

INTERNATIONAL LIFE SAVING FEDERATION

World Water Safety

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CANINE (K9) WATER RESCUE TEAM CERTIFICATE

Minimum Recommended Competencies

A Canine (K9) water rescue team consists of a dog, who successfully completed a formal training programme in K9 water rescue and a handler. The dog and the handler work as a unit assigned to protect the life and safety on surf, non-surf and still water beaches and at lakes or rivers. The K9 water rescue team will be annually re-assessed by the country's responsible body.

The certificate is specified to recognise only one handler and one unique dog, which has been individually trained by the handler to attain the recognition as a "ILS certificate K9 water rescue team."

The following is an outline of minimum competencies recommended by the International Life Saving Federation for an operative K9 water rescue team. The ILS recognises that many of its Member Organisations have varying standards, which may exceed these minimum competencies, given that circumstances differentiate between each country.

ILS encourages the highest possible standards in lifesaving, and merely provides the following as recommended minimum competencies.

Prerequisites

The prerequisites for the handler for course attendance are as follows:

- Minimum of 18 years of age.
- Member of the National Federation or a recognised federation by that National Federation.
- Being the owner or trainer of the canine qualifying for K9 Water rescue team.
- Being in the possession of a wetsuit and fins for the handler and a floating device for the K9 with sufficient buoyancy that guaranty a floating position when in the water.

The prerequisites for the canine for course attendance are as follows:

- Training with the handler on a regular base in the water.
- A healthy body weight minimum of 30kg and minimum aged 12 months.
- Up to date in required vaccinations of the country and microchip or tattoo identification.
- In appropriate health (an annual health certificate from the veterinary).
- Of good temperament around people, dogs, animals, places and a very strong non-aggressive attitude of the dog

All learning Outcomes in an open water environment are with wetsuit/flotation and harness for K9. If the handler doesn't wear a wetsuit, he must be equipped with a lifejacket.

Learning Outcome 1: Perform water-based skills in an open water environment.

Assessment Criteria:

1. Handler swims 400 meters using fins and towed or swim side by side with the K9, the handler may support the K9 by using the fins and holding the K9 harness on both side.
2. Handler support the dog above water for at least 2 minutes.
3. Handler runs 200 – 300 meters along the beach (one or two stops may be ordered) and perform a side by side swim with K9 for minimum 100 meters.

Learning Outcome 2: Demonstrate combined rescue without equipment in an open water environment.

Assessment Criteria:

Perform combined rescue technique in the following sequence:

1. Lifesaving entry with K9 side by side (slide entry, wading, jumps, swim); then,
2. Perform rescue of conscious, non-difficult victim, that is minimum of 100m away from shore.
3. Lifesaving entry with K9 side by side (slide entry, wading, jumping, swim); then, perform rescue of unconscious victim floating at surface level victim that is minimum of 50m away from shore.

Learning Outcome 3: Simulate the use of land-based rescue skills.

Assessment Criteria:

1. Lift unconscious patient and transport them over a minimum distance of 25m from water edge using a recognised patient transport technique (technique available in your country first aid instructions).
2. Know the right procedures to contact the emergency service into his/her country.

Learning Outcome 4: Perform emergency response techniques including resuscitation and first aid techniques.

Assessment Criteria:

1. Perform basic patient management techniques including:
 - Diagnosis/check for dangers (including environment, handler, victim, K9 and crowd control), reaction, airways, breathing and circulation (DRABC), lateral position and patient rollover, call for help.
2. Perform resuscitation techniques including:
 - EAR (adult, child, infant), CPR (adult, child, infant), One-person CPR operation
3. Perform resuscitation techniques including:
 - EAR K9 – one-person CPR K9.
4. Identify and perform first aid techniques for managing injury and emergency including: patient management
5. Identify and managing injuries (i.e. shock, fractures, arterial and venal bleeding, spinal injury, etc.).
6. Use of appropriate rescue and first aid equipment

7. The K9 must stand-by and wait, calmly and attentively, for further direction from handler and not interfere with any part of the emergency medical aid operation.

Learning Outcome 5: Demonstrate combined rescue without equipment in an open water environment of two victims.

Assessment Criteria:

Perform combined rescue technique in the following sequence:

1. Lifesaving entry with K9 side by side (slide entry, wading, swim); then, perform rescue of two conscious victims (one is doing difficult) who are a minimum of 100 m away from shore and at least 50 meters apart from each other.
2. Lifesaving entry with K9 side by side (slide entry, wading, swim); then, perform rescue of a conscious and an unconscious victim who are a minimum of 50 m away from shore and at least 50 meters apart from each other. The unconscious victim may wear gloves.

Learning Outcome 6: Demonstrate combined rescue with equipment in an open water environment.

Assessment Criteria:

Perform combined rescue technique in the following sequence:

1. Lifesaving entry with K9 side by side (slide entry, wading, jumps, swim); then, perform rescue of conscious victim that is minimum 100m away from shore using a rescue tool (fins, rescue tube, rescue board, life jacket, floating rope, etc.).
2. Lifesaving entry with K9 side by side (slide entry, wading, swim); then, perform rescue of unconscious victim that is minimum of 50m away from shore, using a rescue tool (fins, rescue tube, rescue board, life jacket, floating rope, etc.).

Learning Outcome 7: Towing a boat and a drifting boat.

Assessment Criteria:

1. Towing a boat (minimum 70kg boat with one person on board) minimum 100 meters to the handler. The canine may either pull the boat by mouth or the rope may be attached to its flotation device.
2. Towing an empty drifting craft for a minimum of 60 meters. Craft to be defined here after as a rescue boat or similar which is used by a member organization for rescue purposes.

Learning Outcome 8: Rescuing a person in distress by bringing up a floating device or rope by K9

Assessment Criteria:

1. The K9 will take a floating device, floating rope, life jacket or a rescue tube, on its own to a conscious victim in distress from a distance of 50 meters. K9 tow the person back to shore or the handler may tow the victim in if long floating rope was used.

Learning Outcome 8: Demonstrate the use of a craft for rescue purposes. (Only K9 handler with a RESCUE BOAT DRIVER CERTIFICATE may use outboard engine propelled rescue crafts)

Assessment Criteria:

1. Demonstrate the use of a craft for rescue purposes.
2. K9 must swim around boat till the victim is on board and the handler take the K9 in the boat.
3. Handler will pull the canine into boat with ease and without any help at the end of the rescue attempt.

Assessment Strategy

These learning outcomes are best assessed using the following common assessment methods:

- Observation by a recognised instructor of the country's National Federation or recognised federation by the latter.
- Execution and complete of the learning outcomes without failure.

Range of Variables

There are a number of variables that will affect the performance and the assessment of the Learning Outcomes. These may include:

Safety of the K9

A "call off" can be made by the handler to the K9 for protection of K9 or the victim, the person does not need to be rescued anymore or the situation has changed, and the dog must quit the action immediately and return to the handler.

Facilities

- Facilities and use of inland-open water aquatic locations. Sea side beaches could be used when waves are not too high.
- Conditions of the venue.
- Identification of equipment that is available for use at that location.

Dress

Candidates may be required to wear their recognised uniform; long shirt and pants or short shirt and pants during the assessment. When conditions require a wet suit and fins may be used, the same as goggles, diving masks and lifejacket.

The K9 will be equipped with a proper floating rescue jacket specially designed for canine. The floating device must be able to keep the K9 floating in all circumstances.

Candidates

Candidates will be able to perform a rescue operation.

Resources

ILS member organisations will list and identify the use of theoretical and practical resources available to them.