

AS 5350.2:2022



Privately contracted security and detection dogs

Part 2: Training and certification of dogs and handlers



AS 5350.2:2022

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- Australian Security Industry Association
- Australian Veterinary Association
- Australian Working Dog Alliance
- RSPCA Australia
- Security Providers Association of Australia

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Part 2: Training and certification of dogs and handlers

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Preface

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee MB-029, Private Security and Detection Dogs.

The inclusion of roles and responsibilities in AS 5350.2:2022 was approved by the Standards Development and Accreditation Committee (SDAC) on 6 May 2021 as a one-off exemption to the directives of Standardization Guide 006, Rules for the structure and drafting of Australian Standards.

The objective of this document is to specify minimum requirements for the training and certification of security dogs and handlers.

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The terms “normative” and “informative” are used in Standards to define the application of the appendices to which they apply. A “normative” appendix is an integral part of a Standard, whereas an “informative” appendix is only for information and guidance.

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Australian Standard®

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Part 2: Training and certification of dogs and handlers

Section 1 Scope and general

1.1 Scope

This document specifies the minimum requirements for the training and certification of security dogs and handlers. In this document, security dogs (detection) includes both biosecurity detection dogs (BDD) and explosive detection dogs (EDD).

Specifically, this document is intended to —

- (a) prescribe the level of competency that a qualified handler is expected to achieve;
- (b) provide a method for assessing the current competence of a handler with prior qualification or training;

NOTE Evaluation may be undertaken by a person competent ([1.5.3](#)) in canine training or an employer.
- (c) provide minimum requirements for a training facility in the development of a training course;
- (d) be used by certification agencies to assess training provided to a handler; and
- (e) be used to assess and certify security dog facilities that deliver the training.

This document aims to raise the standard of training for security dogs (detection) so they are better equipped for deployment in tactical areas such as counter terrorism. Specific training components are suggested in this document to assist in reducing the number of poorly trained or untrained, dangerous and ineffective dogs in security roles.

This document does not apply to —

- (i) security dogs that are deployed without supervision; or
- (ii) dogs deployed for conservation detection work.

1.2 Application

This document is intended for use by handlers and training facilities for security and detection dogs.

1.3 Normative references

The following document is referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of its content constitutes requirements of this document.

NOTE Documents for informative purposes are listed in the Bibliography

AS 5350.1, *Privately contracted security and detection dogs, Part 1: Acquisition, welfare, training, deployment and retirement*

1.4 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

1.5.1

biosecurity detection

detection of identified odours through the deployment of a detection dog

Note 1 to entry: Biosecurity detection is used to manage risks to human, animal and plant life and associated risk for the environment.

1.5.2

biosecurity detection dog

BDD

detection dog trained specifically to detect biosecurity odours

See also *security dog (detection)* ([1.5.13.1](#))

1.5.3

competent person

person who has acquired, through education, training, qualification or experience or a combination of these, the knowledge and skill enabling that person to perform the task required

Note 1 to entry: Each jurisdiction may have its own regulatory requirements regarding training and qualifications.

1.5.4

cross-contamination

transfer of contaminants from one surface or component to another

Note 1 to entry: Transfer can occur by migration along a surface, by physical contact, airborne as an aerosol, or as a gas or molecular matter.

[SOURCE: ISO 15388:2012(en), 3.1.21]

1.5.5

distractor

non-target odour used to teach a dog to differentiate between the target odour and another

Note 1 to entry: A distractor may be used —

- (a) environmentally, to minimize the level of distraction that of a dog displays, e.g. meat in a supermarket; or
- (b) operationally, to train a dog to ignore odours used to mask or used in a hide placement during training, e.g. latex gloves or human scent.

1.5.6

element of competency

discretely identifiable action or knowledge that can be demonstrated or assessed

Note 1 to entry: Elements are basic building blocks of the *unit of competency* ([1.5.18](#)), which identify a skill or skill set that specify the critical outcomes to be achieved in demonstrating competence.

1.5.7

enrichment

<working dogs> complex social, physical and sensory stimulation offering a significant positive effect on behaviour, physiology and overall wellbeing

Note 1 to entry: This has particular application for working dogs housed in kennel environments.

1.5.8

explosive detection dog

EDD

detection dog trained specifically to detect explosive odours

See also *security dog (detection)* ([1.5.13.1](#))

1.5.9**handler**

competent person ([1.5.3](#)) who cares for, trains and is deployed with a *security dog* ([1.5.13](#)) or a *security dog (detection)* ([1.5.13.1](#))

1.5.10**indication**

distinct and consistent change in behaviour displayed by the dog to communicate the presence of a target odour

EXAMPLE 1 (Passive) Freeze and stare, sit, and down.

EXAMPLE 2 (Active) Barking or scratching at the source of the target odour.

1.5.11**may**

indicates the existence of an option

1.5.12**performance criteria**

level of performance and knowledge required to demonstrate achievement of competency

1.5.13**security dog**

dog trained and deployed to provide security

1.5.13.1**security dog (detection)**

dog trained and deployed to provide security by detecting odours or explosive devices

See *biosecurity detection dog* ([1.5.2](#))

See *explosive detection dog* ([1.5.8](#))

Note 1 to entry: Odours include both biosecurity and explosive scents.

1.5.14**shall**

indicates that a statement is mandatory

1.5.15**should**

indicates a recommendation

1.5.16**soak time**

length of time a hide placement with odour has been positioned to give off scent

1.5.17**trace contamination**

residual odour or trace elements settling on or around the contained element

1.5.18**unit of competency**

outline of the skills, knowledge and practical application requirements necessary for effectively operating as a security dog handler

1.5 Certification

Persons requiring certification to this document shall meet all elements of competency and performance criteria specified in this document for the level of certification being sought.

A team (dog and handler) trained in accordance with this document may receive certification through —

- (a) a training facility that is an Australian registered training organization (RTO);
- (b) a person competent in the assessment of dogs and handlers
- (c) a government organization that delivers security dog training in accordance with this document; or
- (d) a relevant regulatory authority.

Section 2 Training

2.1 General

Training shall be undertaken by persons competent ([1.5.3](#)) in canine training.

On completion of initial training and quarterly thereafter, a handler and security dog shall be examined as a team.

Training shall reflect operational conditions including, where possible, access to real target odours for security dogs (detection).

Security dogs and handlers shall not be required to undertake training —

- (a) without 20 min rest periods for each 20 min deployment or training exercise; or
- (b) in environments that are not conducive to the health, safety and welfare of a dog or a handler.

A dog may have multiple handlers and any one handler may work with more than one dog. So that their competence as a team can be assessed, each dog and handler combination shall be assessed together and not individually.

2.2 Training and handling methods

Training methods for dogs shall be reward-based. Aversive techniques or equipment shall not be used when training dogs.

Training and handling methods shall —

- (a) positively reinforce a dog's natural instincts;
- (b) be conducted humanely;
- (c) not cause injury, suffering or distress to a dog; and
- (d) gradually introduce the dog to new working conditions and environments to allow for change in routine and minimize stress.

Standard operating procedures (SOPs) shall be developed for training by a person competent ([1.5.3](#)) in canine training to minimize injury, suffering or distress to the dog and to optimize the positive mental state of the dog.

2.3 Workplace induction training

In addition to basic training, when a handler is employed, they should undertake workplace induction training that includes an introduction to the working environment and the provision of policies and procedures for the role.

Workplace induction training shall be provided by a security dog training facility.

2.4 Training records

2.4.1 General

A training policy for all security dogs and for people seeking competency in handling security dogs shall be documented and contain clearly defined objectives and outcomes.

Training records shall be kept for all security dogs and for people undertaking training in security dog handling.

All training records shall be signed or acknowledged electronically by both the person competent in canine training (1.5.3) and the handler. These records shall be made available to the handler for review and stored centrally upon completion of each training session. Copies of these records should be kept by both the person competent (1.5.3) in canine training and the handler, for transparency and traceability of the dog's training history.

These training records should accompany the dog when the dog is retired or rehomed.

NOTE Refer to AS 5350.1 for information on the retirement and rehoming of dogs.

2.4.2 Training session records for dogs

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The following shall be recorded for each security dog at every training session:

- (a) Date, time and location of training.
- (b) Name of handler.
- (c) Name and microchip number of the security dog.
- (d) Name of person competent (1.5.3) in canine training.
- (e) Training aides used.
- (f) Record of hides.
- (g) Record of indications (1.5.10).
- (h) Length of training session.
- (i) Type of training e.g. location or concealment, open area or bush.
- (j) Environmental and climatic conditions present;
- (k) Performance of the team.
- (l) Any identified deficiencies.
- (m) An action plan to rectify any identified deficiencies.

[SOURCE: BS 8517-2:2016 Clause 8.10.1, modified.]

2.4.3 Training session records for handlers

The following shall be recorded for each security dog handler at every training session:

- (a) Name.
- (b) Employment status.
- (c) Initial training records and documentation.
- (d) Training review records.
- (e) Continuation training records.
- (f) Incident reports.
- (g) Complaints relating to a handler's conduct.
- (h) Acknowledgement of the code of conduct.

Following training, only a team determined to be operationally competent shall be deployed.

2.5 Elements of competency

The competencies required for certification as a security dog or security dog handler are grouped into units of competency ([1.5.18](#)), which are further broken down into elements ([1.5.6](#)). These elements describe what the dogs or handlers need to be able to do on completion of training.

The elements of competency can be classified broadly into two groups, as follows:

- (a) Elements that develop in a handler a familiarity with handling skills, equipment, work health and safety, and broader context of the roles and responsibilities of a security dog handler.
- (b) Elements that are beyond those necessary to become certified as a security dog or handler. These elements should be covered by continuation training programs to maintain and advance the knowledge and skills of the dog or the handler or both, see [Section 10](#).

Security dogs and handlers shall demonstrate proficiency in the elements of competency before being issued a certificate of competence or similar qualification.

2.6 Accredited units of competency

The units of competency are shown in [Table 2.1](#).

Table 2.1 — Accredited units of competency

Unit	Unit of competency	Clause
Initial practical assessment for handlers		
1	Provide basic care of domestic dogs (ACMSPE304)	3.2
2	Manage training and well-being of security dogs (CPPSEC3112)	3.3
3	Assist with conditioning animals (ACMGAS206)	3.4
4	Handle dogs for security patrols (CPPSEC3113)	3.5
5	Deploy detector dog (PSPBDR303)	3.6

All new security dog handlers shall undergo an initial training course from an RTO.

NOTE An example of a relevant training authority is the Australian Skills Qualification Authority (ASQA).

Upon completion of the initial training units, handlers should receive a statement of attainment in either security dog operations or security dog operations (detection). A copy of the statement of attainment should also be able to be provided upon request.

2.7 Unaccredited units of competency

Additional units of competency are shown in [Table 2.2](#).

Table 2.2 — Unaccredited units of competency

Unit	Unit of competency	Clause
Security dog welfare and management		
6	Health and safety risk assessment	4.2
7	Daily physical examination and grooming	4.3
8	Handler training in canine first aid	4.4
9	Load, transport and unload security dogs	4.5
General training for handlers of security dogs		

Table 2.2 (continued)

Unit	Unit of competency	Clause
10	Theoretical knowledge of security dog handling	5.2
11	Heelwork	5.3
12	Recall	5.4
13	Distance control — down command with handler in sight	5.5
14	Emergency stop	5.6
15	Speak on command	5.7
16	Steadiness to noise	5.8
17	External patrol	5.9
18	Internal patrol	5.10
19	Protection work (arrest)	5.11
20	Protection work (weapon attack)	5.12
21	Searching for property	5.13
22	Searching for person(s)	5.14
23	Unauthorized entry or egress of premises	5.15
General training for handlers of security dogs (detection)		
24	Operational management	6.2
25	Progression of training	6.3
26	Lead manners	6.4
27	Emergency stop and recall	6.5
28	Preparation prior to deployment	6.6
Training for handlers of biosecurity detection dogs		
29	Locating identified odour — open terrain or area search	7.2
30	Indication of identified odour — open terrain or area search	7.3
31	Locating identified odour — vehicle or vessel search	7.4
32	Indication of identified odour — vehicle or vessel search	7.5
33	Safe systematic search — open terrain, area vehicle or vessel search	7.6
34	Scent identification test	7.7
Training for handlers of explosive detection dogs		
34	Scent identification test	8.2/7.7
35	Scent awareness	8.3
36	Locating — building search	8.4
37	Locating — vehicle search	8.5
38	Locating — open terrain or area search	8.6
39	Indication of explosive devices — building search	8.7
40	Indication of explosive devices — vehicle search	8.8
41	Indication of explosive devices — open terrain or area search	8.9
42	Safe systematic search	8.10
Training in freight screening using explosive detection dogs		
43	Freight screening training requirements for an EDD team	9.2
44	Freight screening training requirements for an EDD	9.3
45	Freight screening training requirements for an EDD handler	9.4
46	Training conditions for EDD teams deployed to screen freight	9.5
47	Operational requirements for an EDD team to screen freight	9.6

Section 3 Units of competency: Initial practical assessment for handlers

3.1 General

Initial training for handlers includes both practical and theoretical components. On completion of units 1 to 5, a handler should be competent in providing care for dogs including managing the health and welfare of security dogs, conditioning and monitoring their behaviour, and be competent in handling and controlling security dogs or security dogs (detection) during operational deployment.

3.2 Unit 1 — Provide basic care of domestic dogs (ACMSPE304)

3.2.1 General

This unit of competency provides the elements and performance criteria for identification of behavioural and physical needs of dogs and the provision of daily care to dogs by their handler.

NOTE 1 ACMSPE304 is a nationally recognized unit of competency under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

NOTE 2 See [Appendix A](#) for a handler's duty of care for dogs.

3.2.2 Elements of competency and performance criteria

The competency of handlers shall be assessed using the criteria set out in [Table 3.1](#).

Table 3.1 — Provide basic care of domestic dogs

Element of competency		Performance criteria
3.1.1	Identify commonly available dog breeds	Define a profile of dog breeds commonly held within the facility, including appearance, nutrition, health and behavioural characteristics. Physical characteristics are described using industry terminology. Security dogs are identified using industry specific terminology. Breed, colours, markings and other identifying features are defined, interpreted and documented.
3.1.2	Identify and appraise behavioural and housing requirements	Indicators of dog comfort and normal behaviour are identified and signs of distressed security dogs are recognized and reported to the person competent in canine supervision (1.5.3)^a. Enrichment needs of specific dogs are identified^b.
3.1.3	Handle and restrain security dogs	Methods used to handle and restrain dogs shall minimize risks to the handler and stress to the dog^c. Appropriate equipment to restrain and handle security dogs is identified and utilized. Security dogs are approached and restrained in a manner which optimizes their welfare.
3.1.4	Assist with health care needs	Signs of good health in security dogs are identified and recorded in the dog's health and treatment records. Common health issues are identified and signs of disease or other conditions are reported to the person competent in canine supervision (1.5.3). General health maintenance and preventative treatment procedures are identified and implemented in consultation with the person competent in canine supervision (1.5.3)^d.

Table 3.1 (continued)

Element of competency		Performance criteria
		Options for activity and enrichment are identified, the impact upon the security dog's health is determined and as directed by the person competent in canine supervision (1.5.3), these options are implemented.
3.1.5	Feeding security dogs	Digestive system features are identified and related to dog-specific feeding routines and diets. Preferred food sources are identified and samples are appraised for quality and suitability. Potential feeding hazards are identified and risk control options are defined. Feed is prepared in accordance with dietary needs. Feed is distributed. Consumption, including abnormalities, is reported according to workplace routines.
3.1.6	Maintain records for feeding, treatment and transport	Complete feed and treatment records, noting food consumption. Report abnormalities to person competent in canine supervision (1.5.3). Complete documentation relevant to licences and transport, where required^e.
a State building codes for housing design, environmental factors and stocking densities may have additional requirements for the housing needs of dogs. b Welfare legislation may have additional requirements for current animal housing designs, such as enrichment requirements. c Work, health and safety legislation may have additional requirements for risks associated with handling and restraining security dogs. d Regulatory authorities may have additional requirements for maintenance and preventative treatment of dogs. e Workplace procedures and legislation may require documentation on the transport, care and management of security dogs.		

3.3 Unit 2 — Manage training and well-being of dogs for security functions (CPPSEC3112)

3.3.1 General

This unit of competency provides the elements and performance criteria to manage the training and well-being of dogs used for security functions.

NOTE 1 CPPSEC3112 is a nationally recognized unit of competency under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

NOTE 2 See [Appendix A](#) for a handler's duty of care for dogs.

3.3.2 Elements of competency and performance criteria

The competency of handlers shall be assessed using the criteria set out in [Table 3.2](#).

The following table is reproduced from the Property Services Training Package with permission of the Commonwealth of Australia (as represented by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment).

Table 3.2 — Manage training and well-being of dogs for security functions

Element of competency		Performance criteria
3.2.1	Select dog for security role	Review workplace procedures and policies including WHS for compliance with legal rights and responsibilities when managing security dogs. Identify and assess needs of security dog and handler team. Inspect appropriate canine breeds and select suitable dog to meet security role. Check dog's health and training records and confirm suitability for security role.
3.2.2	Develop dog and handler training maintenance plan	Develop a tailored training maintenance program to address the unique needs, strengths and weaknesses of the security dog and handler team. Schedule training to meet priority needs within an agreed timeframe. Update training plan to meet changing needs of security dog and handler team.
3.2.3	Implement dog and handler maintenance training	Demonstrate dog handling techniques which minimize risk to self, others and dog. Select and use suitable protective clothing and equipment and training aids. Conduct maintenance training according to schedule and timeframes. Assess the security dog's response to training and adjust methods to achieve team performance objectives. Complete training records using workplace documentation.
3.2.4	Maintain dog's health and well-being	Monitor security dog's health and condition and immediately address identified needs and problems in consultation with relevant persons. Administer preventive health treatments and maintain a diet that meets security dog's nutritional requirements. Maintain security dog at a high level of fitness. Clean and maintain security dog's facilities and equipment to the required standard.

[SOURCE: DESE, *Property Services Training Package*, CPPSEC3112 — Manage Training and Well-Being of Dogs for Security Function.]

3.4 Unit 3 — Condition animal behaviour (ACMBEH404)

3.4.1 General

This unit of competency provides the elements and performance criteria to condition dogs in order to modify their behaviour by assisting with formulating and demonstrating a conditioning plan. The plan should be based on conditioning techniques such as reinforcing or inhibiting behaviours.

NOTE 1 ACMBEH404 is a nationally recognized unit of competency under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

NOTE 2 See [Appendix A](#) for a handler's duty of care for dogs.

3.4.2 Elements of competency and performance criteria

The competency of handlers shall be assessed using the criteria set out in [Table 3.3](#).

The following table is reproduced from the Animal Care and Management Training Package with permission of the Commonwealth of Australia (as represented by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment).

Table 3.3 — Assist with conditioning animals

Element of competency		Performance criteria
3.3.1	Develop a conditioning plan	Identify a range of desirable and undesirable behaviours for a variety of dogs. Identify behaviours that require conditioning for a specific breed. Identify appropriate positive reinforcers specific to the breed being trained. Identify and establish a conditioned reinforcer appropriate for the breed and behaviour to be conditioned. Develop a written plan for each behaviour to be conditioned according to current, best practice positive reinforcement information.
3.3.2	Condition a desirable behaviour using low stress handling techniques	Assess risks, conform with safety and infection control procedures and use personal protective equipment. Identify signs of stress prior to and during the conditioning process. Implement the approximations required to condition a dog for a specific behaviour. Confirm that the behaviour is under stimulus control in different environments or housing locations. Modify approximations when signs of stress are identified during the conditioning process. Confirm that the conditioning process meets animal welfare principles and ethics requirements.
3.3.3	Monitor and review a conditioning plan	Review the short- and long-term objectives of the conditioning plan in consultation with relevant personnel. Update the conditioning plan incorporating reasonable expectations of the dog's abilities. Maintain records of behaviour being conditioned.
3.3.4	Demonstrate positive reinforcement techniques to others	Prepare information on positive reinforcement conditioning and explain it to stakeholders. Demonstrate the process for conditioning a secondary reinforcer and how it is applied in the conditioning process. Respond to queries from stakeholders on the conditioning process. Prepare information on signs of animal stress and how to minimize this in conditioning programs, and explain this to stakeholders.

[SOURCE: DESE, *Animal Care and Management Training Package*, ACMBEH404 — Condition animal behaviour]

3.5 Unit 4 — Handle dogs for security patrols (CPPSEC3113)

3.5.1 General

This unit of competency provides the elements and performance criteria to handle dogs while conducting a security patrol.

A security patrol dog shall be assessed on lead at all times except for emergency recalls which may be assessed off lead.

NOTE 1 CPPSEC3113 is a nationally recognized unit of competency under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

NOTE 2 See [Appendix B](#) for a handler's operational deployment duties.

3.5.2 Elements of competency and performance criteria

The competency of handlers shall be assessed using the criteria set out in [Table 3.4](#).

The following table is reproduced from the Property Services Training Package with permission of the Commonwealth of Australia (as represented by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment).

Table 3.4 — Handle dogs for security patrols

Element of competency		Performance criteria
3.4.1	Prepare for patrol with security dog	Review workplace procedures and policies for compliance with legal rights and responsibilities when handling dog during security patrol. Interpret work instructions and clarify patrol requirements with relevant persons. Confirm the security dog is suitable and trained to meet patrol requirements. Check health, hygiene and stability of dog, and take required remedial action where signs of poor health or abnormal behaviour are detected in accordance with animal welfare requirements. Organize and use personal protective equipment (PPE) and handling aids in accordance with workplace requirements.
3.4.2	Conduct patrol with security dog	Carry out patrol tasks with security dog using safe handling methods. Handle security dog in a manner that minimises risk of injury to the dog, self and members of the public. Monitor and maintain dog's operating efficiency and well-being throughout patrol.
3.4.3	Identify and respond to security threat	Apply general safety procedures to handle dogs, both leashed and unleashed in a security work environment. Identify security threat and assess degree of risk to persons, property and premises. Assess the threat situation to determine appropriate use of the dog as a security measure and implement response. Check personal safety needs and seek assistance as required. Apply hold, release and arrest procedures to apprehend intruder, ensuring minimal risk of injury to the dog, members of the public and self. Adjust or discontinue response promptly to meet changing circumstances while maintaining control of dog. Promptly attend to injuries to persons or the dog, and seek assistance from relevant persons as required. Record patrol and response details using documentation in accordance with workplace requirements.

[SOURCE: DESE, *Property Services Training Package*, CPPSEC3113 — Handle Dogs for Security Patrols.]

3.6 Unit 5 — Deploy detector dog (PSPBDR003)

3.6.1 General

This unit of competency provides the elements and performance criteria to use and deploy a security dog for detection.

NOTE 1 PSPBDR003 is a nationally recognized unit of competency under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

NOTE 2 See [Appendix B](#) for a handler's operational deployment duties.

NOTE 3 Refer to AS 5350.1 for information on the operational deployment of security dogs.

3.6.2 Elements of competency and performance criteria

The competency of handlers shall be assessed using the criteria set out in [Table 3.5](#).

The following table is reproduced from the Public Sector Training Package with permission of the Commonwealth of Australia (as represented by the Department of Education, Skills and Employment).

Table 3.5 — Deploy detector dog

Element of competency		Performance criteria
3.5.1	Select and apply a search methodology	Choose an approach that maximizes the potential outcome of the search. Identify likely risks. Identify the most appropriate method for deploying the dog, taking into account the task and situation.
3.5.2	Deploy the detector dog	Deploy the detector dog in accordance with planned search methodology. Manage risks in accordance with risk management policies and guidelines.
3.5.3	Conduct follow up search activities	Identify and manage ongoing risks to achieve identified outcomes. Question persons of interest.
3.5.4	Maintain records	Collect, collate and exchange information relating to searches with other personnel. Maintain contemporaneous notes. Complete documentation accurately and in a timeframe that meets legislative and organizational requirements.
3.5.5	Gather and report information	Use initiative to identify possible information. Record relevant information accurately. Report information to relevant personnel accurately.
3.5.6	Receive and act upon feedback	Seek feedback on search processes. Improve processes and approach based upon assessment of feedback received.

[SOURCE: DESE, Public Sector Training Package, PSPBDR003 — Deploy Detector Dogs.]