

# **GAK9 TRAILING**

## **Certification standards**



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# INTRODUCTION

These certification standards are divided into four classes: "Field", "Rural", "Suburban" and "Urban". Each class includes four levels: "Handler", "Specialist", "Expert" and "Master".

## Class Definitions

**Field:** Open grassy areas, brush, desert, or woods. Little to no human contamination. Primarily soft surface.

**Rural:** All of the above areas mixed with simple surface changes such as dirt roads and small streets. A small amount of human contamination is possible. Mostly soft surface with about 20% surface changes.

**Suburban:** All of the above plus industrial type areas or business parks where there is more human activity but confined primarily to the structures with off hours or when the businesses are closed as to minimize human contact. Approximately 50/50% hard and soft surface.

**Urban:** This is primarily a city type setting with business, residential, and high human and vehicle traffic areas. A mixture of hard and soft surface is to be expected.

## Who may certify

### Civilian handlers

Any GAK9 Trainer may certify each certification class at all levels.

### Military/Police handlers

As additional certification criteria may be required, only Police & Military trainers may certify in accordance with the agency at hand.

## Sequence of certification

Regardless of the certification class, the applicant must start with the Level "Handler" and work up consecutively. No Level can be missed within a class.

For example, the applicant cannot skip from the "Handler" Level to the "Master" Level in the Field Class. He/she may change certification class but always has to start with the Handler Level and work his/her way up.

Applicants who have already certified in the "old" GAK9 certification system may skip some certifications. Here are the equivalents:

- "Old" GAK9 Trailing Level 1 = Field Level 1 & 2
- "Old" GAK9 Trailing Level 2 = Field Level 1-3 / Rural Level 1-3
- "Old" GAK9 Trailing Level 3 = Field Level 1-3 / Rural Level 1-3 / Suburban Level 1-3
- "Old" GAK9 Trailing Level 4 = All classes & levels

## Evaluation criteria

- a) The trail will be double blind.*
- b) The distance and age of the trail are approximative and may vary due to the fact that the certification is double blind and the trail-layer might encounter unforeseen conditions.*
- c) The K-9 team must find the trail-layer within the time limit. However, this time limit can be extended at the evaluator's discretion (for example if the trail is longer than planned or for whatever unforeseen circumstances).*
- d) Finds based on a dog working in air scent patterns (area search) are not valid.*
- e) Both the trail layer and the K-9 handler will carry a GPS tracking device. The tracks will be laid on top of each-other after the certification. The evaluator has the final decision on passing or failing of the K-9 Team.*

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- f) Any disrespectful behavior towards the evaluator or against animal welfare will result in the disqualification of the K-9 Team.*
- g) In case of failure, the K-9 Team can repeat the certification as often as they want.*

# CERTIFICATION CLASS "FIELD"

The certification class "Field" is divided into four levels:

- *Field Handler*
- *Field Specialist*
- *Field Expert*
- *Field Master*

## Scent evidence collection and use

- a) The scent article will be provided by the trail layer in a jar or any other suitable container previously before he/she lays the trail.*
- b) The scent article might either be placed directly at the start of the trail or left in the care of the expert witness.*

## FIELD HANDLER

### The track/trail

- a) The trail will be 500-600m with minimum one turn.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 30 minutes old.*
- c) The trail must be on soft surface only (woods, fields).*
- d) 15 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## FIELD SPECIALIST

### The track/trail

- a) The trail will be 700-800m with minimum two turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 1 hour old.*

- c) The trail must be soft surface only (woods, fields with possible road crossings).*
- d) 25 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **FIELD EXPERT**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 800-1'000m with minimum three turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 2 hours old.*
- c) The trail must be mainly on soft surface (woods, fields). At least one road crossing must occur.*
- d) 35 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **FIELD MASTER**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 1'000-1'500m with minimum three turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 4 hours old.*
- c) The trail must be mainly on soft surface (woods, fields). At least two road crossings must occur. There will be at least one obstacle that the K-9 Team will have to bypass or negotiate (e.g. bridge, wall, fence, water creek, etc.).*
- d) 45 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*



# CERTIFICATION CLASS "RURAL"

The certification class "Rural" is divided into four levels:

- *Rural Handler*
- *Rural Specialist*
- *Rural Expert*
- *Rural Master*

## Scent evidence collection and use for Handler

- a) The scent article will be provided by the trail layer in a jar or any other suitable container previously before he/she lays the trail.*
- b) The scent article might either be placed directly at the start of the trail or left in the care of the expert witness.*

## Scent evidence collection and use for Specialist, Expert, Master

- a) The scent article may either be fixed or moveable. In case of a moveable object it will be provided by the trail layer in a jar or any other suitable container previously before he/she lays the trail. In case of a fixed object, the trail layer must ensure that enough scent is being deposited on the object.*
- b) The scent article might either be placed directly at the start of the trail or left in the care of the expert witness.*

## RURAL HANDLER

### The track/trail

- a) The trail will be 500-600m with minimum one turn.*

- b) The age of the trail will be 30 minutes old.*
- c) The trail must be in a rural area (fields, gravel roads, woods) and its start should be on soft surface. At least one surface change (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) 15 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **RURAL SPECIALIST**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 700-800m with minimum two turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 1 hour old.*
- c) The trail must be in a rural area (fields, gravel roads, woods) and its start should be on soft surface. At least one surface change (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) 25 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **RURAL EXPERT**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 800-1'000m with minimum three turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 2 hours old.*
- c) The trail must be in a rural area (fields, gravel roads, woods) mainly on soft surface. At least two surface changes (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) 35 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **RURAL MASTER**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 1'000-1'500m with minimum three turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 4 hours old.*

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- c) The trail must be in a rural area (fields, gravel roads, woods) mainly on soft surface. At least two surface changes (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) There will be at least one obstacle that the K-9 Team will have to bypass or negotiate (e.g. bridge, wall, fence, water creek, etc.).*
- e) 45 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

# CERTIFICATION CLASS "SUBURBAN"

The certification class "Suburban" is divided into four levels:

- *Suburban Handler*
- *Suburban Specialist*
- *Suburban Expert*
- *Suburban Master*

## Scent evidence collection and use for Handler

- a) The scent article will be provided by the trail layer in a jar or any other suitable container previously before he/she lays the trail.*
- b) The scent article might either be placed directly at the start of the trail or left in the care of the expert witness.*

## Scent evidence collection and use for Specialist, Expert, Master

- a) The scent article may either be fixed or moveable. In case of a moveable object it will be provided by the trail layer in a jar or any other suitable container previously before he/she lays the trail. In case of a fixed object, the trail layer must ensure that enough scent is being deposited on the object.*
- b) The scent article might either be placed directly at the start of the trail or left in the care of the expert witness.*

## **SUBURBAN HANDLER**

### **The track/trail**

- a) *The trail will be 400-500m with minimum one turn.*
- b) *The age of the trail will be 30 minutes old.*
- c) *The trail must be in a quiet area (suburban, industrial, etc.) and its start should be on soft surface. At least one surface change (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) *15 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **SUBURBAN SPECIALIST**

### **The track/trail**

- a) *The trail will be 600-700m with minimum two turns.*
- b) *The age of the trail will be 1 hour old.*
- c) *The trail must be in a quiet area (suburban, industrial, etc.) and its start should be on soft surface. At least one surface change (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) *20 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **SUBURBAN EXPERT**

### **The track/trail**

- a) *The trail will be 800-1'000m with minimum three turns.*
- b) *The age of the trail will be 2 hours old.*
- c) *The trail must be in an industrial/suburban area and its start should be on soft surface. At least two surface changes (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur. The area should be chosen so that the K-9 Team will encounter distractions.*
- d) *30 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **SUBURBAN MASTER**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 1'000-1'500m with minimum three turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 4 hours old.*
- c) The trail must be in an industrial/suburban area and its start can either be on soft or hard surface. At least two surface changes (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur. The area should be chosen so that the K-9 Team will encounter distractions.*
- d) 45 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

# CERTIFICATION CLASS "URBAN"

The certification class "Urban" is divided into four levels:

- *Urban Handler*
- *Urban Specialist*
- *Urban Expert*
- *Urban Master*

## Scent evidence collection and use for Handler

- a) The scent article will be provided by the trail layer in a jar or any other suitable container previously before he/she lays the trail.*
- b) The scent article might either be placed directly at the start of the trail or left in the care of the expert witness.*

## Scent evidence collection and use for Specialist, Expert, Master

- a) The scent article may either be fixed or moveable. In case of a moveable object it will be provided by the trail layer in a jar or any other suitable container previously before he/she lays the trail. In case of a fixed object, the trail layer must ensure that enough scent is being deposited on the object.*
- b) The scent article might either be placed directly at the start of the trail or left in the care of the expert witness.*

## **URBAN HANDLER**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 400-500m with minimum one turn.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 30 minutes old.*
- c) The trail must be in an urban area (residential area, school, busy industrial estate, etc.) and its start should be on soft surface. At least one surface change (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) 15 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **URBAN SPECIALIST**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 600-700m with minimum two turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 1 hour old.*
- c) The trail must be in an urban area (residential area, school, busy industrial estate, etc.) and its start can either be on soft or hard surface. At least one surface change (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) 20 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*

## **URBAN EXPERT**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 800-1'000m with minimum three turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 2 hours old.*
- c) The trail must be in an urban area (residential area, school, busy industrial estate, etc.) and its start can either be on soft or hard surface. At least two surface changes (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) 40 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*



## **URBAN MASTER**

### **The track/trail**

- a) The trail will be 1'000-1'500m with minimum three turns.*
- b) The age of the trail will be 4 hours old.*
- c) The trail must be in an urban area (residential area, school, busy industrial estate, etc.) and its start can either be on soft or hard surface. At least two surface changes (gravel, concrete, black-top etc.) must occur.*
- d) 50 minutes time limit for successful trail completion.*