



# COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA SEARCH & RESCUE STANDARD 7500

---

## TYPE 2 TRACKER – TRACKING TECHNICIAN

VASARCO Tracking Standards Committee chaired by Rob Speiden

**APPROVED BY THE VIRGINIA SEARCH AND RESCUE COUNCIL and  
THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

# 2019

This is the final document approved in 2019. It presents the certification standard for credentialing as a Type 2 – Tracking Technician. It is accompanied by COVSAR Tracking Standards 7000 - 7900.

**7500 Type 2 Tracker – Tracking Technician**

**7500** This standard establishes a certification named "Type 2 Tracker – Tracking Technician" (T.T.) and outlines all applicable requirements for achieving this certification.

**7501 Scope:** These standards were developed to define the minimum qualification requirements necessary for certification as a T.T. by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Emergency Management (VDEM).

The certification issued under these standards is a requirement only for those personnel who wish to voluntarily participate in the search and rescue program of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management at the level indicated in this standard.

**7502 Purpose:**

7502.1 Outlined in the following standard are all the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) expected at the T.T. certification level.

**7503 General:**

7503.1 This standard uses Commonwealth of Virginia Search and Rescue (COVSAR) Standard 7400 as a minimum standard and incorporates all criteria of that standard as a basis in conjunction with the additional criteria in this standard.

**7504 Definitions:**

The definitions used by this standard are listed and defined in COVSAR Standard 7200. They may or may not reflect the definitions used by other individuals, groups, agencies or publications.

**7505 Prerequisites:**

7505.1 All pre-requisites listed in COVSAR Standard 7400 are also included as a minimum for this standard.

7505.2 Applicants must be currently certified by VDEM as a Search Team Leader, and have been so certified for at least one (1) year, or an equivalent as recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Emergency Management Search and Rescue Program. Proof of current certification must be presented along with the application for certification as a T.T.

7505.3 Applicants must have a certificate of training or completion of a Managing Search Operations, Managing Land Search Operations, or Management Team Member (MTM) course or an equivalent as recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Department of Emergency Management Search and Rescue Program. Proof of such certification must be presented along with the application for certification as a T.T.

7505.4 Applicant must have been certified as a Search Team Member or equivalent for at least three (3) years.

7505.5 Applicant must be currently certified as a Type 3 Tracker – Operational Tracker and have been so certified for at least one (1) year.

7505.6 It is recommended that the Tracking Technician have training in Crime Scene Preservation.

7505.7 Current CPR and First Aid Certifications.

7505.8 Completion of the NIMS Courses; 100, 200, 700, and 800.

- 7505.9 Completion of the National Park Service Basic Search and Rescue course.
- 7505.10 Applicants must have a background check completed within the last three years before applying for certification, and agree to allow VDEM or the applicant's member group to perform a background check when recertifying or three years from the last one, whichever is first.

**7506 Forms:**

These forms, in addition to those listed in COVSAR Tracking Standard Section 7406, will be used for Tracking Technician documentation:

- 7506.1 Application for Certification: Type 2 Tracker – Tracking Technician
- 7506.2 Type 2 Tracker - Tracking Technician Position Task Book

**7507 Testing:**

- 7507.1 Testing will include written and practical exam stations and will be conducted within the scope of the knowledge, skills and abilities conveyed in the Foundations for Awareness, Signcutting and Tracking Training Standard 7200.
- 7507.2 The tracking candidate must demonstrate a working understanding of the items listed under each subject and must be able to demonstrate the ability to perform and/or discuss the skills delineated in Tracking Standard 7200.
- 7507.3 Specific written and field tests have been designed to evaluate the candidate's knowledge and performance skills. The field tests and evaluation criteria are delineated and described in COVSAR Standard 7300.
- 7507.4 Each candidate will be individually evaluated on the following field evaluation stations during daytime – 7407.3.1, 7407.3.2, 7407.3.5, 7407.3.7, 7407.3.8
- 7507.5 Each candidate will be individually evaluated on the following field evaluation stations during nighttime (dark conditions) – 7408.3.3, 7408.3.4, 7408.3.6
- 7507.6 Candidates will be evaluated on ten (10) categories (with additional subcategories) as delineated in Table 1 of standard section 7408.
- 7507.7 Scores from each evaluation station will contribute to an overall score for each category based on the respective ratios listed in Table 1 of standard section 7408.
- 7507.8 The candidate's certification will be based on an overall score averaged and weighted from all of the individual category and subcategory scores.
- 7507.9 All field tests must be completed within thirty-six (36) months of submission date of an application for certification/ recertification.
- 7507.10 If the candidate wishes to change their score on record, s/he may retake the relevant evaluation station(s) according to evaluators' availability.
- 7507.11 The highest set of scores achieved on any station within the last thirty-six (36) months will be the score that is applied towards certification for a candidate. In the event that there are two or more sets of scores (from two or more completed stations) with varying results in different skill categories, the candidate may only choose one station event score sequence to count as the set of scores considered for certification. In other words, scores cannot be mixed or matched from different testing events of the same station.

**7508 Certification**

Candidates who meet or exceed the minimum scoring requirements, in addition to completing the aforementioned prerequisites and requirements, will be certified as a Type 2 – Tracking Technician. Minimum requirements include the following:

7508.1 Candidate scores a ninety percent (90%) or higher on the written test. Candidates must wait a minimum of three (3) months between test-taking opportunities if they wish to retake it.

7508.2 Candidate achieves a minimum score in the following categories (with subcategories) as shown in Table 3 below according to scoring described in COVSAR Standard 7300 – Criteria for Field Evaluations.

Table 3. Listing of Knowledge, Skill and Ability categories, subcategories and minimum score for achieving certification.

	<b>Category and Subcategory</b>	<b>Minimum Certification Score</b>
1	<b>TOOLS</b>	4.0
2	<b>INTERVIEWING</b>	3.0
3	<b>PLS /LKP</b>	3.0
4	<b>DETECTION / AWARENESS</b>	---
4.1	TRACK DETECTION	3.5
4.2	CLUE AWARENESS	3.5
5	<b>INTERPRETATION</b>	---
5.1	HUMANIMAL	4.0
5.2	IDENTIFICATION	4.0
5.3	AGING	3.0
5.4	DIRECTION OF TRAVEL	4.0
6	<b>RECORDING/DOCUMENTATION</b>	---
6.1	PHOTOGRAPHING	3.0
6.2	DRAWING	3.0
6.3	CASTING	3.0
6.4	REPORTING	3.0
7	<b>TRAILING</b>	3.0
8	<b>CLUE MANAGEMENT</b>	4.0
9	<b>PROFESSIONALISM</b>	4.0*
10	<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	3.0

\*At least two Tracker Recommendation Forms submitted for candidate (scores averaged)

- 7508.3 Candidate achieves an overall weighted score of **4.0** or higher in all of the categories described in section 7408 Table 1 (according to scoring described in COVSAR Standard 7300 – Criteria for Field Evaluations).
- 7508.4 Candidate achieves a minimum score of 3.0 points in categories 2, 3, 5.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 7, and 10. A score of less than 3.0 points in any of those categories prevents the candidate from being certified as a T.T., even if s/he has achieved an overall evaluation score of 4.0 points or more.
- 7508.5 Candidate achieves a minimum score of 3.5 points in categories 4.1, and 4.2. A score of less than 3.5 points in either of those categories prevents the candidate from being certified as a T.T., even if s/he has achieved an overall evaluation score of 4.0 points or more.
- 7508.6 Candidate achieves a minimum score of 4.0 points in categories 1, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4, 8, and 9. A score of less than 4.0 points in any of those categories prevents the candidate from being certified as a T.T., even if s/he has achieved an overall evaluation score of 4.0 points or more.
- 7508.7 A tracking candidate may challenge or take the written test and/or field evaluation stations at any time that they are offered (with regard to sections 7408.3 and 7409.1).
- 7508.8 Certification - Initial certification will be accomplished by completing all prerequisites and requirements outlined in this standard.
- 7508.9 Certification will be for a period of three (3) years as long as other prerequisites remain current.
- 7508.10 At any time that a prerequisite certification possessed by the certificate owner expires, the person's Tracker certification also expires.
- 7508.11 Upon successful review the Group Training Officer will obtain signatures and forward document 7506.1 - Application for Certification for Type 2 – Tracking Technician to the VDEM SAR Training Specialist, SAR Chief, or appropriate person(s). VDEM will then issue a new certification. That new certification expires three (3) years after the date of issue.

## **7509      Recertification**

Recertification will be accomplished by completing the following steps:

- 7509.1 Completing the T.T. Position Task Book (PTB) (COVSAR 7506.2) and all prerequisites outlined within section 7505.
- 7509.2 The Tracker will submit his/her PTB to the tracker's Group Training Officer for approval.
- 7509.3 Upon successful review the Group Training Officer will obtain signatures and forward document 7506.1 - Application for Certification for Type 2 – Tracking Technician to the VDEM SAR Training Specialist, SAR Chief, or appropriate person(s). VDEM will then issue a new certification. That certification expires three (3) years after the date of issue.
- 7509.4 Retesting in the following field evaluation stations with scores, in combination with other field station scores on record, that meet or exceed those described in section 7508:
- A. 7407.3.1 Aging Station
  - B. 7407.3.3 PLS/LKP Station
  - C. 7407.3.4 Sign Cutting Station
  - D. 7407.3.6 Sign Squares Station
  - E. 7407.3.8 Reporting as evaluated in Section 6.4 of COVSAR Tracking Standard 7300
- 7509.5 Any scores earned in field stations other than the ones listed above (e.g. 7407.3.2 Known/Unknown, 7407.3.5 Sign Interpretation, 7407.3.7 Tools and the written test) can and will be carried over into re-certification scoring calculations unless the candidate wishes to attempt to improve those scores by retaking any particular station.
- 7509.6 Field tests for recertification (described above) must be completed within thirty-six (36) months of date of application for recertification.
- 7509.7 The COVSAR Tracking Committee may grant a three-month certification extension to those trackers who have been actively engaged in the recertification process. Due to the limited opportunities for testing, location of testing, availability of evaluators, and variable weather conditions at time of testing, trackers who have attempted all required stations for recertification within thirty-six (36) months of their current certification expiration, may be provided a three (3) month extension to their certification upon its expiration. Within the three-month extension period, the tracker must complete and pass all of the required stations for their level of recertification. If the Tracker fails to complete and pass the recertification stations during this period, they will lose their current certification and will be required to retake all stations required to be a COVSAR credentialed tracker at any level.

## **7510      Reciprocity**

Reciprocity will be handled on a case by case basis due to the varying degree of possible experience and previous training individuals may have (e.g. currently certified as a National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) Tracker I). Typically this process will involve evaluating the individual against the Position Task Book and their current abilities. Once any gaps are identified a training plan can be developed and the individual can work toward certification.