

K9 Search and Rescue Team Inc.

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Introduction to K-9 Search and Rescue Team, Inc. Standards

Adopted - 9 January 2000

The K-9 Search and Rescue Team has implemented the following standards in an attempt to enhance their professionalism and response capability. The sole purpose of standards is to establish criteria by which one can judge their performance and improve. The standards are not intended to intimidate but rather provide consistent objectives for all. K-9 strives to provide the best emergency service possible; these standards provide goals toward the end; "That Others May Live".

K-9 Search and Rescue Team uses the German Shepherd Dog exclusively. A number of factors, both positive and negative, play into this decision.

1. K-9 Search and Rescue was a member of the American Rescue Dog Association for many years. The ARDA accepts only German Shepherd Dogs (Page 26, Search and Rescue Dogs Training Methods). K-9 is therefore familiar with the German Shepherd Dog as a breed.
2. Short-coated breeds may have difficulty in the extreme temperature fluctuations in our response area. Longhaired breeds may have more difficulty in the heat and with matting and plant seeds. We work from the southwestern desert to the 14,000-foot environment.
3. Short nosed breeds may lack the ability to do the necessary scent work.
4. Some sporting breeds are selected for their gaming or "crittering". Excessive interest in sporting distracts from search work.
5. Some breeds are bred for livestock work. They may be distracted by domestic animals in the search area.
6. German Shepherd Dogs are accepted by the public and civil authority as a working breed.
7. A single breed within a team presents a more professional appearance.
8. German Shepherd Dogs have a double coat that provides environmental protection
9. German Shepherd Dogs are large and strong enough to work all our response terrain and not too large to load and haul in multiple transport vehicles.
10. German Shepherd Dogs have the measured intelligence of an average fourteen-year-old human. Therefore, they can be trained for all facets of search work, and learn quickly. They bond to the handler readily and strive to please.
11. Early research has been reaffirmed recently in Holland as to the German Shepherd Dogs' scent discrimination ability. Of the dog breeds tested in Holland, the German Shepherd Dog was the most consistent, reliable and astute.

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12. The German Shepherd Dog does have some significant health problems at our response elevations. Therefore, the Team recommends very careful puppy selection from imported genetic lines.

Birtwistle, D. (1998) in his "About the Breed" reports the German Shepherd Dog is:

- Highly active indoors
- Highly active outdoors
- Highly vigorous and energetic
- Highly consistent in behavior
- Moderately dominant to familiar people
- Highly emotionally stable
- Highly sociable with children
- High rate of learning
- High problem solving ability

Therefore, the Team has decided to use only the German Shepherd Dog as a response dog. The Team recognizes that other breeds do search work well. K-9 Search and Rescue Team have herein established standards for all facets of their operation: base camp, navigator, and handler. All Team members that want to respond with the Team to any public function will be required to meet the introduction standard thereby insuring at least some knowledge of K-9 operation. All Team members, regardless of type of membership, are expected to strive toward level one in their chosen specialty tract.

K-9 has adopted NASAR'S Standards as the K-9 SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM, INC. minimum standards.