

N.B. Ground Search and Rescue Association and RCMP "J" Division  
Civilian GSAR Dog Program Parameters

**Part I -**

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The use of Civilian Dog Team is governed by operational policy.

Prior to the call out of any Civilian Dog Team, the RCMP on call Dog Handler **MUST** be contacted as searching for missing persons are their responsibility.

1. The RCMP will accept applications from Civilian Dog Teams to be examined for acceptance in searching for lost persons only.
  - Applicants **MUST** be registered (affiliated) members in good standing of the NBGSARA
  - **MUST** attend regularly GSAR Team meetings, training session(s) and operational call outs
  - **MUST** be qualified Searcher Level I with knowledge of how to handle exhibits, be certified to operate a radio, map & compass / GPS, possess wilderness survival skills and First Aid training
  - **MUST** have demonstrated their seriousness, dedication and commitment to their GSAR Team over a period of time
  - **MUST** have demonstrated these skills in an operational setting
  - **MUST** have the support of an RCMP certified dog handler

Note: Under no circumstances civilian dog team handlers are to be used without a prior security clearance having been conducted and there is no apparent danger to the civilian team from an armed confrontation or unnecessarily hazardous situations.

The Criminal Ops. Officer must also approve the use of a civilian dog team in searches involving criminal matters.

Applicants request must be forwarded to your GSAR Team President who in turn will attach a letter listing your qualifications and achievements along with his support.

The application is to be forwarded to the:

OIC, RCMP  
"J" Division Criminal Operations  
1445 Regent St.  
P.O. Box 3900  
Fredericton, New Brunswick  
E3B 4Z8

2. The RCMP Police Dog Service Coordinator will then make arrangements with the local handler for testing you. Any costs incurred will be your GSAR Team responsibility. Note that your GSAR Team Leader or is designate shall also be in attendance during this test and will receive a copy of your evaluation report. This process will ensure that Civilian Dog teams complies with established standards. Testing will consist of oral questions and skills display. The responsibility to be tested is that of the Civilian Dog Teams owing to RCMP Dog

**Handlers operational requirements necessity and any other unforeseen circumstances, which the RCMP can not be held responsible for.**

- 3. It is to be noted and understood that the RCMP is not validating Civilian Dog Teams for any purpose whatsoever and will ensure that persons volunteering and wishing to be tested does not have ulterior motives be it personal or business-wise. The RCMP primary concern is relative to the caliber of the Civilian Dog Team being used during a search, the RCMP will ensure that they are qualified and competent and that they meet their continued approval. The RCMP does not accept / assume any liability as it pertains to the Civilian Dog Team actions.**
- 4. Each Civilian Dog Team will be re-tested each year to ensure standards are maintained. Failure to remain conflict of interest free or maintain NBSARA good standing and continued training standards during the year will result in the RCMP Dog Handler withdrawing its approval / support of the team and a recommendation to withdraw the Civilian Dog Team from the program.**
- 5. The attestation of the Civilian Dog Team will only apply to the dog which was tested with its handler and to no other dogs, vice-versa.**
- 6. When testing has been completed, the RCMP Dog Handler will submit his findings and recommendations to the RCMP Headquarters . The RCMP Divisional Coordinator will then either issue a letter of authorization / attestation to the team, valid for one year, or inform them of their failure. The New Brunswick Public Safety Department, the NBSARA president and GSAR Team President will be notified accordingly.**
- 7. Civilian Dog teams will be permitted to provide assistance when requested under stipulated conditions.**
  - Sufficient police dog teams are not readily available**
  - The Civilian Dog Team will provide a voluntary service (not hired as non-Force team)**
  - The use of these voluntary teams will be restricted to searching for lost persons only****Cadaver Dog / Recovery of human Remains Certification will follow a similar process.**

**For further information on the Civilian GSAR Dog program, contact:**

**OIC, RCMP  
"J" Division Criminal Operations  
1445 Regent St.  
P.O. Box 3900  
Fredericton, New Brunswick  
E3B 4Z8**

## **Part II -**

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### **1. CANDIDATE SELECTION CRITERIA:**

- Good physical condition with a sincere interest in dogs and the outdoors
- High degree of perception, patience, initiative and self-discipline
- Demonstrated ability to make sound judgements

### **2. SELECTION OF DOGS:**

- Any breed of dog capable of meeting the objectives set forth and compatible with the job requirements
- Dog must be current with immunization vaccinations for Distemper, Hepatitis, Lepto Spirosis, Rabies and Canine Parvovirus

### **3. TRACKING:**

Given a practical situation, successfully work a two Km unknown and unmarked track approximately 45 minutes old (depending on weather conditions) laid by one quarry in a rural environment over a variety of terrain. The track will include:

- two (2) road crossings
- four (4) scent related articles
- right angle turns
- one dead end (not over 15 meters)
- at least one cross-track
- approximately 20 meters on low scent area
- animal scent distractions

### **4. SEARCHING:**

A. Given a practical situation and working with the Search and Rescue Dog off leash, search for and locate a concealed person in a rural environment. The search will include:

- pattern and proper use of the wind
- bush and open area
- approximately 400 meters by 400 meters
- to be completed in 20 minutes

B. Given a practical situation and working with the Search and Rescue Dog off leash, search for and locate two medium sized concealed (scented) evidence / articles of clothing in a rural area. The search will include:

- pattern and proper use of the wind
- articles concealed overnight prior to commencement of the search

- approximately 200 meters by 200 meters
- to be completed in 20 minutes

**5. OBEDIENCE:**

Given a practical exercise in obedience, perform the following exercises with the Search and Rescue Dog on and off leash, individual or in a group.

- heel
- jog at heel
- sit at heel
- down at heel
- stay (handler out of sight for 5 minutes)
- recall / come (from a distance of 15 meters)
- stay on recall
- sit at a distance of 10 meters
- down at a distance of 10 meters
- finish "heel"

**6. RETRIEVING:**

Given a practical situation, the Search and Rescue Dog off line "sit - stay" while the handler throws the dumbbell out at least 10 meters, chase and pick-up the dumbbell on command "fetch", return to the handler, sit at the fore position and "hold" the article, give up the article on command "out" and go to the "heel " position on command by the dog handler.

**7. AGILITY:**

Dog handler working under field conditions require an agile and confident Search and rescue Dog that may be required to cross creeks on logs, traverse heavy dead fall area, jump on and over various obstacles. Realizing that not all handler(s) will have access to a formal agility course. This profile will have to be improvised and evaluated commensurate with local availability.