

Saving lives with the help of dogs

International Search and Rescue Dog Organisation

Dogs sift silently through rubble piles and systematically search extensive areas. They always follow their nose. The goal: to find people and save lives. To make this possible, search and rescue dogs are trained to uniform quality standards all over the world.

Whether on a ski tour in the mountains, a boat trip on the lake or picking mushrooms in the forest – anyone can get into an emergency at any time. Once an accident has happened, every minute counts. In such fearful moments, search and rescue dogs are indispensable. Their distinct sense of smell, but also their speed and agility are valuable qualities that neither humans nor modern technology can match.

To become a lifesaver, the canines receive specialist training for at least two years. Through courses, operational exercises and tests, the International Search and Rescue Dog Organisation ensures the qualification of search and rescue dog teams around the world. When working with the dogs, the natural food and play instincts are used to turn clumsy young pups into self-confident lifesavers. The most important lesson, however, is that finding a human is rewarding. Therefore, positive reinforcement, praise, play, and reward are paramount in training.

The International Search and Rescue Dog Organisation, based in Salzburg, Austria, is a global network of more than 130 member organisations and about 4,000 certified search and rescue dogs. Its aim is to have enough operational teams available worldwide to respond quickly in emergencies. An endeavour of particular importance considering the increasing number of natural disasters and extreme weather events.

To maintain the high standard in the work with search and rescue dogs the non-profit organisation relies on donations from both individuals and corporations.

More information on the organisation can be found at: <https://www.iro-dogs.org>