



Skills England

Standard Draft Preview

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Standard in development L3: Detection and protection working dog specialist Version 2.0

Title of occupation

Detection and protection working dog specialist

UOS reference number

ST1298

Core and options

No

Level of occupation

Level 3

Occupational maps data

Route: Agriculture, environmental and animal care

Pathway: Animal Care and Management

Cluster: Animal care and welfare assistant

Typical duration of apprenticeship

24 months

Minimum hours for compliance

418 hours

Target date for approval

31/12/2024

Resubmission

No

Would your proposed apprenticeship standard replace an existing framework?

Yes

Level 3 Service Dog Handler Apprenticeship Framework.

Does professional recognition exist for the occupation?

No

Regulated occupation

Is this a statutory regulated occupation?

No

Occupational summary

This occupation is found in a wide range of employers operating across sectors such as Defence, Police, Border Force, Department for Transport, Prison Service, private security

companies, or de-mining charities. All organisations employ specialist working dogs within complex settings. Detection and Protection Working Dog Specialists (DPWDS) operate and manage specialist working dog teams in complex environments alongside other departments or agencies. In some instances, they may be required to operate overseas. They can handle specialist working dogs themselves but will very often be managing, developing, and supporting basic dog handlers to ensure that they are operating safely and effectively. Specialist working dogs may need to be accredited to operate within a multi-agency setting. They may be combined with other resources to deliver a coherent, combined effect. The setting in which they operate might be austere and isolated with minimal support (e.g. military operations, search and rescue, disaster relief). Alternatively, it could be congested and confused (e.g. crowds, busy transport hubs). DPWDSs can be employed, in rural or urban settings, in tropical or arctic conditions, and anything in between. Employers can range in size and include government departments, private companies, or charities. DPWDSs can be employed across a range of settings. For example, they could use detection dogs to find explosives or detect other prohibited substances including narcotics or electronic devices. In other settings, they might use dogs as part of a combined force to find people (including those with hostile intent), or to chase, bite and detain people. In the charitable sector, they may be involved in de-mining or helping to find buried individuals following natural or man-made emergencies. In the search and rescue sector, a DPWDS will combine with other resources to find and rescue people in trouble.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to manage specialist working dogs effectively to support business objectives when operating in complex or high pressure environments or situations. The DPWDS must be aware of the constraints and limitations of their dog in all of the settings outlined above. Typically, the specialist dog may be deployed on general purpose, passive or active detection activities or tracking of individuals. The DPWDS will carry out dynamic risk assessments of complex environments in order to minimise risk to the dog and any individuals present during operations. They work closely with other departments or agencies to scope the operation and plan the most effective integration of the specialist working dog into the operation. They will deploy the specialist working dog in the most effective way necessary for the given circumstances and take necessary steps to preserve environmental or evidential integrity. The DPWDS may be involved in all aspects of managing specialist dogs from sourcing and handover of a dog through to the management of health and welfare, planning and evaluating feeding regimes, maintaining the dogs' physical condition through to deployment and supporting evaluation of performance through to dog retirement. The DPWDS will maintain and use a range of dog records and will have responsibility for validating licensing arrangements and identifying continuation training requirements. The DPWDS will also be responsible for ensuring that working dogs, once no longer fit for service role, are able to enjoy a safe and full life, including where they have trained to chase, bite and hold.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with a wide range of stakeholders dependent on the sector they are operating in. This may include: Task Commanders such as the commander of a military, police, customs, prison service task group; the management team of a conference facility, a high-profile venue or a freight hub (including land, aviation and maritime); operational partners 'on the ground' that operate alongside the specialist working dogs, such as fire-arms teams, forensic experts, customs officials, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) operators and medical teams; operational enablers such as transport operators for helicopter search and rescue or the military;

inspectors who will validate and assure the accuracy and effectiveness of the dog and the control systems in place to manage it; dog breeders and trainers to replace or provide expert training of dogs; science support staff to enable validation of capability and the development of training aids when dogs are no longer meeting operational requirements and require specialist training; suppliers of food, equipment, training aids, kennels; behavioural specialists; veterinary care providers such as veterinary surgeons, physiotherapists, groomers; infrastructure management (to repair and maintain kennelling); cleaners and support staff; chains of command and management who may not have any specialist working dog expertise.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for managing and operating specialist working dogs independently of other dog-related expertise for extended periods and reliably identifying when specialist working dogs are operating correctly. DPWDSs also support the assurance of dog capability, the failure of which could lead to injury and loss of life to self, the dog and others. The DPWDS has a responsibility to the overall commander and other agencies involved in an operation to confirm how dogs will or are being used, will or are complementing other capabilities and are performing or have performed. They will communicate information that has been obtained from the action of the specialist dog to other agencies to enable them to act on that information. They support the sourcing or retiring, developing and licensing of dog teams as well as managing the health and wellbeing of multiple dog teams. They have knowledge of the latest science of dog welfare, how dogs behave and learn and scent and how to use this knowledge to employ and operate dogs effectively while maintaining their health and welfare. They will manage training aids, equipment and resources safely to develop and maintain the performance of dog teams. They will maintain specialist working dog teams of different classifications at the required operational standard and retain evidence that demonstrates the assured status of the specialist dog. The DPWDS ensures that dogs under their charge are operated and cared for in compliance with all relevant legislation, including the Animal Welfare Act, Dangerous Dogs Act and transport legislation. They select the safe and appropriate approach to deliver an operational task. This includes; undertaking suitable planning and reconnaissance; ensuring specialist working dog constraints and limitations are understood by all stakeholders; operating reliably within set constraints such as time, limits of exploitation, legislation; manage all resources relating to working dogs under their charge appropriately, such as food, medication, training aids (including explosives, schedule drugs and prohibited items), kennelling, vehicles, protective equipment, canine ancillaries and personal weapons. A DPWDS will be responsible for maintaining operational performance and continuation training of the dogs under their charge, they will require the support of those with greater expertise to carry out initial specialist dog training and correct significant behavioural issues, or train in complex skills.

Typical job titles

Explosives detection dog handler

Specialist dog handler

Are there any statutory / regulatory or other typical entry requirements?

No

Occupation duties

DUTY	KSBS
Duty 1 Manage DPWD Health, Welfare and Ethics needs, taking account of the role and working environment.	K1 K2 K3 K5 K6 K7 K8 K9 K10 K11 K12 K14 K15 K16 K17 K18 K19 K20 K21 K23 K24 K25 K26 K27 S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6 S7 S8 S9 S10 S11 S12 S13 S14 S15 S16 S17 S18 S19 S21 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10
Duty 2 Promote, monitor, and maintain health, safety, and security within a specialist DPWD establishment.	K1 K2 K3 K5 K6 K7 K8 K9 K11 K12 K13 K14 K15 K16 K17 K19 K21 K22 K23 K24 K25 K27 S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 S6 S7 S8 S9 S10 S11 S12 S13 S15 S16 S17 S18 S19 S20 S21 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10
Duty 3 Establish the scope of the operation and plan effective use of the DPWD, in consultation with agencies and stakeholders involved.	K2 K3 K5 K6 K16 K17 K19 K21 K23 K25 S4 S5 S6 S10 S17 S18 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10
Duty 4 Select, apply, and maintain DPWD training aids, equipment, PPE, and other resources.	K3 K5 K11 K14 K16 K19 K20 K21 K22 K23 K25 K27 S2 S5 S7 S9 S10 S11 S13 S16 S17 S19 S21 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10
Duty 5 Maintain and use DPWD information and records.	K2 K3 K5 K7 K8 K9 K10 K12 K15 K18 K19 K20 K21 K23 K24 K25 K26 K27 S1 S3 S6 S7 S8 S9 S10 S11 S12 S13 S14 S15 S17 S18 S19 S21 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10

Duty 6 Plan, conduct, and record continuation training to maintain the efficiency of the DPWD and to improve performance.	K3 K5 K11 K12 K14 K15 K20 K22 K27 S3 S7 S8 S9 S10 S11 S13 S16 S18 S19 S21 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10
Duty 7 Prepare for and undertake licensing or certification and assure DPWD capability.	K7 K8 K12 K14 K15 K16 K17 K18 K20 K21 K22 K23 K24 K25 K27 S2 S9 S10 S11 S13 S14 S16 S21 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10
Duty 8 Support and collaborate with other teams or agencies to complement operations and augment DPWD effectively into wider operations.	K2 K3 K5 K6 K16 K17 K21 K25 K27 S4 S5 S6 S7 S9 S10 S11 S12 S14 S15 S17 S18 S21 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10
Duty 9 Deploy and operate DPWD effectively in order to contribute to operational objectives in line with employer policies and procedures.	K2 K3 K5 K6 K9 K16 K17 K19 K21 K23 K24 K25 K26 S1 S4 S5 S6 S7 S17 S18 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10
Duty 10 Support, coach, and mentor others to prepare and manage their DPWD for operations, undertake operational planning and to operate their dog.	K3 K4 K16 K20 K25 K27 S9 S11 S13 S18 S20 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6 B7 B8 B9 B10

KSBs

Knowledge

K1: Principles of planning, siting and management of sustainable accommodation, including kennels, free runs and other areas tailored to the setting and specific need.

K2: Approaches to planning and reconnaissance prior to deployment.

K3: Capabilities and limitations of DPWDs and how they can be applied in different settings.

K4: Coaching and mentoring techniques used to support and develop junior dog handlers.

K5: The agencies and stakeholders available to support and enable DPWD capability.

K6: Health and safety risks and how to mitigate them.

K7: How to interpret behavioural changes to identify changes in physical health, inform training and improve performance.

K8: Learning theory including operant conditioning, its use, effects and practical application, including the differences between positive and negative reinforcement and positive and negative punishment.

K9: Legislation and policy relating to DPWD transportation.

K10: How to maintain DPWD physical and mental state.

K11: Principles of assuring safe and effective DPWD capability.

K12: Digital and paper record keeping requirements including certification or licensing, task reports, animal passports, veterinary records, and continuation training documents.

K13: Regulations relating to the disposal of biological waste.

K14: How to develop and implement schedules of reinforcement and how they can be used to establish and maintain desired behaviour.

K15: The welfare needs of DPWDs, how to recognise signs of good and poor welfare and approaches to promoting welfare needs.

K16: Techniques and procedures for handling and managing a DPWD safely and effectively.

K17: The conflicting demands of animal welfare, societal expectations, and the safety of the public.

K18: The factors affecting DPWD through life management including, the preparation of DPWD for retirement.

K19: Methods used to maintain and monitor the health needs of DPWDs including preventative care strategies, infection prevention and control and the application of first aid techniques.

K20: The performance standards and approach to assessing performance of the DPWD relevant to the sector in which it is used.

K21: The factors to consider when planning the potential deployment and operation of a DPWD, including logistics and the environment.

K22: The safe and effective storage, maintenance and handling of training aids.

K23: The local threats and hazards and factors relevant to DPWD tasks and how to avoid and mitigate them.

K24: DPWD welfare legislation, policies and procedures.

K25: Joint Decision Models, and how they should be employed as part of operational deployment.

K26: Types of feed and the nutritional requirements of DPWDs relevant to life stage, health status, activity levels.

K27: How to evaluate DPWD performance, identify training needs and develop, maintain and implement individual DPWD training plans.

Skills

S1: Establish requirements, prepare and manage accommodation.

S2: Apply knowledge of behaviour patterns, body language and communication methods of DPWDs to identify physical and psychological concerns and improve performance.

S3: Evaluate recorded information, to devise appropriate training.

S4: Carry out dynamic risk assessment and management.

S5: Communicate the capability and limitations of the DPWD and adapt for different stakeholders.

S6: Communicate welfare policy and procedures and how they affect performance.

S7: Deploy, handle and manage the DPWD in accordance with organisational practices and procedures.

S8: Keep detailed records relevant to training, health and performance.

S9: Design, apply and evaluate integrated training programmes to maintain the performance of DPWD teams.

S10: Develop and implement a health and safety and security plan appropriate to the setting.

S11: Prepare DPWD for licencing or certification and support assurance to maintain the efficiency and effectiveness of the DPWD capability.

S12: Develop, implement and monitor nutritional plans and the safe storage and handling of food.

S13: Evaluate DPWD performance and design and deliver training in order to ensure standards of efficiency are maintained.

S14: Identify and implement transitional requirements for retiring DPWDs to support the retirement process.

S15: Maintain and monitor the health needs of DPWDs provide first aid, implement preventative care strategies, including infection prevention and control.

S16: Manage the handling, maintenance and storage of equipment and training aids.

S17: Plan, select and prepare appropriate transportation of the DPWD.

S18: Plan, review and adapt the integration of the DPWD into a complex task or operation.

S19: Select, evaluate and employ the appropriate equipment and practices in order to protect and promote DPWD welfare and desired operational performance.

S20: Support, coach and mentor DPWD handlers.

S21: Create, implement, evaluate and modify individual DPWD training plans with realistic targets for a desired behaviour based upon the principles of learning and the intended outcomes of the training specific to the DPWD.

Behaviours

B1: Committed to delivering good animal Health, Welfare and Ethics, whilst also meeting the needs of the organisation, and any societal expectations.

B2: Acts in a professional, moral and ethical manner, and shows empathy and respect to both animals and people.

B3: Recognise own limitations and seek qualified professional advice as necessary.

B4: Committed to the adoption and promotion of safe working practices.

B5: Acts in a way that builds and maintains positive working relationships.

B6: Committed to self-reflective practice and keeping up to date with industry best practice.

B7: Supports an inclusive culture, treating colleagues and external stakeholders fairly and with respect.

B8: Committed to the adoption and promotion of environmentally sustainable practices.

B9: Able to work independently and with autonomy within their scope of practice.

B10: Able to adapt to change in conditions, technologies, situations and working environments.

Qualifications

English and maths

English and maths qualifications must be completed in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.

Does the apprenticeship need to include any mandated qualifications in addition to the above-mentioned English and maths qualifications?

No

Consultation

Public survey by SE in conjunction with AAP reforms. Minor updates to K10, K16, K22, S7, S16 to add clarity.

Progression routes

ST0398 Animal trainer L4

Supporting uploads

Mandatory qualification uploads

Mandated degree evidence uploads

Professional body confirmation uploads

Subject sector area

3.3 Animal care and veterinary science