

## **C-RAD Validated Members Expectations, Procedures and Standards**

**Effective Winter 2021 / 2022 ALL C-RAD validated members are expected to meet these requirements and follow these procedures for obtaining and maintaining their C-RAD Validations**

**All questions should be directed to the disciplines coordinator or the overall training officer for C-RAD**

A C-RAD validated member is someone in the rescue community with the desire to be an asset to their agency, an active participant in their community, and someone who will go above and beyond to help someone in need. They will have the desire to grow, learn, mentor and be challenged. They will want to develop into an operational member of a rescue organization and support others in the organization who are operational members.

A C-RAD member will strive for professionalism and be an asset - never a liability - in all situations they are a part of, whether they are representing C-RAD, or any other organization. All members will support the mission of C-RAD and work to continue pushing the organization in a positive direction.

**Document Goal:** This document is meant to be a summary of the intent, criteria and processes for obtaining and maintaining a C-RAD validation as a technician and/or K9 handler. It is our expectation that teams will use this document in conjunction with industry standards, best practices, and real life experience to develop themselves as a rescue resource for their agency, counties and communities. This document sets the standard for these disciplines and our desire is for individuals and teams to choose to exceed them as they continue on in their time as professional rescuers.

### **Notice:**

Colorado Rapid Avalanche Deployment (C-RAD) encompasses various agencies that contain avalanche rescue dogs, handlers and avalanche technicians that may be utilized under the discretion of their resort, Sheriff's Office, County SAR team or other fielding agency during any phase of a search and rescue mission.

C-RAD IS NOT a fielding organization, therefore any validated C-RAD member must first have a relationship and approval with an organization that fields (and covers) rescue resources. They must be requested by that organization (or a mutual aid organization with permission from their home fielding agency) prior to participating in any search and rescue mission.

### **Criteria for ALL Validated Members:**

- General Member in Good Standing with C-RAD and their Affiliated Agency (Will be reviewed on an annual basis at the start of each season)
- Hold a minimum of a Wilderness First Responder (WFR) (OEC, EMT preferred), and BLS CPR.
- Have a minimum of two years snow and avalanche hazard assessment experience, such as working as a forecaster, avalanche technician or similar role for their agency (ski area, SAR team, etc).
- Completion of ICS 100, 200, 700 and 800 (Renewed with validation cycle)
- Successful completion of discipline specific requirements listed below

**Note:** Completion of these requirements may be only one step in the process of becoming a deployable person for your agency. Ensure you understand what other expectations there may be from your fielding organization to ensure you are on their deployment list.

- Example: A green card alone may not authorize you for deployment on a mission outside of your ski area.

## **C-RAD VALIDATED TECHNICIAN EXPECTATION, REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS:**

The objective of this segment is to give Agency Coordinators a list of minimum requirements to ensure that new candidates and previously qualified Avalanche Rescue Technicians are equipped with the skills and tools needed to be effective. Teams are expected to provide a “first-on-scene” response. The responsibilities of the Tech include, but are not limited to, evaluating scene safety, performing a transceiver/recco search, act as site coordinator until more resources arrive, communicate effectively with professional SAR, provide first-aid and be able to survive in a hazardous, high alpine, dynamic environment. The skill set is beyond that of basic companion rescue, including RECCO device proficiency, rope rescue, field medicine, air and ground support coordination, and incident command. Team members may be in the position, and are fully expected to be, prepared for executing a complete or near complete rescue before ground and other air resources arrive. Technicians should be familiar with larger scale incident command structures, understand span of control, chain of command and how they and their team members integrate into a larger incident organization structure as well. This document is intended as a guide for Agency Coordinators who will be ultimately responsible for ensuring that Validated Techs have met all criteria and complete all CE's. In addition to these standards Agency Coordinators are asked to ensure that Validated Techs are in good physical condition, are well versed in backcountry travel, route finding, navigation, etc., and have some basic technical rescue skills for low angle environments. The Tech Coordinator and/or the Board reserve the right to question an Agency Coordinator's endorsement of a Tech in order to verify equivalent learning/experience, or any other criteria in question.

### **Minimum Requirements:**

- New Techs must have a minimum of a Pro 1 avalanche certification or equivalent. Existing Techs may meet this requirement with operational experience and can petition the board for approval, such as someone that has had several years of experience working with local SAR but has never completed this certification.
- AAA AvSAR Course or equivalent learning, experience, or course work. The board will make the final decision on whether experience or other course work is sufficient for validation.
  - For more details on the course work refer here “Click AvSAR Guidelines”:
  - <https://www.americanavalancheassociation.org/pro-training-program>
- Completion of the AAA Avalanche Rescue Skills Test within the last three years.
  - *Single rescuer, two beacons in large backpacks buried up to 1m, 50x50m area, locate and bring to surface in under 7 minutes*

### **In addition to the minimum requirements for General Members listed above Techs must also meet the following criteria:**

- Current air resource training (green card from flights or equivalent)
- Successful completion of one in or out of area reality based drill or qualifying mission with after action report completed and signed by evaluators. Minimum of two evaluators, one of which must be a validated technician.
- Have a 24hr rescue/sustainment pack for field deployment. Includes all rescue (including technical), survival and medical equipment.
- Have Agency Coordinator endorsement that the candidate is well versed and competent in backcountry travel, navigation, and low angle rope rescue techniques.
- Agency approval - Agency Coordinators will be ultimately responsible for ensuring that all criteria have been met.

**Continuing Education / Revalidation Requirements:**

- Completion of continuing education on a three year cycle which should include the following:
- Renewal of ICS 100, 200, 700, & 800 or some other relevant training on SAR communications and command structures
- Successful completion of AAA Rescue Skills Test as outlined above
- Complete/attend some form of relevant professional development every year (regional SAW event, AMGA course, other backcountry rescue/medical trainings, etc.), one of these three must be a C-RAD course. Patrol refreshers and medical recertifications are not considered relevant. The Board and/or Tech Coordinator will have the final say in what is considered relevant.

## **C-RAD DOG VALIDATION EXPECTATIONS, REQUIREMENTS, AND STANDARDS:**

**Goal:** C-RAD wants to validate only the most consistent and high quality avalanche search teams. Avalanche Rescue is a game of seconds and victims don't have time for second best. A C-RAD validation test is only a portion of the validation process. The whole process includes "Dog Schools", in and out of area training, and personal training for canine and handler. The team needs to show success and consistency throughout the entire process.

### **To request a C-RAD dog validation test all criteria must be met:**

- Active members of C-RAD may request a C-RAD validation test (through proper channels), as long as they have not received a recommendation that the dog "NOT CONTINUE" in the avalanche rescue profile.
- Teams are validated as a pair of dog and handler.
- Teams that have shown a proven track record of success both at schools and at their home area. This determination is made by the team's Agency Coordinator in conjunction with the C-RAD Dog Coordinator.
- Each handler must maintain current records of all drills and deployments
- Secondary handlers who want to validate with an already validated dog are expected to follow the same guidelines.

### **How does a member request a C-RAD dog validation test:**

- Handler needs to pass a C-RAD style test in-house prior to official validation attempt. The Validation test should not be the hardest test the team has completed successfully.
- The agency coordinator will submit a request to the current C-RAD Dog Coordinator asking for a validation test via email at [dogcoordinator@c-rad.org](mailto:dogcoordinator@c-rad.org). The agency coordinator is responsible for requesting tests for teams that have shown consistency with success.
- The C-RAD Dog Coordinator will work together with the program requesting the test and other available programs who are able to host the test to get it setup.

### **Where can a test be held:**

- An INITIAL validation test must occur at a location other than your home resort or program (cannot be a location familiar to the team).
- A RECERT validation test may occur at your home resort or program. However, it can be requested to be hosted elsewhere by the member, their program coordinator, or the C-RAD dog coordinator.

### **Evaluators for a C-RAD dog validation test:**

- A minimum of two out of area evaluators (not affiliated with the program that the requesting team is from) are required for a validation test. A third evaluator from the testing teams program can be used at their discretion. A shadow evaluator is allowed for the purposes of obtaining their Evaluator status. Shadow evaluators cannot fail a team.
- To validate a team, the evaluators must be unanimous in their decision to pass.

### **Validation Objections:**

- The Dog Coordinator has the final discretion. Objections must be submitted in writing to the [dogcoordinator@c-rad.org](mailto:dogcoordinator@c-rad.org) email within 24 hours of their validation attempt to be considered. Objections should be based on testing criteria. Once an objection is filed the Dog Coordinator will gather information from the evaluators, area coordinators, prospective handler, and any other information sources available.

**C-RAD Evaluator Criteria:**

1. Can be a C-RAD Lead Instructor (See instructor criteria document)
2. Can be a validated C-RAD dog team, who has observed a minimum of 3 validation tests in their entirety. One of which needs to be successful. One of which needs to be out of their home area. Needs to be at least two different teams.
3. Need to be a validated team for 12 months or longer.
4. Must be approved by the current Dog Program Coordinator.
5. Interested individuals should email the C-RAD Dog Coordinator. [dogcoordinator@c-rad.org](mailto:dogcoordinator@c-rad.org)
6. Must attend an evaluator workshop. These are held at the fall and winter courses.
  - a. This requirement will integrate once the workshops are setup and scheduled

**Maximum Number of Validation Requests:**

- One dog team (handler and dog pairing) may request up to two tests. - Following the second failed attempt a team will no longer be allowed to ask for a C-RAD validation test and will be recommended to "NOT CONTINUE" in the avalanche rescue profile.
- A NULL test (meaning something occurred outside of the control of the team or evaluators that prevented the test from completion) will not count as one of these two. Null tests are determined by the evaluators.
- ALL Validations tests should conclude with an AAR including the testing team, present evaluators and agency coordinator (if available) at a location other than the field testing site (indoors). If a team fails, following the AAR, a discussion needs to occur between evaluators, Dog Coordinator, and the Area Coordinator. Options may be, but not limited to: additional focused training on problem areas for dog and/or handler, seeking additional expert advice, or washing the dog out of search work.
- Outcome of the AAR will dictate the plan moving forward and address areas of improvement.

**Validation Test Criteria:**

- **General:**
  - Validation Objective: Clear a site of human scent, 100 meter by 100 meters, with an unknown amount of victims ranging from 1-3 live people, in 20 minutes.
  - The Handler must voice objections or questions about the test parameters prior to the start of the test.
  - No helicopters are allowed during a C-RAD validation test
  - The testing candidate will be required to demonstrate the use of backcountry gear such as AT/Telemark skis or snowshoes in an uphill capacity prior, during or after the test
  - The testing candidate must demonstrate safe and efficient travel with their K9 prior or after the test
  - Evaluators may look at a site and define it "suitable" for testing even if all parameters are not able to be met
    - Evaluators may adjust the site parameters based on testing conditions (snow, depth etc), as long as the intent of the evaluation is met
- **Site Setup Criteria:**
  - The site size is 100 meters by 100 meters
  - Site boundaries should be obvious and well marked
  - Slope shall not exceed 25 degrees on average
  - The site shall be easy to travel on by the dog (Unconsolidated snow or deep snow may be a factor in adjusting site parameters or grounds for a null test - determined by evaluators)
  - Depth of burial for each live victim shall be between 75cm - 100cm below the surface of the snow. Meaning that the cave roof is that thick.
  - No surface clues allowed
  - The snow should be well disturbed enough to hide the location(s) of the victims.
  - No scent articles
  - Holes should be dug at minimum 24 hours prior to testing

- Nothing unnatural should be buried or on the site
- Any unused holes shall be left open and free of any items
- After all victims have been buried and preparers have left the test site, the scent will be allowed to rise for 15 minutes before bringing the handler and dog into the test site.
- **Victim Information / Safety:**
  - All victims should anticipate being in their dog holes for one hour from when they are buried
  - All victims will be buried with a RECCO chip and Radio for safety
  - If at any time a victim needs to get out of their hole or evaluators cannot make contact with victim, the test will be stopped and it will be deemed a NULL test
  - Buried people should not have food in the snow cave with them
  - Victims shall be buried with foam pad for insulation and protection from probing
  - If Interviewed, will not provide handler (or shoveler) with any information on numbers or locations of other buried victims
- **Test Criteria:**
  - Testing team must not know the location or number of victims in their test (must be blind)
  - Range of burials for INITIAL VALIDATION is 1-3 live people with Recco Chips and radios for safety (blind and unknown to the testing team). REVALIDATION IS 0-3 live people.
  - The handler must not use a transceiver.
  - Testing candidate must conduct an interview with the reporting party (who is one of the evaluators) to determine basic information about the scene. No clues as to the number or location of burials will be given
    - Ideal components for interview:
      - Scene Safety / How Long / Number of People / Prior work completed / Point last seen
  - Testing time starts when the K9 is put to work or into "search" mode
  - The team has 20 minutes to find all subjects and call the site "clear of human scent"
    - Candidate may ask for a time check at any point during the test
  - K9 must show a commitment to scent source by an identifiable TFR (Trained Final Response) prior to handler confirming burial
  - A confirmed probe strike or "daylight" (dog uncovers the victim without help) count as a "find"
  - Handlers may choose to utilize a shoveler. The handler must DEFINITELY call for a shoveler before the shoveler may enter the site.
    - Shoveler cannot be used to investigate interest
    - Shovelers can only dig on confirmed probe strikes
    - No tug toys, reward toys or reward treats will be allowed in the buried subjects' hole. Handlers may reward their dogs as they see fit and would do during a real mission on their test
  - A handler must communicate with the evaluators when they believe that the site is clear of human scent or evaluators will notify the handler of the 20 minute limit and ask them for their next steps / plan

#### **Maintaining Validation:**

- Once a handler and dog pass the C-RAD certification test, their certification will be valid for 3 years from the date of the test and must be recertified sometime in the year of expiration.
- All the same process will be followed for pursuing revalidation