National Canine Training and Accreditation Scheme (NCTAS) – Private Security Industry (NCTAS-P)

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Police, military and other UK Government Explosives Detection Dog (EDD) Teams have long been subject to robust training against UK priority threat materials, with annual accreditation; the current National Canine Training & Accreditation Scheme (NCTAS) went live in 2020.

Video

National Canine Training and Accreditation Scheme (NCTAS)

About the National Canine Training and Accreditation Scheme (NCTAS)

Policing, military and other UK Government EDD Teams must complete an annual accreditation, the National Canine Training and Accreditation Scheme (NCTAS). This is a robust course tailored to the key threat materials of highest concern within the UK.

There has historically been no equivalent, government recognised approach for assuring the capability of private sector EDD Teams. To address this, the NCTAS-P was launched in March 2021. It provides a route for private sector EDD Teams to be accredited under a government approved

scheme.

A version of the course available to the private sector, the NCTAS for the Private Security Industry (NCTAS-P), allows private sector teams to also be accredited under the government scheme.

The assessment takes place across two days for up to 4 EDD teams (each team is made up of one handler and one dog) and covers a wide range of threat related substances. Teams are then assessed by expert instructors on odour identification and four conventional searches (vehicle, building, area and route).

The benefits of the NCTAS and NCTAS-P

The NCTAS and NCTAS-P are the only accreditation schemes for Venues and Public Spaces which are backed by the Home Office, Counter Terrorism Policing, NaCTSO and the National Protective Security Authority (NPSA).

NCTAS-P allows for interoperability between government agencies and the private sector, ensuring standards are kept high and that the training is consistent and operationally relevant.



Explosives Detection Dogs (EDD) teams

Explosives detection dog (EDD) teams are an invaluable asset in enhancing public safety. Used across policing, military, government and the private sector, EDD teams can identify the smallest trace of explosives, making them a vital tool in the fight against terrorism.

NCTAS-P accredited EDD Teams

- Comprise a dedicated dog and handler pairing
- Are tested against key high priority explosives threats relevant to the UK
- Have evidenced safe and thorough search techniques in line with police requirements
- Are accredited annually by National Police Chiefs' Council approved police dog instructors
- Understand the correct procedures to undertake if the dog gives an indication on the presence of explosives

Security operators can be confident in choosing NCTAS-P accredited EDD teams, security operators can be confident they will receive the same high standard as NCTAS accredited teams across government.



Guidance for businesses and industry implementing EDD teams

The National Protective Security Authority (NPSA – formerly CPNI) has gathered and produced guidance that outlines the key areas to consider when procuring and implementing EDD teams. This is intended to help businesses and organisations who are interested in using private sector detection dog services to understand the services offered by each provider and ensure they address the operational requirements.

Where an organisation is procuring new (or re-tendering for existing) EDD services, it should explicitly require the supply of EDD teams holding a current NCTAS Private Security Industry (NCTAS-P) accreditation.

Where an existing contract for provision of EDD services is already in place, the organisation should work with their supplier to ensure that all EDD teams deployed at their site(s) hold NCTAS-P accreditation by the end of an agreed transition period. ?

Find out more about NCTAS-P

- For more extensive details of NCTAS-P, GOV.UK have a database of currently approved NCTAS-P teams
- NPSA (formerly CPNI) have produced guidance, including on effectively specifying, procuring and implementing detection dog services.
- If you are a UK based Detection Dog Service provider and want to be an affiliated NCTAS-P team, please apply via email: nctasp@homeoffice.gov.uk

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