



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
VERMONT STATE POLICE
Rockingham Station
1987 Rockingham Road
Chester, Vermont 05143**

May 25, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is written on behalf of the New England K-9 Search & Rescue Team, a volunteer organization, based throughout Vermont and New Hampshire. The Vermont State Police Search & Rescue Team recognizes this organization as a professional volunteer group, specializing in the use of certified handlers and air scenting dogs to locate and rescue individuals who had become lost and/or injured on land and water. For the past 26 years, this group has served the citizens of Vermont as an emergency response resource team, having participated in over 381 calls involving lost persons, victims of crimes, evidence recovery and drowning.

We are aware of and wish to note their response and participation at the victim recovery efforts at the Staten Island "Fresh Kills" land fill of the World Trade Center. In October 2001, they were identified as an emergency services response team for the state of Vermont domestic emergency preparedness plan for response to incidences of domestic terrorism. Today they remain a response resource to incidences of natural and man made disasters.

The NEK-9 SAR Team is a self-sufficient, highly motivated and well-equipped team whose canines and handlers are complemented with support personnel and equipment to include GPS/Computer mapping and a complete communication system with integration capability. Their disciplined and consistent K-9 training program is designed to maintain a high level of performance. They are qualified in ICS, search management, wilderness navigation, search techniques and wilderness first aid.

The Vermont State Police, like many law enforcement agencies across the nation, with its statutory obligations to oversee and manage these kinds of incidences, realize the invaluable services that are provided by New England K-9 SAR. We have been fortunate and privileged to have such a disciplined and highly trained group available for immediate search response and who, in addition, for the last 14 years have chosen to enhance their services with educational programs designed to teach the public about how to keep themselves safe and what to do if and when they become lost. NEK-9 SAR has added other programs designed to provide the branches of emergency services the knowledge required to make an appropriate response to search emergencies placing particular importance to children and the elderly dementia for the broad behavior associated with this disabling disease. Emergency services have always indicated a need to have such a program, as search and rescue is an expanded and specialized field beyond the scope of the duties performed by the fire service, emergency medical services and the law enforcement branches.

The citizens of the State of Vermont are fortunate to have this highly trained professional volunteer group available 24 hours/7days per week. Each individual team member makes a personal commitment to an extremely high level of professional training and receives no compensation. Their continued participation at search emergencies is vital to the successful outcome of search missions and ultimately to saving lives.

If I can be of any further assistance regarding this organization, please feel free to contact me at the address provided above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jocelyn R. Stohl".

Lt. Jocelyn R. Stohl, Commander
Search & Rescue Team Leader
Vermont State Police

"Your Safety Is Our Business"