Unit Leader with the K9 Unit Member/Trainee to which they have delegated their duties their absence.

- **UL = Unit Leader:**
 - Oversees all functional aspects of the Unit
 - Maintains all Unit Documents: Guidelines, Evaluation and Training Standards, etc.
 - Delegates responsibilities to other Unit members
 - Fosters teamwork and leadership within the Unit
 - Builds consensus for Unit decisions
 - Works with other TSAR Units for joint Training opportunities
 - Coordinates TSAR Team Trainings on K9 with TSAR Training Officer
 - Schedules and organizes Unit Classroom Trainings
 - Reviews and signs all Training Reports
 - Oversees Pre-Evals and Mission Readiness Evaluations
 - Archives all photographs, press, and other documentation (with SY)
 - Maintains Unit Records on Basecamp and Call Multiplier
 - Keeps TSAR IT Officer up to date on Unit information for TSAR website
 - Purchases & maintains team equipment
 - Manages new Applicants
 - Assigns Mentors
 - Unit Mediator

- **STO = Search Training Officer:**
 - Second to UL
 - Schedules and organizes Unit field trainings
 - Manages sign-in for Unit trainings
 - Provides mapping and search sectors for training
 - Ensures training records are maintained (with NCO)
 - Plans Unit trainings to collectively meet all evaluation requirements

- **NCO = Navigation & Communications Officer:**
 - Oversees training in navigation & communication for K9 Trainees & K9 Support
 - Manages GPS and radios for trainings
 - Manages weather readings for trainings
 - Oversees navigation/communication/weather records for trainings
 - Gives training records to SY for Training Log
 - Works with Base Unit to organize Base operations for K9 trainings

- **SY = Secretary:**
 - Maintains the Unit Training Log
 - Maintains current veterinary records on all K9s
 - Copies all Unit materials and handouts
 - Maintains & reports all suggestions and complaints
 - Maintains all classroom training information (books, handouts, videos, etc.)
 - Librarian for all team literature (books, videos, etc.): check-in & check-out records

- **TR = Treasurer:**
 - Maintains accounting of K9 Unit budget
 - Records any income of earmarked K9 funds
 - Makes recommendations for needed equipment
 - Assists UL with purchases and interfaces with TSAR treasurer
 - Monthly financial report to Unit

- **MSO = Medical & Safety Officer:**
 - Maintains K-9 first aid training for all handlers
 - Maintains K-9 first-aid kit
 - Assists handlers to maintain individual K- 9 first-aid kits
 - Implements and oversees safety and health precautions for all K-9s & handlers
 - Assumes responsibility for all safety & guidelines to be met during training and missions
 - Trains new handlers and ground support in safety & medical guidelines for dogs and people

- **AOTO = Agility & Obedience Training Officer:**
 - Schedules and coordinates obedience/agility trainings for Unit
 - Plans trainings to meet all obedience and agility requirements for K9's
 - Helps Handlers meet agility and obedience goals
 - Sources and/or purchases specialty agility equipment for the Unit

- **LC = Location Scout:**
 - Scouts new locations for trainings (each to be approved by STO)
 - Secures locations
 - Provides GPS coordinates for new locations
 - Flags/marks highway turnoff for trainings when necessary

- **RC = Recreation Coordinator:**
 - Plans and facilitates Unit hikes
 - Plans and facilitates Unit gatherings
 - Plans and facilitates health & stamina building exercises for handler and K-9s
 - Plans & arranges extracurricular activities = films, videos, etc.

- **IT = Information Technology Officer:**
 - Posts and maintains the K9 Unit's Air B&B experience presence, coordinates with experience goers and interfaces that information with the UL & STO
 - Archives images and videos for the K9 Unit in the TSAR Box account
 - Provides images/video and content to the TSAR IT Officer for inclusion in social media posting, which includes: trainings, missions, and Air B&B experiences.
 - Can provide content for use on the TSAR website from our Unit. This goes to the UL who will either post the material directly or give to the TSAR Webmaster for posting.

ATTACHMENT E LEADERSHIP

This is a document inspired from the Leadership Class given at ESCAPE '04. It is included in an effort to educate and remind all K9 Unit Members/Trainees about the points of good, effective leadership. Whether in a position of leadership through the Delegation of Responsibilities or looking to the leadership of another, we feel this outline is an important benchmark for personal understanding and provides direction and goals for leaders and subordinates alike.

LEADERSHIP = TO HAVE GOALS MET BY DIRECTING OTHERS

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF A LEADER

- **Accountability** – Accounting for what you have done, right or wrong. No shifting of blame.
- **Anticipation** – Ability to think ahead. Reflects your experience & training.
- **Competitiveness** – With self – the desire to always strive to do better.
- **Courage** – Not afraid to make a decision. Be confidently able to trust your fate & reputation on what you have delegated others on your team to do.
- **Credibility** – The result of accountability and honesty create the perception from others to believe & trust you. You must always be believable to be a good leader.
- **Decisiveness** – The ability for your knowledge, training & experience to enable you to confidently make quick decisions.
- **Dependability** – The result of credibility. When you are credible, others feel they can depend on you.
- **Desire** – You have to want to be a leader.
- **Emotional Stamina** – The length of time and the situations in which you can maintain emotional stability. Leadership requires a sublime inner calm.
- **Empathy** – A genuine understanding of why people do what they do and the emotional maturity to allow for other's mistakes.
- **Loyalty** – You must be on board for the team (not out for yourself) and willing to sacrifice your own gain at times for the good of the team. Your trust for your team and the trust of you by your team = Loyalty.
- **Physical Stamina** – You must exhibit the physical stamina to do what you are asking others to do.
- **Responsibility** – To say you will do it & then you do it – no questions.
- **Self Confidence** – Confidence is contagious & a lack of it shows. You must speak & act with confidence to instill confidence among others.
- **Stewardship** – You must take care of your own – take worries away from your people because they are out doing your work.
- **Tenacity** – Stick to it. Be committed to the job until it is done.
- **Timing** – It is essential to know when "to" & when "not to". Sometimes if you put things off, they get better, but sometimes they do not.

ESSENTIAL ACTIONS OF A LEADER

- **Utilizes Valuable, Capable People** – a leader is never threatened by knowledgeable, capable people under his direction, even if they know more than the leader themselves. A wise leader knows how to effectively nurture & utilize this person to the best advantage of the whole team. A good leader would never run off such a valuable asset to the team.
- **Puts the Program First** – The objective of a good leader is to put the goal & team first, to make the program work better, not to make himself or herself look better.
- **Willingness to Grow** – A good leader is willing to continue growth & learning & to show others they are still working to improve themselves. This benefits everyone.
- **Ability to Learn From Your Mistakes** – If a leader does not learn from his/her mistakes, then others will be unwilling to follow them. You may make a dumb mistake once, but it is best to never repeat it. A good leader will recognize their mistake, be willing to admit the mistake to others, & then take action to not make it again.
- **Enhance & Hold on to Personal & Team Honor** – Personal honor is your own personal reputation & team honor is how you represent your entire organization. This is a primary job of the leader.
- **Displays & Facilitates Discipline & Builds Moral** – Discipline is doing something regularly, correctly, & in a structured manner. Discipline builds moral, the cornerstone of confidence & willingness. A good leader sets an example by “Do as I do, not do as I say”. A good leader keeps a good & positive structure of discipline within his team.
- **Has Respect for the Position** – A good leader shows respect for the position he/she holds, does not demand respect for his/herself because the position is bigger than the individual holding it. As a leader, this is a double-edge sword: respect for the privileges that come with leadership & acceptance of the responsibilities as well. You must be willing to take your “perks”, as this shows respect for the position, but at the same time, you must honorably bear all of the responsibility as well.
- **Ability to Show Respect** – A good leader always shows proper courtesy & respect to subordinates. They must show proper courtesy & respect to those above them as well.
- **Displays Proper Appearance, Uniform, & Equipment** – A good leader will always be appropriate in grooming, dress, & have the proper equipment for the job, as this commands respect & credibility. They must wear what is expected in order to fulfill the idea of their position and present the position in a professional manner.
- **Decisiveness** – It is far more important to make a decision than to remain in indecisiveness. Indecisiveness means you fail to take responsibility.
 - Decisiveness takes courage.
 - The ability to make difficult decisions distinguishes the leader from the led.
- **Informed** - A leader must have knowledge of the issue before making a decision.
- **Delegates Responsibility** - A leader must delegate to his/her subordinates. In this action, the leader takes all the responsibility for the result (good or bad), but never interferes with the subordinate unless asked for help. However, if a subordinate asks for help, then it is the leader’s responsibility to give them whatever help they seek.
- **Appropriately Gives Up Control** - There is no place for micromanagement. Micromanagement is insecurity. A leader must allow subordinates to make decisions at their own level. Therefore, a good leader will do his/her best to prepare their subordinates for the tasks at hand, but then will surrender the outcome.
- **Shows Appreciation** – A good leader rewards others, but not for doing less than expected. A leader cannot reward everyone for everything every time they do what is asked, but a “thank you” is a good idea as often as possible. Praise for those who are

good & loyal followers is very much in order, as a leader must nurture this type of behavior for the success of the team.

- **Survives Failure** – It is not always going to work. A good leader will learn from failure and will survive it. They never shoot the messenger who bears the bad news, but also has full authority to shoot the messenger who fails to bring the bad news. A subordinate who is not willing to bear the bad news to the leader is not a valuable asset to the leader or the team.

ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF A LEADER

- **Establishes the Atmosphere** – A leader establishes a professional, respectful atmosphere and adds his/her own personal flavor to the general working atmosphere from there: busy & kinetic, calm & focused, positive & upbeat, etc.
- **Establishes a High Level of Trust** – You only get one chance to make a first impression.
 - A leader must play it straight & be believable to those above, to peers, & to subordinates alike.
 - Trust can be lost in one action. It is only gained through hard work and consistency.
- **Provides Direction** – A leader values people, their time & efforts. A good leader never lets people wander.
- **Accepts Recognition** – A leader receives more recognition and must accept it. A good leader acknowledges his subordinates efforts in the light of his/her own recognition & makes sure they receive their due credit for a job well done. A leader never takes advantage of his/her subordinates.

Being a leader is often a lonely place to be. You are not there to make friends, but to keep the goal of the team in mind, the intentions in the right place, to make decisions, and to step up to the plate as the leader.

There is leadership at all levels of TSAR. TSAR cultivates leadership. Each leadership position should be approached with these principles in mind. No one is perfect, whether as a leader or a subordinate, so we should all have empathy for each other throughout each person's journey. At the same time, we should all be striving to be our best for our team, whether leading or following during any particular moment or situation.

TAKE IT! DO IT! DO THE BEST YOU CAN! LEARN FROM IT!