

Standard For Training and Certification of Canine Detection of Explosives



WHAT IS AN AAFS STANDARD FACTSHEET?

The AAFS produces clear, concise, and easy-to-understand factsheets to summarize the contents of technical and professional forensic science standards on the OSAC Registry. They are not intended to provide an interpretation for any portion of a published standard.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STANDARD?

The detection of explosives prior to detonation is a very challenging yet necessary task to protect human life and property. The explosive threat landscape has rapidly changed in recent years because of greater access to information and starting materials.

The use of detection canines to detect explosives has been a regular practice since the 1960s. Detection canine teams are often the first resource deployed because of their speed, reliability, and rapid ability to adapt and work within various environments.

This standard promotes consistency across organizations utilizing canines for the detection of explosives and relieves the judicial system of conflicting protocols.

WHY IS THIS STANDARD IMPORTANT? WHAT ARE ITS BENEFITS?

Decades of subject matter expertise and peer-reviewed scientific studies were used to develop a singular standard that can be used as the foundation for canine training and certification protocols.

Adherence to the requirements outlined in this standard promotes canine teams that consistently and reliably detect the explosive categories to which they are trained.

Organizations using canine teams for the detection of explosives are encouraged to meet this standard.



HOW IS THIS STANDARD USED, AND WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS?

This standard serves as a baseline for the training of canines for the detection of explosives. Organizations deploying canine teams should adapt the required assessments and optional explosives to represent their traditional operational needs and relevant explosive threats.

Requirements for initial training, assessment, certification, maintenance training, training aid storage and handling, and records and document management are specified in this standard. This includes the three subdisciplines of canine detection of explosives: explosives detection canines (EDC), person screening canines (PSC), and explosives detection with person screening capability canines (EDC w/PSC).

This standard defines the minimum search area capability (buildings, vehicles, baggage, choke points, etc.) and the mandatory categories of explosives the canine teams within each subdiscipline are expected to detect.

The canine team's documentation is the main source of data to determine the team's reliability in the judicial system. The minimum required documentation for the canine team's training, assessment, certification, and deployments are outlined within the standard.

The annexes within the standard provide an extensive but not exhaustive list of explosives meeting the mandatory and optional categories to ensure the canine teams are training on the appropriate substances.