

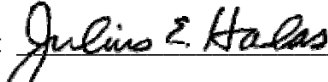


**Department of Financial Services
Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

	Title:		Policy #
	Law Enforcement Canines		2.5.3
	Amends:	Rescinds:	Effective Date:
N/A	N/A	09/22/2009	
Review Date:	Review Date:	Review Date:	
Approved:  Chief John Corbett  Director Julius Halas			

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish specific guidelines for canine unit sworn members and the deployment, training, care of canines, and special equipment.

II. Policy

It shall be the procedure of the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations to utilize accelerant detection canines for the detection of accelerant materials and the recovery of evidence related to fire investigations. Explosive detection canines shall be utilized for the detection of explosive materials and the recovery of evidence related to investigations or post blast incidents.

III. Authority

Section 633.03, Florida Statutes

IV. Definitions

- A. Accelerant Detection Canine – A certified canine for the purpose of assisting in the examination of a fire scene, area, item, person(s) for the presence of an accelerant.
- B. Canine Sitter – A caregiver, who is not a trained handler, who assists the primary or secondary handler with his or her canine duties.
- C. Canine Team- A sworn member handler and an assigned canine that work as a team to perform law enforcement functions.
- D. Explosive Detection Canine - A canine specially trained to detect and locate the presence of compounds containing nitrates and other materials used in the construction of explosive devices.
- E. Handler- A sworn member who has been specifically trained in the care, handling and training of a canine for various law enforcement functions.

- F. In Service Training- Training conducted in conjunction with Bureau guidelines to maintain skills that must be performed during re-certification.
- G. Secondary Handler- A sworn member who has been specifically trained in the care, handling and training of a canine for various law enforcement functions, but is not permanently assigned a canine.

V. Procedures

- A. The canine team will be under the direct supervision of the regional field command with oversight by the Bureau Canine Commander and Special Operations Major.
- B. When a request for the canine team is received, the request will be forwarded to the appropriate Regional Communications Center for Computer Automated Dispatch (CAD) entry.
- C. Detectives requesting assignment as a canine handler must forward their request, in writing, through the chain of command to the Special Operations Major.
 - 1. Only detectives with a minimum of two (2) years of fire and arson investigation experience.
 - 2. Detectives receiving less than “achieves” performance appraisals for the previous two years will not be considered.
 - 3. An assessment by the Canine Commander and Special Operations Major shall explore the following areas in which the requesting detective must:
 - a. Have demonstrated a past work history in the area of criminal arrest activity, fire causation and post blast investigations;
 - b. Have the ability to clearly communicate thoughts and concepts in written reports;
 - c. Must be knowledgeable in fire origin and cause and be able to prepare testimony for court proceedings;
 - d. Be able to work independently with minimal supervision;
 - e. Understand that the assignment involves working long, varied hours including nights, weekends and holidays;
 - f. Demonstrate the ability to complete assigned projects accurately and on time;
 - g. Demonstrate decision-making that conforms to agency policies and case law;
 - h. Have adequate facilities for the housing of a canine, such as a fenced yard and kennel. If the sworn member does not have an

existing kennel at his residence, the Bureau will furnish a kennel to house the canine;

- i. If the handler has an adult co-habitant, the co-habitant must consent to house the canine on the premises;
- j. Agree to a three (3) year minimum assignment that begins with the canine training completion date;
- k. Must be physically able to perform the duties of a canine handler; and

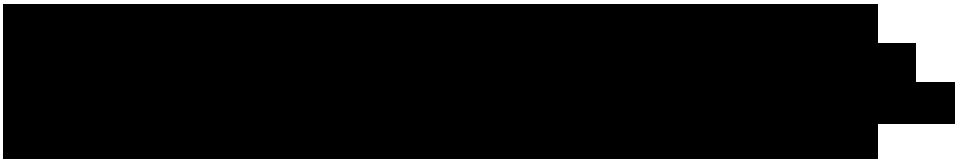
4. The Bureau Chief shall make the final selection of all canine handlers.

D. Canine Commander duties shall include the following:

- 1. The canine commander shall be familiar with policies and requirements for all canine teams;
- 2. Ensure region supervisors, handlers, canines, and vehicles are all operating efficiently and effectively;
- 3. Ensure that training needs and requirements are met and that all records and reports are current and properly completed;
- 4. Conduct regular inspections of the kennel, equipment, and vehicle of the canine team to ensure that they are properly maintained; and
- 5. Ensure that a good working relationship is maintained between the canine team and other Departmental staff.

E. Training

- 1. An accredited training facility certifies the Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations canine team in the detection of associated compounds. The team is required to be re-certified annually by the designated certifying agency. The Special Operations Major will ensure that the canine team maintains annual certification.

2. 

- 3. Explosives detection canines will adhere to the specified guidelines for feeding and rewards.
- 4. Canine teams shall train seven (7) days a week.

- a. Handlers will be permitted a minimum of two (2) hours per day for training during their normal workweek, pending any exigent circumstances.
 - b. Handlers will be allocated one and one half (1½) hours per day for training during their normally scheduled day off.
- 5. Handlers are required to complete daily training reports in the Bureau's reporting system to document all training completed with the canines.
 - 6. Attendance at a bi-annual training program is required for canine handlers, secondary handlers and canines for updated handling techniques and a review of training records.

F. Canine Vehicles

- 1. [REDACTED]
- 2. Any time the canine team is on-duty, and utilizing the Department issued vehicle, the canine shall be confined to the specially equipped cage within the vehicle.
- 3. Under special circumstances (i.e., canine vehicle repairs or out of area assignments), it may become necessary to transport the canine in a vehicle not equipped with a cage. The handler shall make every effort to protect the safety of the canine while being transported during these circumstances.
- 4. Prisoners shall not be transported in a Department issued canine vehicle. The handler will request a transport vehicle for this purpose.
- 5. [REDACTED]
 - a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]

- c. [REDACTED]
- d. [REDACTED]
- e. [REDACTED]

G. Examinations

- 1. Examinations may include, but are not be limited to: building, motor vehicles, fields or open areas, parking lots, luggage, packages, airplanes, vessels or lockers.
- 2. Canine teams will not conduct an examination under any of the following conditions:
 - a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
- 3. The handler will determine when, and if the conditions at the scene warrant the use of the canine. The circumstances where an accelerant detection canine would be used are as follows:

a. Building Examination

Prior to conducting an examination, the handler is responsible for verifying that scene conditions are of minimal risk to the canine. The handler will take control of the scene, if necessary, with the assistance of the fire department or other designated law enforcement officers. The handler will determine the number of persons who will enter the building while the canine is examining the scene.

Depending on the conditions, the handler may release the canine off leash to conduct a controlled examination. The handler shall

maintain visual contact with the canine. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

b. Open Area Examinations

Based on the circumstances, the handler will determine when an open area examination is to be used. Depending on the conditions, the handler may release the canine off leash to conduct a controlled examination. The handler shall maintain visual contact with the canine. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

c. Vehicle Examinations

Prior to conducting an examination, the handler is responsible for verifying that scene conditions are of minimal risk to the canine. The handler will take control of the scene, if necessary, with the assistance of fire department personnel or other designated law enforcement officers. The handler will determine the manner in which the examination will be conducted. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

d. Person/Group/Crowd Examinations

In some instances, a canine team may be effective in examining people, small groups, or crowds. In these situations, respect for public apprehension and fear of a canine may require that exposure with citizens be limited. The handler shall consider the following guidelines:

- 1) [REDACTED]
- 2) Is the area such that the handler has adequate working space to properly control the canine during the examination?
- 3) Is there an immediate threat to life or property that would be mitigated by use of the canine?

During small group and crowd examinations, the canine will be on a short leash and under the handler's control at all times. If at any time during an examination the canine exhibits any hostile reaction to an individual or group of individuals, the handler shall immediately terminate the examination and remove the canine from the area. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

H. Handler Responsibilities

The routine care, feeding, grooming, cleanliness, training and maintenance of the canine will be the sole responsibility of the canine handler. All canine records, including weight and medical history records, will be kept current by the canine handler.

1. Canines will be groomed, inspected and worked daily.
2. The canine's kennel shall be cleaned and maintained in a sanitary condition.
3. Canine food, supplies and equipment are to be secured through the Regional Supervisor or Detective Canine Handler.
4. Service of a licensed veterinarian shall be obtained by the canine handler with approval of Canine Commander.
5. In an emergency situation, the canine handler shall ensure that the canine receives immediate medical attention from a licensed veterinarian and the Canine Commander shall be notified immediately.
6. The handler will treat any minor illness or injury to the canine immediately. If further treatment is needed, the handler will ensure that care is obtained, as soon as possible, from a licensed veterinarian.
7. The canine handler will be responsible for the administration of any medication as prescribed by the veterinarian.
8. A physical examination should be conducted by a licensed veterinarian annually. The handler is responsible for maintaining current vaccination records.
9. The canine shall be licensed in accordance with all local and state laws. The handler is responsible for ensuring that this licensing remains current.
10. Canine handlers will be responsible for the care and upkeep of all equipment issued to them for training and maintenance of the canine.
11. Canine vehicles are to be maintained in good operating order. The interior will be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Any damage to upholstery shall be reported to the Canine Commander and repaired once authorized. Regional Supervisor's periodic inspection reports shall document the need for such repairs.

12. Canine handlers will be responsible for all training aids and will ensure that these aids are securely stored.

I. Reports/Records

The documentation of all activities and performances of Bureau canine teams is essential. The following reports shall be completed as required:

1. A log report of each actual examination conducted;
2. A daily training log of canine activity; and
3. A supplemental report will be completed for each investigation when the canine is utilized as support.

J. Functions of the Accelerant Detection Canine Program

1. Control of Canines

The canine handler is primarily responsible for the care, handling and actions of the canine. The following are minimum guidelines for the handler to follow in order to maintain control of the canine:

- a. Handlers shall take every precaution to ensure that canines are not provoked, teased, or otherwise abused;
- b. When it is necessary to relieve the canines, handlers will take the canine to a proper area and maintain control;
- c. Handlers shall not leave canines unattended in offices or chained in any manner that would permit injury to the canine or any individual; and
- d. The handler is no longer required to exercise immediate control over the canine's actions once the canine is returned to the kennel or another designated secure place.

2. Bureau Member Training

The detection canines have been selected and trained by experts. Under most circumstances, canines are stable and predictable in the office environment. The canine team will become a common sight throughout the office areas.

- a. To familiarize other staff with canine operations, the Canine Commander shall provide informative memos or literature regarding the program.

- b. The following information should be provided as a guideline for interaction with the canine and when observing the activities of the canine team:
 - 1) A canine that is secured should not be approached;
 - 2) Do not run towards or away from the canine team;
 - 3) Unless the handler advises otherwise, do not attempt to feed or pet the canine;
 - 4) Do not open a vehicle door if the canine is inside;
 - 5) Do not give the canine commands; and
 - 6) Do not crowd, bend over, tease or try to confine (hug) the canine.

K. Formal Canine Demonstrations

- 1. Upon request, the canine team may demonstrate its skills for school groups, service clubs, government agencies, and other similar groups.
- 2. Requests for formal demonstrations shall be documented and sent to the Canine Commander for approval. All canine demonstrations shall be authorized in advance by the Canine Commander.
- 3. Requests by local agencies for use of detection canines to assist on fire scenes shall take precedence over requests for demonstrations. Canines will not be taken from a fire scene to perform demonstrations.
- 4. Canine handler demonstrations are designed to exhibit the best aspects of the canine detection team. The following are guidelines for canine demonstrations:
 - a. The handler shall be dressed in his or her field uniform and present a professional appearance;
 - b. The canine shall be leashed at all times, except when the demonstration exercise calls for the canine to be off-leash;
 - c. As part of the demonstration, the canine may be walked through the group on-leash;

- d. If the handler deems the situation appropriate, he or she may allow individuals to pet the canine. The handler will give instructions to the group on where and how to pet the canine;
- e. Exhibits may include such items as leashes, collars, medical supplies, training tools, food etc;
- f. Examination exercises should be on-leash and short in duration. Examinations should be demonstrated only when the conditions promote a successful exercise free of any conditions that would be harmful to the canine; and
- g. The canine handler must strictly limit public participation in any demonstration.

L. Canine Bite Guidelines

Should an accidental bite by an Bureau canine occur during on or off-duty hours, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. The handler shall immediately secure the canine and then ensure that first aid is administered. If necessary, the handler will contact EMS, or arrange transportation to a medical facility;
2. The handler shall make no statement regarding liability or fault;
3. The handler involved shall prepare a detailed report of the incident. All reports shall include a description of the events, witness statements, photographs of the injuries and place of occurrence;
4. The handler shall notify the Canine Commander and regional supervisor and both shall respond to the incident location if possible;
5. The handler shall not sign any paperwork that will hold the agency responsible for payment of hospital charges; and
6. If an agency member is bitten, first aid shall be administered. If necessary, EMS will be contacted and the member transported to the hospital. A report documenting the incident shall be completed, and a First Report of Injury form will be completed by a supervisor and submitted within twenty-four (24) hours.

M. Explosives Detection Canines

Explosives detection canines are assigned to the Special Operations Unit. The canines are specially trained [REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
 - a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
 - d. [REDACTED]
3. Explosives detection canines shall receive training and demonstrate the ability to detect explosives odor through an agency-approved instructor. This shall be done prior to deploying the canine in the field.
4. After basic training the canine must continue proficiency in-service training. This training shall be conducted during mandatory in-service and shall be the responsibility of each handler to maintain.
5. When deploying the canine, the handler shall have a bomb tech accompany them to serve as the "spotter" during the examination.

N. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1. [REDACTED]

2. [REDACTED]
3. [REDACTED]
4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]
6. [REDACTED]
7. [REDACTED]
8. [REDACTED]
 - a. [REDACTED]
 - b. [REDACTED]
 - c. [REDACTED]
 - d. [REDACTED]
 - e. [REDACTED]
 - f. [REDACTED]
 - g. [REDACTED]

O. Secondary Handlers and Canine Sitters

1. Secondary handlers must complete an approved certification program prior to working as a certified canine team.

2. Certified canine secondary teams are trained to perform in the same manner as a full-time canine team. Secondary teams adhere to the same standards as the primary canine team.
3. A canine sitter will be trained only to maintain and care for the canine in the absence of the canine handler. Under no circumstances, will the canine sitter utilize the canine in any law enforcement function.
4. A Bureau member, who is a secondary handler or canine sitter, is authorized to operate department issued canine vehicles.