

Regulations for the Training and Examination of an African Swine Fever (ASF) Carcass Detection Dog Team in Flanders, Belgium

Version November 2025

This protocol is based on the protocol of the TCRH-centre (TCRH Training Center Rescuing and Helping GmbH) for the ASP-dog detection teams in Baden-Württemberg, Germany.

Following fact-finding visits* to the TCRH – with conversations and observations of trainings and examinations to ensure an accurate understanding —the material was adapted to the Flemish context**.

PRELIMINARY VERSION TO BE ADAPTED IN PILOT PROJECT

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**Information on vaccine requirements was obtained from Kristof Baert (INBO, The Research Institute for Nature and Forest)

Reference:

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1. General Provisions

1.1. Scope

The purpose of these provisions is to ensure that a sufficient number of dog teams (comprising a handler and a dog) are trained and qualified according to defined minimum requirements to perform carcass searches in the event of African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreaks.

1.2 Training and Qualification

Training of suitable dogs shall be conducted by qualified and approved trainers or training organizations with expertise in cadaver detection. Cooperation with recognized institutions, specialized agencies, or relevant authorities may be established to ensure high-quality and standardized training methods.

1.3 Deployment Responsibility

The organization, coordination, and supervision of search deployments, as well as the welfare and management of the dog teams during operations, are the responsibility of the competent local or regional authorities under whose direction the deployment takes place.

1.4 Examination Regulations

The examination and certification procedures outlined in this document apply to all dog teams that are intended to be deployed for ASF carcass detection operations. These procedures ensure that only teams meeting the established standards of competence and reliability are approved for field use.

1.5 Applicability

These regulations apply to the training, examination, and deployment of ASF carcass detection dog teams operating under the authority of any national, regional, or local body responsible for animal disease control and wildlife management.

The regulations outlined in this protocol may be revised or updated over time to reflect new knowledge, evidence, or best practices. Any proposed amendments shall be reviewed and approved by the head trainers prior to implementation.

2. Minimum Requirements for the Training and Examination of an ASF Carcass Detection Dog Team

2.1. Responsibility for Training and Certification

The training, examination, and certification of ASF carcass detection dog teams are the responsibility of the approved head trainers. Their training and examination regulations, must be submitted to the competent authority for acknowledgment or approval prior to publication.

All training and examination activities must ensure compliance with animal health and welfare standards, as well as general principles of disease control. This can be evaluated any time by recognized veterinary authorities responsible for monitoring compliance with relevant animal welfare and animal disease regulations.

Participation of official representatives as examiners is not mandatory, but the official veterinary authority must be given the opportunity to observe training or examinations for the purpose of veterinary supervision.

2.2 Training Objectives

The core training objective is that the dog reliably identifies and indicates wild boar carcasses (or other relevant carcass material) under natural conditions, while working freely and in cooperation with the handler.

An examination is conducted to assess the special suitability and reliability of the team. The test area must include varied vegetation and terrain conditions, and the dog must locate a specified number of carcasses within a defined timeframe.

Upon successful completion of the examination, the handler receives an official certificate of qualification, confirming the team's status as an approved ASF Carcass Detection Dog Team.

Financial or logistical support for participation in the training and deployment program may be provided by the responsible authority or funding body, as determined at the national or regional level.

2.3 Prerequisites for Training and Examination

2.3.1. Health and Veterinary Requirements

Both handler and dog must be in good physical condition on the days of the training and examination. Each handler is responsible for the fitness of its' dog.

If health concerns arise during a training or examination, the trainers or examination panel decides on participation eligibility.

2.3.2. Requirements for the Handler

Minimum handler age: 18 years.

The handler must:

Be physically and mentally fit to participate in field operations in challenging terrain and over extended periods..

- Possess appropriate social and teamwork skills.
- Train and handle the dog in a manner consistent with animal welfare principles.
- Be capable of recognizing signs of stress, exhaustion, or overwork in the dog.
- A hunting license is not required.
- Be sufficiently motivated and available for training and eventual deployment in case of an ASF-outbreak.

The use of physical or psychological punishment is strictly prohibited. Likewise, the use of equipment that violates animal welfare standards—such as electric shock collars, prong collars, or choke chains—is forbidden.

2. 3.3 Requirements for the Dog

2.3.3.2. Suitability

All dog breeds are generally eligible to participate in the training and certification program for ASF carcass detection.

Only healthy dogs without signs of illness or injury may participate. Dogs that are sick, lame, or otherwise impaired are excluded.

Minimum dog age: 12 months at the time of first training. 18 months at the time of the first examination.

The maximum dog age limit for participation depends on its individual fitness, that will be evaluated by the trainers.

2.3.3.1. Screening for selection

A first screening prior to acceptance of participation is organised in which the dog and handler are observed. Following criteria are important for acceptance:

- Dog constitution, physical condition, limitations of the musculoskeletal system, motoric suitability, general health appearance, not affected by known hereditary defects.
- Bond between handler and dog.
- Capacities to deal with difficult terrain and with environmental stimuli
- Endurance and fitness
- Curiosity and activity.

Throughout the training the dog must continue to:

- Be healthy, fit, and physically capable of fieldwork. If, during the training or examination, it becomes clear that a dog is unfit, exhausted, injured, or

distressed, the training or examination will be terminated immediately in consultation with the trainers or examiners.

- Possess a good sense of smell, and willingness to work and search, motivation, and play or food drive.
- Exhibit stable social behaviour toward humans and preferentially also to other dogs.
- Not show excessive fear or aggression
- Be sufficiently stable to work in difficult terrain and the contexts associated with the work (difficult terrain, transport, waiting times, hygiene measures,...).
- Be reliably recallable and responsive to the handler.
- Dogs showing signs of uncontrolled hunting behaviour or a history of chasing wildlife are excluded from training and examination.

2.3.3.2. Vaccination Requirements

All dogs must have valid vaccinations according to national veterinary standards.

- Rabies vaccination is mandatory for travel. Since ASP dogs may be required to operate near borders, this vaccination is compulsory.
- Other mandatory vaccinations should protect against canine distemper caused by canine distemper (CD) virus, infectious canine hepatitis (ICH) caused by canine adenovirus type 1 (CAV-1), respiratory disease caused by canine adenovirus type 2 (CAV-2), canine parainfluenza caused by canine parainfluenza (CPI) virus, and canine parvoviral enteritis caused by canine parvovirus (CPV).
- Following vaccinations are considered optional: Leptospirosis and Kennel cough (Bordetella).

4.3 Dog Administrative Requirements

In compliance with Belgian regulations, the dog shall be microchipped and must possess a valid passport.

If the dog owner and handler are not the same person, the owner must provide a written declaration granting the handler permission to train, examine, and deploy the dog in official operations.

3. Training and Examination Conditions

3.1 Trainer Qualifications

Training must be conducted by qualified instructors with proven experience in hunting dog, rescue dog, or detection dog training.

Competence may be demonstrated through official certification, professional experience, or long-term practical work in related fields.

3.2. Examiner qualifications

The Chief Examiner must have documented experience in evaluating working, rescue, or detection dogs, or equivalent qualifications.

To qualify as an Examiner, an individual must demonstrate at least three years of active judging experience in a recognized detection dog training or working dog organization.

3.2. Training Methods

Training must rely exclusively on positive reinforcement — rewarding desired behaviours with motivation-based rewards (e.g., toys, praise, food).

The use of physical punishment, psychological pressure, or aversive techniques is strictly prohibited.

Use of animal welfare–violating devices is not permitted, including:

- Electric or shock collars
- Prong collars
- Choke or slip leads

3.3. Use of Equipment

Dogs should be accustomed to wearing a GPS tracking device, as tracking is mandatory during examinations and field operations.

In rough terrain, the dog may have to wear a protective vest at the handlers' and trainers discretion. If a protective vest will be used during deployments, it should be introduced and practiced during training.

Handlers should bring a long line for the dog, a harness, a treat pouch and or toy for the dog, a water bottle for the dog, a 1 to 2 meter lead, suitable footwear, weather-appropriate clothing allowing easy movement, sufficient food rewards for the dog (150 – 250 small pieces/ day) and a backpack to hold all the equipment.

3.4. Hygiene and Biosecurity

Training must include the accustoming of dogs to cleaning procedures.

Cleaning must be carried out using mild, non-irritating products suitable for animals, in a manner that prevents ASF virus transmission, with attention to animal welfare and thermal comfort. Dogs must be dried and kept warm, especially in cold weather.

3.5 Purpose of Training and Examination

Each dog must be tested with the same handler throughout the exam.

A dog may be examined with a maximum of two handlers, but each pairing must undergo a separate examination.

Upon successful completion, the team is recognized as a Certified ASF Carcass Detection Dog Team.

If either the handler or the dog changes, this certification becomes invalid until the new pairing successfully completes the examination again.

The purpose of the ASF Carcass Detection Dog Program is to evaluate whether a dog-handler team can effectively locate wild boar carcasses at various stages of decomposition within assigned search areas.

Training and examination may include multiple qualification levels (e.g., basic, intermediate, advanced).

3.6. Nose work Examination

After completion of the training at a specific level (eg. Green, yellow), a practical nose work examination has to be passed.

The examination content and report are included as annexes.

- After passing the “Green level” examination, dog handlers can be deployed together with another handler as assistant who passed the “Yellow level”. The searches should only cover easy terrain such as meadows, forest edges, roadsides, ...
- After passing the “yellow level” examination, dog handlers can be deployed on difficult terrain searches, with an assistant of at least yellow level.
- The “red level” examination can be passed in case handlers with sufficient terrain deployment want a proof of an extra degree of mastery, but is not mandatory.

An online theoretical examination is held on scent differentiation, conduct and behaviour during operations, procedures when discovering rests of wildlife, procedures around the hygiene gate, handling of radio and GPS equipment, deployment as a search team assistant for ASF operations, knowledge of compass use, weather conditions, thermals, scent, and search tactics. All this is part of the “Green examination”. Online courses on the topics are provided in the days prior to the examination.

3.7. Deployment readiness examination

Teams that pass the exam, should pass an additional deployment readiness test, needed prior to any operational deployment.

The deployment readiness examination also include practical/theoretical tests of

- Warming up and cooling down of a dog
- Search tactics
- Procedures for wild boar cadavers
- Documenting searched zones
- Hygienic measures, including the cleaning of the dog, using mild, animal-safe products. If a dog cannot be washed, it fails the deployment readiness examination automatically.
- Orientation, map reading, and radio communication

It may additionally include following topics, on practical and theoretical level:

- First aid for dogs
- Situational awareness and field safety
- Accident prevention
- Health and welfare of dog and handler
- Safe transportation of dogs
- Ecology and behaviour of wild boars
- Principles of ASF and Aujeszky's disease prevention

3.7 Examination Prerequisites

The trainers must give prior approval to each team before they are allowed to start the test.

Admission to each examination level requires:

- Trainer approval confirming readiness, and
- Successful completion of the previous level

Female dogs in heat may participate but must be kept separate from other participants and examined at the end of the event. The condition must be reported to the Examination Leader no later than the day before the examination.

Minimum age of the dog on the day of examination:

- Basic ("Green") Level: 18 months
- Advanced ("Yellow") level: 24 months

The handler must be at least 18 years old to participate. No exceptions are permitted.

3.8 Examination Event Authorization

Examinations must take place in a designated examination area, which may be a permanent site or a temporarily approved location that meets environmental and safety requirements.

Examinations must be conducted under the supervision of the chief examiner. The Chief Examiner is responsible for all organizational aspects of the event, including:

- Obtaining event approval from the competent authority at least three weeks in advance
- Informing the official examiners of the date, location, and participant list at least four days before the examination
- Ensuring the examination area meets all safety and environmental requirements
- Briefing all participants. The examination begins with an official briefing led by the Examination Leader and Examiners.

All examiners should maintain order and safety throughout the event.

All participants must follow the instructions of the Examination Team.

An additional member of the examination panel may be appointed or approved by the competent authority, such as for instance the local veterinary office.

The number of spectators permitted is determined in consultation with the handlers and at the discretion of the Examiners.

A minimum of three registered teams is required to hold an official examination.

The number of evaluations per examiner should be limited to respect the workload.

Any premature termination or interruption must be recorded in the Performance Record with an explanation.

4. Examination Preparation and Organization

4.1 Examination Registration

Each handler must check in with the Examination Leader, presenting all required documentation before the start of the examination:

- Proof of training participation and eligibility
- Completed registration and consent forms

Incomplete or missing documentation may result in exclusion from the examination.

Each handler may present a maximum of two dogs per examination event.

4.2 Examination Team

The examination shall be conducted by a panel of two qualified individuals, consisting of:

- One Chief Examiner
- One Associate Examiner

The specific dogs' team trainer can be present as observer on the day of the examination, but can not test his/her own teams.

Possible scoring system (to be determined later):

- Daily work : 60%
- Practical exam: 30%
- Theoretical exam: 10 %

4.3 Examination Area and Search Material

The executing organization is responsible for preparing the examination area and providing all necessary tools and materials.

Each dog team must be assigned a unique search area or hiding location not previously used during training.

Permissible search materials include:

- Wild boar carcasses
- Wild boar dummies with fresh skin
- Wild boar skins or hides (confirmed free of infectious disease)

Search areas resemble the natural wild boar habitat (e.g., forest, field, reed area)

4.4. Examination content

The examination content for the different levels is described in the annex (green and yellow level).

4.5 Safety and Welfare Arrangements

The examination organizer must ensure:

- A first aid kit for dogs is available on-site
- A safety whistle for the dog handlers.
- A resting area for dogs awaiting their turn (e.g., shaded areas in hot weather, insulated shelters in cold weather)

Handlers are responsible for their dogs' care during waiting times (e.g., water, blankets, coats)

All technical devices, such as GPS trackers and radios, must be checked for functionality before the start of the examination.

Participants must behave respectfully toward people, animals, and property.

Any violation of animal welfare regulations results in immediate exclusion and notification of the competent authority.

If a dog displays aggression toward humans or other dogs, or hunts uncontrollably, the examination must be stopped, and the team excluded.

Examinations interrupted for medical reasons (handler or dog) are considered not undertaken.

4.6 Evaluation Sheets and Registration Forms

For all examinations, the Examiners or Evaluators are responsible for verifying that evaluation sheets and registration forms—completed by the Examination Leader—are accurate, complete, and signed.

4.7 Liability and Insurance

The dog owner is liable for any personal or property damage caused by their dog.

The handler is responsible for any accidents during the examination and must be covered by adequate insurance. Proof of adequate liability insurance must be presented at the start of the examination.

4.8 Evaluation and Results

Examinations are graded as “Pass” or “Fail.”

The result is recorded in the Performance Record and verified by the Examiner.

A written certificate of completion is issued to teams that pass.

Teams that fail or are excluded may retake the examination no earlier than one month after the previous attempt.

4.9. Complaints and Appeals

Complaints regarding incidents during an examination, or the conduct of handlers, evaluators, examination leaders, examiners, or other persons involved, should be resolved on-site whenever possible.

The decision of the Examiners or Evaluators is final regarding the factual assessment of performance.

In justified cases — specifically involving procedural violations or misconduct by examiners, evaluators, or officials — a written complaint may be submitted to the authorized certifying body or central office. This must be signed by the complainant, the Examination Leader, and at least one independent witness, and received within ten days of the incident.

Acceptance of a complaint does not constitute a right to alter the examiner’s judgment. The competent committee of the certifying authority will decide on the complaint.

The certifying authority is authorized to impose the following measures for unsporting or unethical behaviour, dishonest actions, or violations of examination rules:

- Suspension or ban from participation in examinations;
- Suspension or prohibition from conducting examinations or organizing related events for up to two (2) years.

4.10. Validity of Examination Results

A passed examination at any level is valid until December 31 of the following calendar year.

Extensions or exceptions may be granted by the Training Leader or responsible certifying authority, upon justified request.

5. Operational Readiness and Deployment

5.1 Maintenance of Operational Readiness

Upon successful completion of the examination, the certified dog–handler team will be registered as an active member of the Readiness Unit in the central operational registry maintained by the competent public authority.

5.2. Ongoing Training

To maintain operational readiness, the Chief trainer responsible for Readiness Unit members must organize regular training sessions, with a minimum of six sessions per half-year, under the supervision of a qualified trainer.

Attendance records of all participating dog-handler teams must be maintained.

5.3 Additional Competence Training

In addition to continued scent-search training, handlers are encouraged to participate in continued operational preparedness exercises, which may include:

- Map reading and navigation,
- GPS tracking and georeferencing,
- Coordinated multi-team area searches,
- Radio and field communication procedures,
- Basic biosecurity and decontamination protocols.

6 Deployment During ASF (African Swine Fever) Epidemics

6.1. Deployment Obligation

In the event of an ASF outbreak, members of the Readiness Unit are obligated to assist as much as possible in coordinated cadaver searches upon official request.

It is the handler's responsibility to refuse or postpone a deployment if the dog shows signs of fatigue, stress, or overexertion.

Repeated unjustified refusal to participate may result in withdrawal of support services or suspension from the readiness list.

6.2. Working and Rest Periods

After every 30 minutes of active deployment, the dog must be granted a minimum 15-minute rest period. Each handler should evaluate its' dogs need for longer or shorter breaks.

Rest areas must be isolated and sheltered (shade in warm conditions, protection from cold, access to water, and coat if necessary).

The total operational time (including rest periods) should not exceed four hours per deployment, excluding transport and acclimatization.

After deployment, the dog should be offered food and be allowed to recover.

7.3 Post-Deployment Hygiene

After each epidemic deployment, the dog must be thoroughly washed using mild, animal-safe cleaning products.

Frequent washing can compromise the skin's lipid barrier; therefore, cadaver search dogs should not be deployed more than two to three times per week.

Annex 1: Nose work Examination Levels: green, yellow and red

Placement requirements:

- The number of search items will be unknown to the dog handler.
- Placement must prevent dogs from following human scent directly to the items
- Items must be placed no less than four hours before the examination begins
- During setup, the materials must be carried in a way that minimizes ground contact to avoid creating misleading scent trails.

1. Examination Level "Green"

1.2. General

The "Green" level examination consists of three stations where it will be assessed whether the dog has been conditioned to the scent and whether the dog is capable of working the scent of the carcass.

Additionally, it will be evaluated whether the handler can recognize when the dog is in the scent cloud and when the dog has reached the carcass.

All dogs registered for this level on a given examination day will be tested at the same three stations.

Successfully passing the "Green" level examination qualifies the ASP-KSHT for searches on a long leash in areas that meet the requirements for the search areas of the "Green" level examination.

1.3 Station 1

Search Area: Unusual terrain with ground changes.

Search Time: Max. 10 minutes.

Number and type of cadaver parts: One, in a tightly sealed glass jar with a screw lid, the lid should have enough holes for scent release, hidden out of sight.

The dog must find the scent of the carcass within the given time, work the scent cloud, and show a "behaviour" at the jar which the handler recognizes as an indication of a find.

1.4 Station 2

Search Area: Edge of a forest, meadow, about 10 m wide and about 500 m long.

Search Time: Max. 10 minutes.

Number and type of cadaver parts: One, in a tightly sealed glass jar with a screw lid, the lid should have enough holes for scent release, hidden out of sight.

The dog works on a long leash with a search collar or in a harness and must find the scent of the carcass within the given time, work the scent cloud, and show a "behaviour" at the jar which the handler recognizes as an indication of a find.

1.5 Station 3

Search Area: Clearing, fenced area, or young plant enclosure, max. 4000 m².

Search Time: Max. 15 minutes.

Number and type of cadaver parts: Two, in tightly sealed glass jars with screw lids, the lid should have enough holes for scent release, hidden out of sight.

The dog works either on a long leash with a search collar or in a harness, or in fenced areas, may also work off-leash, and must find the scent of both cadaver parts within the given time, work the scent cloud, and show a "behaviour" at the jars which the handler recognizes as an indication of a find.

2 Examination Level "Yellow"

2.1 General

To participate in the exam, the prerequisite is passing and having a valid "Green" level exam. The "Yellow" exam level consists of two parts: Nose Work and Obedience. Each part of the exam can be taken separately. The individual passed parts are to be recorded in the performance booklet. Successfully passing the nose work qualifies the ASP-KSHT to search with a long leash in terrains that meet the criteria for the search areas of the "Yellow" exam level. With a successfully completed obedience exam, the search can also be conducted as a free search. It is permitted for the dog to wear bells or similar items during the search to make it easier to locate the dog.

2.2 Nose Work

2.2.1 Examination Terrain, Carcass (Carcass Parts)

Search Area: Approximately 18,000 - 20,000 square meters, low or sparse vegetation, suitable for searching with a long leash. Search Time: Max. 30 minutes. Number and Condition of Carcass or Carcass Parts: Three, in different stages of decay, minimum weight 2 kg.

2.2.2 Preparation

The carcass parts are placed in the search area by the examiner and evaluators, along with the examination leader, well before the start of the search. Hiding spots that are not accessible to the dog are not allowed. The minimum distance between two carcasses must not be less than 15 meters. The hiding spots should be invisible to the handler. The covering of the carcasses is only allowed using natural materials from the surroundings. The handler and dog must wait out of sight until called upon.

2.2.3 Registration, Questioning

The handler registers with the examiner or evaluators at the beginning of the search and announces the form of the indication (staying, barking, retrieving, or free indication). The handler will receive a description of the search task from the examiner or evaluators. The handler should ask the examiner or evaluators any questions to clarify points that remain unclear. The handler then informs the examiner or evaluators of their search tactic, taking into account terrain and wind direction. The handler must adhere to the basic principles of wild boar carcass searches. Searching against the wind is also possible from the starting point. The handler is free to change their tactics during the search, provided they notify and justify this to the examiner or evaluators.

2.2.4 Search Work

The handler sets their dog in accordance with their search tactic. The free-searching dog should search the terrain as instructed by the handler, with audible and/or visual cues used to guide the dog. The dog should not leave the marked or assigned area by more than 20 meters (or natural and visible boundaries). Audible and/or visual cues that trigger the indication behaviour are not allowed. The handler with the dog on the long leash must choose their tactics in a way that allows the dog to search the entire area. The handler announces the indication by saying "Indication" and is only allowed to approach the dog upon the examiner's or evaluators' instruction. In the "stay" indication form, the dog must stay at the carcass until the handler reaches the dog. If the dog leaves the carcass by more than 5 meters, it is considered leaving, with the environment being taken into account. The "barker" must continuously and purposefully bark at the carcass until the handler reaches the dog. A departure of more than 5 meters from the carcass also counts as leaving, considering the environment. In the "retrieving" or "free indication," the indication involves the dog finding the carcass, purposefully approaching it, and signaling to the handler, as well as whether the dog leads the handler directly to the carcass. Any deviation within the indication types leads to a downgrade of the indication. Deviations outside of the indication types lead to failure. After an indication, the handler resumes the search at a suitable point according to their judgment. If the handler sees a carcass before the dog finds it, they must report it to the examiner or evaluators. The dog must be allowed to make an independent find with an indication. For this, the handler must move about 25 meters away from the carcass after reporting it. Time stops between the indication and restarting the search. If the handler pauses the search to give the dog water, an additional 5 minutes is added to the total time. The dog must find and indicate at least two carcass parts within the specified time. The search area must be completely searched within the time limit, even if all three carcasses are found earlier. If the dog's guidance or indication cannot be sufficiently assessed during the search, the examiner or evaluator may conduct an extra evaluation after the search. The extra evaluation of the ability to control/steer a dog in a free search will involve sending the dog about 50 meters to a clearly visible point in the terrain, stopping it, and having it redirected on the examiner's or evaluator's instruction. For the indication re-evaluation, an open visual indication can be done as per the examiner's or evaluator's instructions. The search work concludes with the handler's registration with the examiner or evaluators and the announcement of the evaluation by the examiner or evaluators.

2.2.5 Evaluation

The handler is evaluated in the areas of search tactic, area coverage, and communication with the dog. The dog is evaluated in the areas of motivation and guidance, obedience, intensity, conditioning, terrain handling, environmental influences, weather assessment, and indication. The following points lead to failing the exam:

- Finding fewer than two carcass parts within the prescribed time
- Aggressive behaviour of the dog toward persons involved in the exam
- Leaving the examination terrain for more than 3 minutes
- Failure to indicate at the carcass
- Indication-triggering behaviour by the handler
- Leaving the carcass more than 5 meters after a previous indication

- Rolling in the carcass
- Dog marking on the carcass
- Dog chewing on the carcass
- Not correctly continuing the search by the dog or handler after finding the second carcass, until the entire area is covered or the 30 minutes have expired.

2.3 Obedience

2.3.1 General

The evaluation is carried out in the categories of "passed" or "failed." The overall performance assessment is based on the individual performances and the overall impression of the performance shown.

2.3.2 Obedience Exercises

2.3.2.1 Calling the Dog Out of the Search on Hand Signal from the Examiner or Evaluators

The dog is sent by the handler to a point designated by the examiner or evaluators. When the dog is about 50 meters away from the handler, the examiner or evaluator gives a hand signal, upon which the handler must call the dog back to them. The dog must come directly to the handler without delay.

2.3.2.2 Calling the Dog from a Visual Stimulus on Hand Signal from the Examiner or Evaluators

The dog is sent by the handler to a point designated by the examiner or evaluators. When the dog is about 50 meters away, the examiner or evaluator gives a hand signal to the assistant, who then places a visual stimulus (e.g., a hare-skin dummy) within the dog's sight. Upon a hand or audible signal from the examiner or evaluator, the handler must call the dog back to them. The dog must come directly to the handler without delay.

3 Examination Level "Red"

3.1 General

The purpose of the examination is to ensure that the team of handler and dog is able to find wild boar carcasses under conditions that closely resemble actual operational situations. A valid and passed examination at the "Yellow" level, including both nose work and obedience, is a prerequisite for participation in this examination. During the search, the dog is equipped with a GPS tracker or a GPS collar. The handler monitors the dog's work during the search using a GPS device. It is allowed for the dog to wear a bell or similar device during the search to help track the dog's location.

3.2 Examination Area, Carcasses (Carcass Parts)

- **Search Area:** 30,000 m², with at least 50% of the area being dense and difficult to see through terrain. If this condition is not met, the area can be rejected by the examiner.
- **Search Time:** Max. 30 minutes.

- **Number and Condition of the Carcasses/Carcass Parts:** Three, in various stages of decomposition, with a minimum weight of 2 kg.

3.3 Preparation

To ensure that all dogs have the same conditions, each team is assigned a separate search area. The carcass parts will be placed in the search area by the examiner and the examination leader in advance of the search. Hiding spots that are inaccessible to the dog are not permitted. The minimum distance between two carcasses must not be less than 15 meters. The hiding spots should not be visible to the handler. Covering the carcasses is only allowed with natural materials from the surrounding area. The handler must wait out of sight with their dog until they are called to begin.

3.4 Registration, Questioning

At the start of the search, the handler registers with their dog and announces the type of indication (staying, barking, bringing, or free indication). The handler receives a description of the search task from the examination leader or examiner. The handler should ask the examiner or examination leader about any unclear points to gather all relevant information. The handler then informs the examiner of their search strategy, considering the terrain and wind direction. The strategy should follow the basic guidelines of wild boar carcass searches. A search against the wind is allowed from the starting point. The handler is free to change their strategy during the search, but must notify the examiner and justify the change.

3.5 Search Work

The handler uses the dog according to their search strategy. The dog is to search the area as instructed by the handler, with the use of verbal or visual signals being allowed. The dog should not leave the designated or assigned search area by more than 20 meters (or natural and visible boundaries). Verbal or visual signals that trigger the dog's indication behaviour are not allowed. The handler decides when the dog has indicated. The handler reports this to the examiner using the word "indication" and can only approach the dog upon the examiner's instructions.

- **In the case of "Staying":** The dog must remain at the carcass until the handler arrives. If the dog moves away from the carcass by more than 5 meters, it will be considered as abandoning the carcass, considering the environment.
- **In the case of "Barking":** The dog must bark persistently and purposefully at the carcass until the handler arrives. If the dog moves away from the carcass by more than 5 meters, it will be considered as abandoning the carcass, considering the environment.
- **In the case of "Bringing" or "Free Indication":** The indication is evaluated based on the dog's discovery of the carcass, purposeful running to it, and whether the dog leads the handler directly to the carcass.

Any deviation from the specified indication types will result in a reduction in the score. Any deviations outside the types of indications will lead to failure. After an indication, the handler resumes the search at a location they deem appropriate. If the handler sees a carcass before the dog finds it, the examiner must be informed. The dog must be allowed to make an independent find with an indication. To do this, the handler moves approximately 25 meters away from the carcass after notifying the examiner. Time is paused between the indication and the resumption of the search. If the handler pauses the search to give the dog water, 5 minutes will be added to

the total time. The dog must find and indicate all placed carcass parts within the prescribed time. The entire area must be searched within the time limit, even if all three carcasses have been found earlier. If the dog's control and/or indication cannot be sufficiently assessed during the search, the examiner may conduct a subsequent evaluation. For the evaluation of control/steerability in free-searching dogs, the dog is sent to a clearly recognizable point about 50 meters away in the terrain, stopped, and then re-directed by the examiner. An open visual indication as per the examiner's instructions may be used for evaluating the indication. The search work concludes with the handler notifying the examiner and the announcement of the score.

3.6 Evaluation

The handler is evaluated on the following areas:

- Search strategy
- Area coverage
- Communication with the dog

The dog is evaluated on:

- Motivation and control/obedience
- Intensity
- Stamina
- Terrain handling ability
- Response to environmental factors
- Scent work
- Indication

The following points result in a failure:

- Fewer carcass parts are found than required within the prescribed time
- Aggressive behaviour of the dog towards persons involved in the examination
- Leaving the examination area for more than 3 minutes
- Failure to indicate at the carcass
- Indication-triggering behaviour by the handler
- Leaving the carcass by more than 5 meters after the indication
- Rolling in the carcass
- The dog marks the carcass
- The dog chews on the carcass
- Failure to properly continue searching by the dog or handler after finding the second carcass, until the area is fully covered or the 30 minutes have elapsed

Annex 2. To be adapted: Examination Report for Certification of an ASF Cadaver Search Dog Team

Handler:

Dog:

Chip No.:

Location:

Date:

Examiner:

Planned Search

Search from: _____ to: _____

Passed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Indication Behaviour:

☐ Barking ☐ Indicating ☐ Bringing

Handler's Indication: _____

Placement of Pieces:

Date: _____ Time: _____

Type of Pieces: _____

GPS Data: Piece 1: _____

Piece 2: _____

Piece 3: _____

Description of the Search:

Wild Boar Cadaver Found:

☐ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3

Cleaning and Post-Search Care

After the search, the dog was washed with water and dog shampoo and tolerated the process.

Passed: ☐ Yes ☐ No Description:

Annex 3: Optional Behavioural Assessment towards wild boar in Controlled Environments

During the training or examination, an optional training with live wild boar can be held, in a controlled, approved enclosure.

The dog remains on a leash during the assessment.

Direct contact between dog and wild boar is strictly prohibited.

The dog must demonstrate neutral or avoidance behaviour rather than active approach or aggression.

The assessment is conducted and confirmed by the authorized evaluator.

Dogs may indicate the presence of wild boar (e.g., by barking), but can not show chasing or endangering behaviour. This will result in disqualification.