ASTM INTERNATIONAL

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Standard Guide for
Demonstrating Obedience and Agility in Search and Rescue Dogs[1]

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F1879; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon (ε) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

1. Scope

1.1 This guide is intended to provide voluntary uniform guidelines for obedience and agility training for Search and Rescue (SAR) dogs throughout the United States.

1.2 This guide provides a minimum set of training goals against which SAR dog teams and organizations may voluntarily evaluate their own training programs.

1.3 This guide provides a means of documenting a minimum standard for those agencies who request SAR dog resources for SAR operations and require such documentation.

1.4 Local SAR dog handlers and parent organizations are responsible for testing and verifying that individual resources meet or exceed these guidelines.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*[2]
F1633 Guide for Techniques in Land Search
F1848 Classification for Search and Rescue Dog Crew/ Teams

3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.1.1 *agility, n*—an aspect of a dog's physical condition that characterizes the dog's dexterity and ease of movement.

3.1.2 *obedience, n*—an aspect of a dog's behavior that characterizes the dog's ability to follow instructions.

3.1.3 *off-lead, n*—a working mode for a dog where the dog and handler are not connected physically and the control of the dog is established through audible commands or visual signals.

3.1.4 *on-lead, n*—a working mode for a dog and handler attached physically by a leash and the dog may be controlled by the leash.

3.2 Definitions of terms not defined in this standard can be found in Guide F1633 and Classification F1848.

4. Summary of the Practice

4.1 This guide provides dog handlers, units and organizations in differing locales with the ability to understand and replicate skills and training required to meet these minimum guidelines.

4.2 The obedience skills ensure the dog is under the control of the handler sufficiently to participate in a search operation without interfering with other search resources, individuals, and dogs.

4.3 The agility skills demonstrate the team's abilities to traverse the obstacles which may be present in a search situation.

4.4 Dogs that work incidents involving natural disaster and collapsed structures require all of these basic skills, as well as special techniques, and so are designated as having additional minimum requirements.

5. Significance and Use

5.1 This guide may be used by units, handlers, and requesting agencies when evaluating dog resources or as a basis for establishing local minimum performance guidelines or standards. It is suggested, however, that units and teams not train to these guidelines, but rather train and work in conditions requiring obedience and agility skills, then use these guidelines as a uniform method of evaluating progress.

5.2 This guide does not provide a theoretical basis for how a search dog works, rather it describes the minimum results desired.

5.3 Each dog team, unit, or organization wishing to use this guide has the responsibility of managing and administering it. Units may wish to use evaluators from other units or organizations, or request assistance in obtaining qualified evaluators from organizations, such as the SAR Dog Section of

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