



## Standard Guide for Demonstrating Minimum Skills Training of Search and Rescue Dogs and Handlers Dog Crews or Teams<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F1847; 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 ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

### 1. Scope

1.1 ~~This guide covers voluntary uniform training guidelines for dogs and handlers who engage in search and rescue (SAR) activities throughout the United States, establishes the minimum standard for training of search dog crews or teams as it relates to their general and field knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to their use in Search and Rescue (SAR) operations.~~

1.2 ~~Search dog crews perform searches on the surface of the land, including in mountainous terrain, alpine environments, and on inland water bodies.~~

1.3 ~~This guide provides a minimum set of training goals against which SAR dog teams and organizations may voluntarily evaluate their own training programs, does not include the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to search in partially or fully collapsed structures, confined spaces, underground (such as in caves, mines, and tunnels), in mountainous terrain, in an alpine environment, or on the water.~~

1.4 ~~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, does not provide a theoretical basis for how a search dog crew operates; rather it describes the minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities required for a search dog crew to function safely and effectively.~~

1.5 ~~A search dog crew is able to respond into the field and back country to locate subjects in the wilderness environment.~~

1.6 ~~A search dog crew is required to have, at a minimum, the knowledge, skills, and abilities outlined within this guide.~~

1.7 ~~Search dog crews are eligible to be members of Type I and II SAR teams or crews as defined in Classification F1993.~~

1.7.1 ~~Personnel trained in accordance with this guide may be members of Type I and II teams or crews of Kind A (Wilderness), Kind B (Urban), Kind C (Mountainous), Kind D (Disaster/collapsed structure), Kind E (Inland water), Kind I (Avalanche), and Kind J (Evidence/human remains), and may operate in urban and disaster areas that may be isolated or have lost their infrastructure.~~

1.8 ~~Local SAR dog handlers. Further training may be required before a search dog crew can fully participate on a particular type and parent kind organizations are responsible for testing and verification that individual resources meet or exceed these guidelines of team or crew, based on specific local need, regulations, or policies.~~

1.9 ~~Search dog crews shall work under qualified supervision, as deemed appropriate by the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ).~~

1.10 ~~This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.~~

### 2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards:*<sup>2</sup>

[F1633 Guide for Techniques in Land Search](#)

[F1848 Classification for Search and Rescue Dog Crew/Teams](#)

[F1879 Guide for Demonstrating Obedience and Agility in Search and Rescue Dogs](#) (Withdrawn 2014)<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F32 on Search and Rescue and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F32.02 on Management and Operations.

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

<sup>3</sup> The last approved version of this historical standard is referenced on [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org).

[F1993 Classification System of Human Search and Rescue Resources \(Withdrawn 2014\)](#)<sup>3</sup>

[F2209 Guide for Training of Level I Land Search Team Member](#)

[F3029 Guide for Level I GPS Wilderness Navigator \(GPS-IW\) Endorsement \(Withdrawn 2013\)](#)<sup>3</sup>

### 3. Terminology

#### 3.1 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.1.1 *alert*—an indication by a dog that signals the handler that the targeted scent has been found: a characteristic change in a search dog's ongoing behavior in response to a trained odor, as interpreted by the handler.

3.1.2 *bringsel*—an object carried by the dog or handler that is retrieved or tugged on by the dog when the dog finds its target.

3.1.3 *refind—handler*—an action by a free-ranging dog that is initiated after the dog finds its target and results in the dog directing the handler back to the target: a person with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to control and direct a trained search dog.

3.1.4 *return*—an action of a free-ranging dog that brings the dog back to its handler after finding its target.

3.1.4 *scent article—search dog crew or team*—an object used by search personnel to familiarize a dog with the scent of a subject: a single operational resource utilized in SAR operations, typically consisting of one human handler and one dog trained to search for live humans, human remains, and human possessions. A search dog team or crew may also include a support person.

3.2 Other terminology included in this guide may be found in Classification [F1848](#), Guide [F1633](#), and Guide [F2209](#).

### 4. Summary of Guide

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 This guide identifies a minimum set of skills that will help establish the mission readiness of a search dog crew<sup>4</sup> for search and rescue operations:

4.3 The dog and handler skills demonstrate the crew's abilities to estimate probabilities of detection.

### 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. All or a subst of this guide may be utilized:

5.2 Agencies and organizations who have responsibility for search and rescue operations may use this guide as a basis for developing standardized testing and certification of search dog resources:

5.3 This guide does not provide a theoretical basis for how a search dog crew works, rather it describes the minimum results desired. Definitions that are referenced are provided to develop consistency in interpretation:

5.4 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 the National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR). This decision however, rests solely with the individual team or organization. The method of evaluation is also entirely at the discretion of each user of this guide:

### 4. Dog Skills Significance and Use

4.1 *Obedience and Agility Skills*: This guide establishes a minimum standard for the training of search dog crews as it relates to their general and field knowledge, skills, and abilities specific to their use in Search and Rescue (SAR) operations.

6.1.1 Dogs used in SAR operations should possess an acceptable level of agility and obedience skills such as those listed in Guide [F1879](#):

6.1.2 Obedience skills should ensure that the SAR dog will be under the control of the handler in a manner that allows the dog to participate in SAR operations without interfering with other search resources:

6.1.3 Agility skills should ensure the dog's ability to traverse obstacles and terrain that may be present during SAR operations:

6.1.4 The sufficiency of a dog's agility and obedience skills should be at the discretion of the agency having jurisdiction over search and rescue operations:

4.2 All search dog crews shall meet the requirements of this guide.

4.3 Nothing in this guide precludes an AHJ from adding additional requirements for its own members.

4.4 Though this guide establishes minimum standards, it does not imply that a search dog crew that meets the requirements of this guide is a trainee, probationary, or other similar term member of an AHJ.

4.5 This guide does not stand alone and shall be used with the referenced documents to provide the specific information needed by a dog crew or an AHJ.