

Best Practice: Remote Air Sampling for Canine Olfaction



Category: Guards and Police

Location: United Kingdom

Date Observed: May 2006

POC: Not Available

WWW:

<http://www.chilport.co.uk/remotearsampling.htm>

<http://www.kentk9.co.uk/introduction.htm>

Description:

RASCO™ is the generic title of a UK system developed specifically to address the high volume, short timescale examination of large scale freight containers. The system involves an eighteen inch long polyethylene probe which is inserted under the curtain side or rubber seal of a container door. A vacuum then draws air from the sampling environment in the container into a sample tube or filter. The sample tube or filter is then taken to an analysis area where it is then placed on a stand with various sample tubes and a suitably trained dog examines the tube and provides passive indication if the target material is present. Further samples may be taken to confirm the first analysis and filters can be stored for up to six months for screening at a later date. Fixed screening posts can be established for large busy areas, and an equally effective mobile system is available.

Discussion:

RASCO was tested by the government in the UK at sea ports with successful results in terms of detection rates and false alarm rates. Currently, two companies in Great Britain provide variants of the RASCO system.

Potential Down-side: Cost and availability.

Cost:

Costs can vary depending on location and services provided.

Conclusion:

The RASCO system can be a cost effective and efficient means for providing detection capabilities without managing the costs and overhead associated with maintaining detection dogs. The private sector provides the service on an as needed basis and ensures the dogs are trained appropriately.