

Understanding Certification

To be a certified Mission Ready a K9 team with Marin SAR, a K9 team must have all required sign offs completed and have passed a Cal EMA recognized search dog organization (i.e. CARDA www.carda.org or WOOF www.searchdogs.com) mission ready test. Due to the type of terrain in Marin County all teams must test as Type 2 or Type 4. Those who wish to respond to mutual aid searches in Type 1 terrain must test as Type 1. This means that teams will work on becoming Mission Ready with the certifying agency either before or during their tenure with Marin County SAR.

Once Mission Ready status has been achieved, and the K9 team is off probation, the certified canine is able to participate in the Marin County Humane Society K9 Care Program.

The Marin SAR K9 teams train at least twice a week. All K9 Team Members are required to attend monthly SAR meetings eight times a year as well as six SAR trainings per year once they are certified Mission Ready. Prior to this time they are required to meet all the standards for individual team members of Marin SAR Unit.

Training will cover a wide range of activities, all of which are required for a K9 Team in addition to the skills and training required of all Marin County Search and Rescue members.

These activities will include:

- Obedience and direction and control skills
- Canine agility
- Helicopter safety class, cold loads, hot loads, and flight time if possible with K9 partner
- Search techniques: area, hasty, trailing/tracking, cadaver, and evidence
- Urban search and disaster training
- Crime scene safety and security
- Canine first aid and decontamination
- Scent theory

Please feel free to contact the Marin Search and Rescue K9 Coordinator, Karen Gideon, for further information or answers to your questions. Contact Karen via email at karengideon@gmail.com and include your phone number and contact information.