

ROLL CALL TRAINING ONLINE

Deployment Period 11 - 2019

DRAFT

TOPIC: Specialized
SUBJECT: Gang and Narcotics Division Bloodhound Squad
PREPARED BY: Gang and Narcotics Division, (323) 226-1516
REFERENCES: Manual Section 4/212.70

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE

Officers will know the capabilities of and the criteria for requesting Gang and Narcotics (GND) K-9 Unit Bloodhound Squad for tracking.

INTRODUCTION

The Gang and Narcotics Division (GND) Bloodhound K-9 Unit Bloodhound Squad can assist officers in the field in a variety of situations that include:

- Locating or providing the direction of travel of a suspect or missing person
- Identifying suspects with scent evidence obtained at crime scenes
- Assist with the investigation of an unoccupied vehicle that is left at scene by providing investigative leads
- Leading officers/investigators to areas or residences frequented by the suspect or lost person.

Scent Evidence

The human body sheds approximately 50,000 skin cells an hour. These skin cells, or “scruff,” are invisible to the naked eye, but provide the scent the bloodhound is trained to follow. A person’s scent/scruff is as unique as their fingerprint. The bloodhound was the first dog specifically bred for superior scent capabilities. The breed can follow scent trails that are aged for extended periods of time. Aged trails are dependent upon environmental factors including weather and terrain. Bloodhounds have been proven reliable in court.

Responding officers should avoid contact with any scent evidence while preserving it for collection. Bloodhound handlers who have been trained in scent collection will collect and package the scent evidence. Scent evidence is commonly collected onto sterile gauze pads from anything the subject has sat on, touched, held, stood on, or occupied. Scent evidence can also be collected from bodily fluids such as blood, semen, and saliva. All scent evidence, including gauze pads, will be delivered to the investigating officer for later use in court proceedings.

When bloodhound K-9 is requested as soon as the need arises, there is a chance of capturing the scent of the person sought. The scent remains viable for a limited time depending on various atmospheric and environmental conditions. Scent, especially human scent, is fleeting. There are three primary environmental factors that deteriorate scent: time, heat, and wind. The best search conditions for the use of a bloodhound include a minimal amount of time has elapsed, cool and/or damp weather, no breeze, with little or no pedestrian or vehicle traffic.

Scenario

Officers respond to an attack just occurred. Before the victim is transported for medical treatment, she describes the suspect and his clothing. She also tells the officers that she scratched the suspect during the attack and has some of his blood on her fingers.

During a search of the area for the suspect and/or evidence the officers locate a baseball cap and gloves that matches the suspect's clothing description.

Should the officers collect the cap and glove for evidence?

No. The officers should leave the potential scent items (baseball cap, glove) untouched and isolated to avoid contamination, and request the GND K-9 Bloodhound Squad. A GND K-9 supervisor is available 24-hours per day, seven days per week through the Department Operations Center (DOC) at (213) 484-6700.

Requesting Officer Responsibilities

There are two mandatory requirements for the activation of the Bloodhound Squad:

1. A scent article
2. The specific location where the subject was last seen

Officers should identify a scent article and protect it, but not contaminate the item. For instance, if the item is a piece of clothing, leave it where it is found and do not allow anyone to touch or move it.

Officers should be prepared to work the trail with the Bloodhound Squad. The on-scene GND K-9 supervisor has final discretion as to the utilization and deployment of the bloodhound squad. The bloodhound handler is always "reading" the dog and will need cover officers for safety. The number of officers working with the bloodhound team depends on the crime and/or situation. If searching for a suspect known to be armed, a tactical contact team will be assembled for the safety of the bloodhound team and apprehension of the suspect. The on-scene GND K-9 supervisor will communicate their resource needs to sufficiently cover the bloodhound team.

Assisting officers must be alert to eliminate various hazards such as traffic, pedestrians, and stray animals. The officers must keep the handler aware of the surroundings and ensure his/her safety. The bloodhound is not an aggressive dog. It will not warn officers

of the close proximity of a suspect, nor is it trained to bite. The team can stop on the trail to allow area searches by officers or metro canines, or to cross busy streets, but these delays should be limited to ensure a successful conclusion.

Scenario

Officers respond to a report of a missing person (MP). They meet with the staff of an adult care facility who report that an 87-year-old resident walked away from the location the prior morning. Twenty-eight hours have elapsed since the MP left. The MP needs to take medications every 12 hours. The call is now a critical missing. The officers ask the staff for the MP's belongings. A staff member hands them a bed sheet that had been taken from the MP's bed and placed into the communal hamper with soiled sheets from other residents. The officers ask where the MP left the facility. The staff advise the officers that the building's surveillance system is not working and there are eight exits that lead out to five different streets, two of which are major thoroughfares. The officers decide to drive around and look for the MP before notifying the GND K-9 Bloodhound Squad. After two hours of searching they contact the Bloodhound Squad and request their assistance.

Did the Bloodhound Squad respond? Why?

The Bloodhound Squad did not respond due to the following issues:

- The amount of time that had elapsed.
- The last known location was not specific.
- The large building had eight exits and it was unknown which one the MP left through.
- The bed sheet (scent article) was contaminated as it was mixed with other laundry, and handled by staff and the officers.

CONCLUSION

The Gang and Narcotics Division Bloodhound K-9 is trained to trail a single person's unique scent. The bloodhound and handler can be another resource for officers and investigators to utilize during their criminal and non-criminal investigations. When the bloodhound K-9 is requested as soon as the need arises, the better the chance of capturing the scent of the person sought.

To request the response of a Department bloodhound during working hours call the GND K-9 Office at (213) 486-5371. To request the response of a Department bloodhound during off hours and weekends call Department Operation Center, at (213) 484-6700.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are the three primary environmental factors that deteriorate scent?
 - Time
 - Heat
 - Wind

2. What are the two mandatory requirements for the activation of the Bloodhound team?
 - A scent article
 - The specific location where the subject was last seen

3. A Bloodhound Squad may be used as a resource to locate the suspect and/or additional evidence if an unarmed felony suspect drops a hat and there is not an established perimeter. Yes or No
 - Yes

4. Officers respond to a missing person (MP) investigation. Their investigation reveals that the MP is deemed critical. When should the officers request GND Bloodhound?

Answer: Call GND Bloodhounds as soon as practically possible.