



Standard Guide for Techniques in Land Search¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This guide identifies and describes techniques that may be used by individuals or agencies when searching for persons, property, or evidence on land. The application of one or more of these techniques to any particular land search will depend upon the individual circumstances of the search and the judgment of the person responsible for conducting the search.

1.2 This guide assists individuals and agencies by providing a list of techniques for their consideration during a land search and by providing a brief description of the application of the technique to land search. Some advantages and disadvantages, as well as the most common uses of the techniques, are discussed in the guide. The guide does not, however, purport to discuss all aspects of conducting a land search.

1.3 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standard:²

F1767 Guide for Forms Used for Search and Rescue

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *attraction, n*—to get the attention of lost, missing, or stranded subject(s) by sound or visual methods, or both, for example, whistle, light, smoke.

3.1.2 *clue awareness, n*—to be aware of evidence left by a subject(s) which may help to ascertain their location or direction of travel, or both.

3.1.3 *confinement, n*—the act of limiting the growth of the potential search area by minimizing the ability of the subject(s) leaving the search area undetected.

3.1.4 *electronic search, n*—technique(s) using electronic systems or devices to locate a subject(s) or evidence, or both.

3.1.5 *hasty search, v*—to send a fast moving, well-trained crew(s) of searchers to quickly check selected high probability area(s).

3.1.6 *investigation, n*—the systematic collection and analysis of information about the lost or missing subject(s) by interviewing (interrogation) or reviewing records or evidence, or both.

3.1.7 *line search, v*—to use searchers in a linear pattern(s) at specified intervals, to investigate a defined search segment.

3.1.8 *probability of area (POA), n*—the probability of a subject or clue being in the area or segment being searched.

3.1.9 *probability of detection (POD), n*—the probability that the subject or clue will be detected by the search action if the subject or clue is in the search area.

3.1.10 *search dog, n*—canine trained in techniques to locate a subject(s) or evidence, or both.

3.1.11 *search dog crew(s), n*—canine and their handler(s) trained in search techniques to locate a subject(s) or evidence, or both.

3.1.12 *segment (search area), n*—a geographic unit within the search area established for the purpose of effective and efficient assignment of search resources.

3.1.13 *segmentation, n*—the process of partitioning the search area into segments.

3.1.14 *segmentation, binary, n*—to reduce the size of a search area through subdivision into increasingly smaller segments.

3.1.15 *tracking, v*—to follow a subject(s) footprint(s), track(s), or sign through varying types of terrain.

3.2 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.2.1 *breakage, n*—a physical rupture of material or the surface of material, such as frequently seen when vegetation is crushed or bent by external forces such as the passage of subjects.

¹ This guide is under the jurisdiction of ASTM Committee F32 on Search and Rescue and is the direct responsibility of Subcommittee F32.02 on Management and Operations.

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² For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, www.astm.org, or contact ASTM Customer Service at service@astm.org. For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.