**Glossary of Terms often used in Police Canine Training, Deployments, Depositions, and Court Room Situations**

**This page will be updated as we receive new Terminology.**

**Air Scenting -** Target vapor that has become airborne either through the natural process of deterioration or being displaced by wind and air currents, and therefore making it available for canine detection.

**Alert** – A conditioned, trained, or instinctual response to a trained target material or human presence.

**Area Search** – Using a canine to systematically search an area for target or human vapor using air currents to the advantage of the canine.

**Behavior** -The internally coordinated response of a canine to internal and external stimuli that has been shaped throughout the domestication process.

**Bite Ratio** – The number of bites a canine team has in relation to all apprehensions of the department.

**Bite Threshold** – The level of stress or stimulation at which a dog can process before negligently biting a human.

**Bridge** - A bridge is a term that is used to describe a link between a marker and a desired or undesired behavior or task. Usually used in a scenario when a part of the behavior is already known to the canine.

**Bored** – Lack of mental or physical conditioning to complete a desired task.

**Calming Signals** – Canines use about 30 calming signals when communicationg to one another. Some canines use very basic signals while others have a rich vocabulary.

**Certification** – A process and document that attests to successfully completing an examination or relevant skills of a canine team set forth by a governing body.

**Change of Behavior** - An uncharacteristic pattern of behavior(s) that occurs when the canine encounters a stimulus.

**Civil Agitation** – A technique used to develop biting canines focus on the human decoy as opposed to the bite training equipment itself.

**Clarity**- The desired mental state of a canine the allows clear and quick reactionary response to a stimuli or signal.

**Classical Conditioning** - Classical conditioning is a simple form of behavior modification where a neutral stimulus elicits the behavior for which there was formerly no association.

**Competent** - Having suitable or sufficient skill, knowledge, experience, etc., for some purpose; properly qualified.

**Compulsion Training** - Training that uses physical punishment, such as leash corrections, ear pinches, escape techniques, or an electric collar to mark undesired behavior.

**Conflict** – A term used to describe the internal confusion when processing a conditioned or unconditioned signal or stimuli.

**Consistant Reward Schedule** – A non-variable reward schedule, most commonly used when imprinting a new behavior or material. In this model a reinforcer is delivered consistently at the time a desired behavior is offered.

**Context-Specific** **Success** – The concept in which the a canines success is heavy influenced or dependent with a specific environment.

**Contaminating Material** – A non-target material that can chemically or physically accompany target material.

**Continuous Reinforcement** – ***see consistent reward schedule***.

**Correction** – Any signal a canine receives that discourages the likelihood of a behavior

**Counter-Conditioning** - A behavior modification technique used to change a canines natural or unnatural response or perception to a stimuli

**Courage** - The dog's willingness to forego internal conflict or pressure to complete a task.

**Cross-trained Canine** – A canine that is trained in multiple working disciplines.

**Cue** – A desired or undesired signal delivered to the canine by a human that interrupts the canines abilty or desire to complete a task independently. ***Also see learned helplessness***

**Decoy** – A human used to develop the confidence and grips of a canine.

**Defensive Drive** - A canines desire to protect themselves and or their handler when **ACTIVELY** faced with a perceived or real threat.

**Desensitize** – Counter-conditioning a stimuli.

**Distractors-** A non productive or undesired stimuli that can cause the canine to become less productive

**Detector or Detection Canine** - A canine trained alert to the presence of certain vapors or material for which it has been trained utilizing olfactory senses.

**Double-blind/Double-blind testing** - In evaluating a canine team, neither the assessor nor the handler has previous knowledge on where the canine will find success.

**Drive** – The dogs desire to face, participate, interact, or complete a task while maintaining clarity. Often confused with erratic physical or psychological behavior.

**Drive Capping** – A technique to suppress and channel a canines energy to work with clarity at the canines maximum genetic potential.

**Neutrality** – ***See also Desensitize***

**Dual Purpose Dog** – A dog trained in multiple disciplines.

**Environmental Training or Testing** - Instruction and/or evaluation procedures used to desensitize or expolit an otherwise distracting environment to ensure and predict the ability of the canine to focus on a desired task in a complex environment.

**Evidence/Article Search** – A canine trained to locate and indicate to items saturated with a combination of object and human vapor.

**Extinction** - Extracting or escaping a behavior by adding a punisher or withholding a reinforcer. Usually associated with an undesirable behavior.

**False Alert** – A response produced by the canine when further or previous knowledge shows that NO target stimuli was present. Commonly misdiagnosed when only minimal factors are considered. ***See also Generalization***.

**Final Position** – A completed behavior that a dog has been trained to exhibit by verbal command, non-verbal command, signal, and or cue.

**Firearm Detection Dog** - A dog that is specifically trained to locate and respond to the presence of firearms by a group of associated odors or complex odor picture.

**Fixed Reward Schedule** - A schedule of reinforcement in which the trainer reinforces a desired behavior after a **specific** number of responses repeatedly.

**Four Quadrants of Operant Conditioning-** Positive and Negative Reinforcement, Positive and Negative Punishment. Simply defined, positive actions give or add something, negative actions withhold or take something away. Punishers decrease the likelihood of a behavior and Reinforcers increase the likelihood of a behavior. **Positive and Negative DO NOT mean good or bad when referring to Operant Conditioning**

**Generalization** – The canines tendancey to relate or associate a chain of events, stimuli, or routine with a desired response. This can produce a desired or undesired reaction.

**Green Dog** – A canine the has no mission specific training, but has been encouraged and conditioned to understand how to produce a desired reward.

**Grip(s)** – The way a canine grabs an object with its mouth that is heavily influenced by genetic predisposition and developed through training and exposure.

**Habituate** - To become accustomed to a specific situation through repeated exposures. **also see Desensitize**

**Hard Out** – Term used to describe the technique of lifting by the neck or choking the canine until the canine lets go of something in its mouth.

**High Drive Dog** – High Drive is a trait that makes a canine extremely motivated to complete a given task or overcome complex obstacles for an objective while maintaining clarity.

**Homemade Explosives (HME)** - A combination of commercially available ingredients combined to create an explosive substance.

**Human Scent** – A complex odor picture produced by multiple factors that identify a specific person. ie., Metabolism, diet, emotion, heredity, bacteria, grooming products, etc.

**Improvised Explosive Device (IED)** - A device fabricated in an improvised manner incorporating destructive, lethal, noxious, pyrotechnic, or incendiary chemicals and designed to destroy, incapacitate, harass, or distract.

**Instinct** – The hereditary tendency to react in specific ways in specific circumstances somewhat influenced by genetic predisposition. Behaviors that are not taught and are stereotypical in action and similar in all members of a species.

**Judge or Evaluator -** An individual with relevant training and experience who assesses the performance of canine, handler, or team while showing no bias or partiality.

**Leaking** – This expression describes the first signs of stress in dog.

**Learned Helplessness** - When a canine understands that at some point in time, regardless of the individual ability of the canine, a handler or trainer will step in and assist the canine with the problem at hand. Canines that display this behavior will often stop and stare at the handler/trainer, shows signs of leaking, or at times try to escape the work area.

**Luring** – A method of guiding the dog through a behavior with some type of lure. Food is a common lure, and when placed in the hand can be used to manipulate the canine as needed. Other common lures include but not limited to toys, sticks, boxes, hand signals, or body movements.

**Maintenance Training** - Training conducted to sustain the current level of proficiency of a canine or canine team.

**Motivation** – ***see Drive***

**Negative Reinforcement** - A procedure in which a behavior results in the withdrawal of a stimulus and, as a result, future frequency of that behavior increases. An operant conditioning technique.

**Odor** – A vapor produced as a result of the deterioration of a material or substance that has the same chemical makeup as the source material itself. ***See also Vapor***

**Operant Conditioning** – A training technique that involves teaching consequences for actions by exposing the canine to punishers and reinforcers. For undesirable behaviors, a positive or negative punisher would result. For desireable behavior, a positive or negative reinforcer would result.

**Olfaction** – The sense of smell. The ability of a being to interpret an odor or vapor as it bonds to a receptor in the nose and sends a signal through the olfactory system.

**Passive Response-**  A type of response to a stimulus that is trained to minimize disturbance to the environment. (i.e., sit, stand, or lie quietly after the detector dog has detected a trained odor).

**Scent or Odor Plume** – The area a vapor occupies in a given environment.

**Positive Control**- A status in which the handler or trainer has full control of a canine to ensure the canine achieves success or to mitigate collaterial damage.

**Positive Reinforcement** – An operant conditioning technique use to give or deliver a desirable cue or item to increase the likelyhood of a behavior in the future.

**Prey Drive** – This is the instinctive inclination of a dog to find, pursue, and capture prey.

**Proofing** - Teaching your dog to perform a behavior in the presence of distractions or under a set number of successful repetitions.

**Punishment** - A consequence of an undesired behavior in which something is added to or removed from the situation to make the behavior less likely to occur in the future.

**Skin Rafts** – These are dead skin cells that leave the host carrying identifying vapor in the air or just falling to the ground. These vapor enshrouded rafts come to rest on the ground and continue to release scent vapors due to the bacterial activity that happens after it leaves the host.

**Rate of Reinforcement** - The number of reinforcers given for desired responses in a specific period of time.

**Reinforcer** - Anything a canine will work for to obtain.

**Release Command**- A word or cue that signals the end of a sustained behavior or position.

**Residual Odor** - Odor that originated from a substance that may or may not be physically recoverable without specialized equipment.

**Scent** – A distinct smell.

**Scent cone** – A plume of vapor or scent that consistently exists in a predictable location that expands and moves as it get further away from the host or origin.

**Shaping** - The process of teaching a dog a complex behavior by breaking it down into simple steps. The simple behaviors are trained in a gradual progression, with each new step moving the dog closer to the goal directed behavior.

**Socialization** - Is the process of preparing a dog to enjoy interactions and be comfortable with other animals, people, places and activities. **See also Environmental Training or Testing.**

**Stimulus** – A thing or event that evokes a specific functional reaction.

**Stress** – An internal or external response to physical or psychological conflict.

**Stress Signals** - Behavior and body language indicative of escalating tension and anxiety, such as barking and whining or pacing and panting. Stress signals may begin with mild avoidance and progress to more extreme anxiety and panic.

**Stimulus Control** - A behavior is under "stimulus control" when it occurs as a result of a specific signal. **See also Leaking**

**Taggant** – Nitro and Methyl compounds that vaporize rapidly and enhance the detection of plastic explosives by instrumental analysis.

**Target Odor** - Odors which are introduced to a canine to illicit a specific response.

**Temperament** – The manor in which an animal behaves. Broad classes of temperament appear to be heritable.

**Threshold** – The line between levels of stimulation where a behavior occurs in response to a stimulus. The working threshold for a dog may be defined by its training exposure. A minimum and/or maximum amount stimulation to which a dog may require to react.

**Track or Trail** - The place or pathway odor is left behind by a quarry or target material.

**Tracking** - The propensity or learned ability of a canine to methodically follow odor on the ground (human/ground disturbance) **using only olfactory senses**.

**Trainability** – A canines ability to learn through conditioning, exposure, and training.

**K9 Trainer/K9 Instructor** - Any canine professional who is in a situation of instructing any part of the canine or canine team using established methods and validated training guidelines. Usually validated by a certification or pre-requisust of experience.

**Training/Maintenance Log/Record** - A record used to document the training, deployment, or experiences of a canine, handler, or canine team.

**Variable Reward Schedule**- A variance in the amount of time or frequency a canine is given a reinforcer. The introduction to the concept of “maybe”.

**Vapor Pressure** - The natural release of odor from a target substance

**Vegetative Odor** – Released particles from vegetation.

**Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC)** – Gases emmited from certain solids or liquids that typically have high vapor pressure and low water solubility and in some cases have adverse health effects. Some target materials contain VOC’s.