Fire Services Canine Unit

Fire investigation dogs and search and rescue dogs were introduced into the Fire Services Department in 2007 and 2011 respectively, with the aim of enhancing the operational efficiency of frontline personnel at fire and disaster scenes. Fire investigation dogs enhance the evidence collection capabilities of fire investigation personnel at fire scenes. Search and rescue dogs assist rescue teams in locating missing persons across various scenes, particularly in complex terrain or major disasters where they can play a crucial role.

Search and Rescue Dogs

Search and rescue dogs are primarily deployed in incidents involving landslides, collapsed structures, and remote terrain to locate trapped or missing individuals. At present, the Department maintains a team of five search and rescue dogs, all of which are English Springer Spaniels. This breed is selected for its compact build, agility, strong stamina, exceptional olfactory sensitivity and the capability to move swiftly in complex environments. By detecting human scent, these dogs assist rescue personnel in quickly narrowing down search areas or directly identifying the locations of missing persons.

Fire Investigation Dogs

Fire investigation dogs play a pivotal role in assisting fire investigators to determine the presence of accelerants at fire scenes. With their acute sense of smell and agile movement, they can accurately detect accelerants, and conduct quick and comprehensive searches across extensive fire-affected areas. This expedites the digging and collection of fire debris and accelerant samples, thus speeding up the investigation process.   The Department currently has two fire investigation dogs, both of which are Labrador Retrievers.   These dogs have completed specialised training and are capable of detecting six commonly-used accelerants in suspected arson cases, namely petrol, diesel, kerosene, turpentine, thinner and naphtha.