1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
2	x
3	FLORIDA, :
4	Petitioner : No. 11-817
5	v. :
6	CLAYTON HARRIS :
7	x
8	Washington, D.C.
9	Wednesday, October 31, 2012
10	
11	The above-entitled matter came on for ora
12	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States
13	at 11:06 a.m.
14	APPEARANCES:
15	GREGORY G. GARRE, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; on behalf of
16	Petitioner.
17	JOSEPH R. PALMORE, ESQ., Assistant to the Solicitor
18	General, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.;
19	for United States, as amicus curiae, supporting
20	Petitioner.
21	GLEN P. GIFFORD, ESQ., Assistant Public Defender,
22	Tallahassee, Florida; on behalf of Respondent.
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1	PROCEEDINGS
2	(11:06 a.m.)
3	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Garre, welcome
4	back.
5	ORAL ARGUMENT OF GREGORY G. GARRE
6	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
7	MR. GARRE: Thank you, Your Honor, and may
8	it please the Court:
9	The question in this case is when does a
0	trained drug detection dog's alert to a vehicle
1	establish probable cause to search the vehicle?
_2	JUSTICE SCALIA: Are you for or against the
_3	dog this time?
_4	MR. GARRE: For it again, Your Honor.
.5	JUSTICE SCALIA: For it again.
_6	MR. GARRE: The Florida supreme court
_7	answered that question by erecting what we think is an
8_	extraordinary set of evidentiary requirements that, in
_9	effect, puts the dog on trial in any suppression hearing
20	in which defendant chooses to challenge the reliability
21	of the dog.
22	I think, most fundamentally, the problem
23	with the court of appeals' the Supreme Court's
24	decision is that it misconceives what this Court's
25	cases conceive of the probable cause requirement,

- 1 converting probable cause, which this Court has referred to as a substantial chance, or fair probability, of the 2 3 detection of contraband or evidence of a crime, into 4 what amounts to a continuously updated batting average 5 and a requirement that dogs be virtually infallible. 6 That -- that --7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Mr. Garre --JUSTICE GINSBURG: That -- that goes to the 8 9 field performance; but, the other requirements, that the -- some showing -- the test -- that the training 10 11 program is reputable, some showing that the handler, not 12 only the dog, that is -- has had training, it seems to 13 me those two are not -- there's nothing improper about 14 that. MR. GARRE: Well, and I think, Your Honor, 15 16 under our view of it, it's okay to inquire into whether 17 or not the dog has successfully completed a bona fide training program, which -- which we think is a training 18 19 program in which the dog is going to be tested for proficiency, including in a setting where some vehicles 20 21 have drugs and some vehicles don't. 22 And Aldo, the dog in this case, clearly was.
- He'd received a 120-hour training program with the police department in Apopka, Florida. He received a 40-hour refresher seminar by another police department

- 1 in Dothan, Alabama. And he was subjected to continuous
- 2 weekly training, in which part of that training
- 3 consisted of taking him out, walking him by some
- 4 vehicles that contained cars, some vehicles that didn't.
- 5 And the testimony of Officer Wheetley was
- 6 that Aldo's performance was really good. And what he
- 7 meant by that was that if there were eight cars with
- 8 drugs.
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Then why did -- then why
- 10 didn't they get the dog recertified? By the time of the
- 11 search, the certification had expired 16 months.
- MR. GARRE: It was a lapse, Your Honor. The
- dog subsequently was recertified.
- Our position is that the Fourth Amendment
- 15 doesn't impose an annual certification requirement.
- 16 Some states have it, some states don't.
- I think, more important in this case was the
- 18 fact that the dog was continuously trained, continuously
- 19 evaluated and trained.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, what do you -- what
- 21 do you have to show to establish that the dog was well
- 22 trained.
- 23 MR. GARRE: Well, Your Honor, I think the
- 24 most important thing is successful completion of
- 25 proficiency testing.

1	I mean, what what our friends would like,
2	and what the Florida supreme court would like, was
3	really for the courts to delve into all aspects of the
4	training, what types of distracters were used, what type
5	of smell and printing was used and the like.
6	JUSTICE GINSBURG: Well, if it were just
7	that you have the show that the program was
8	reputable.
9	MR. GARRE: Well, certainly that it was
10	authentic, Your Honor. And here, the programs were
11	were conducted by actual police departments in in
12	Alabama and Florida. And this Court ordinarily would
13	presume regularity in those sorts of training settings.
14	And there's no reason to approach the
15	training of a dog any differently, but
16	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I thought all of these
17	training facilities were private entities that
18	contracted with police departments.
19	MR. GARRE: No, Your Honor. The
20	certification. Certification usually is done by private
21	entities which are operated by former law enforcement
22	officers. But the training itself, it usually and here
23	was done by police departments themselves.
24	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Could I go back to

There's no -- what I

Justice Ginsburg's question?

25

- 1 hear -- read the Florida court saying is there's no
- 2 national standard for certification. That's correct?
- 3 MR. GARRE: Yes.
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: There's no national
- 5 standard that defines what's adequate training, correct.
- 6 MR. GARRE: That's right. There --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So -- let me just finish
- 8 my question. So assuming there's no national standards,
- 9 then how do you expect a judge, without asking questions
- 10 about the content of the certification process, the
- 11 content of the training process, and what the results
- 12 were and how they were measured, how do you expect a
- 13 judge to decide whether the certification and the
- 14 training are sufficiently adequate.
- 15 MR. GARRE: And I think that the central
- 16 inquiry that we would think the judge would undertake is
- 17 to determine whether or not the dog was performing
- 18 successfully in proficiency testing.
- 19 After all, that's why we train the dogs.
- 20 And --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But you still have to
- 22 ask what that training was, and the judge still has to
- 23 determine whether the judge believes it was adequate,
- 24 correct? That's what the totality of circumstances
- 25 requires.

- 1 MR. GARRE: Well, Your Honor, in our view,
- 2 we don't think it's -- it's an appropriate role for the
- 3 Court to delve into the contours of the training, what
- 4 specific methods were used to train or distract or --
- 5 you know, all the contours that they bring up in their
- 6 brief.
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So what does a judge do,
- 8 just say, the police department says this is adequate,
- 9 so I have to accept it's adequate?
- 10 MR. GARRE: Not -- you would have to accept
- 11 it, Your Honor, on its face. I think you -- in a record
- 12 like this -- and I think this record is clearly
- 13 sufficient -- and, ultimately, that's what we're asking
- 14 this Court to hold -- what you have in the record
- 15 is evidence --
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Mr. Garre, I -- I have
- 17 no problem that this record -- with this record. My
- 18 problem is how do we rule.
- Because it seems the me that I'm not quite
- 20 understanding what -- how -- the legal rule you're
- 21 asking us to announce. I think the legal rule, you're
- 22 saying, if the dog has been tested for proficiency by a
- 23 police department's determination of what's adequate for
- 24 proficiency, that establishes probable cause. That's
- 25 what I think the rule you want us to -- to do.

1	I don't know what the role of the judge is
2	in that
3	MR. GARRE: I think it would be close
4	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: with that rule.
5	MR. GARRE: close to that. We would ask
6	whether or not the dog successfully treated completed
7	training by a bona fide organization. And here
8	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No certification, no
9	questioning of the handler and the handler's training?
10	The judge can't do any of that and shouldn't do any of
11	that, is what you're saying.
12	MR. GARRE: Certification is not required.
13	It may be one way that the police department could
14	establish reliability a different way, but certification
15	itself is not required when you have a record of the
16	type of training that you have here.
17	We do think that you could put the handler
18	on the stand and ask about the reliability, certain
19	questions about reliability.
20	We don't think, in a record like this, the
21	judge would say, well, it says that he completed 120
22	hours in narcotics detection at the Apopka, Florida
23	police department, and 40 hours at the Dothan police
24	department, so
25	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So it's not enough for 9

- 1 you to win by us saying that a court can't insist on
- 2 performance in the field records, that it has to look at
- 3 the totality of the circumstances.
- 4 What other case have -- have we announced,
- 5 under a totality of the circumstance test, a absolute
- 6 flat rule like the one you're proposing? Where else
- 7 have we said that one thing alone establishes probable
- 8 cause --
- 9 MR. GARRE: Your Honor --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- that one factor
- 11 alone.
- 12 MR. GARRE: -- I think one area where the
- 13 Court mentioned that was in the Lago Vista case, where
- 14 it talked about the importance of clear rules for police
- 15 officers --
- 16 JUSTICE SCALIA: You know, I suppose that if
- 17 the reasonableness of a search depended upon some
- 18 evidence given by a medical doctor, the Court would not
- 19 go back and examine how well that doctor was trained at
- 20 Harvard Medical School and, you know, what classes he
- 21 took and so forth, right.
- MR. GARRE: Absolutely. And the same way
- 23 that when an officer provides evidence for a search
- 24 warrant, we don't demand the training of the officer,
- 25 what schools he went to or what specific courses he had 10

- 1 in probable cause.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Garre, you said there
- 3 was the certification, training program, but you gave a
- 4 third. You said, or otherwise show proficiency in
- 5 locating narcotics.
- 6 So if there is no certification, no
- 7 training, how would the state establish that the dog was
- 8 reliable in detecting drugs?
- 9 MR. GARRE: Your Honor, I think that that
- 10 would be the unusual case, and it probably would be
- 11 captured by the other factors; but, what we meant by
- 12 including that is that there's no limit on the types of
- 13 evidence that the police could submit to show
- 14 reliability.
- 15 If you didn't have certification or a formal
- 16 training program, the fact that there was evidence that
- 17 a dog like Aldo successfully performed in weekly
- 18 training over the course of the year, and the police
- 19 submitted the records, like the records in the Joint
- 20 Appendix in this case at pages 106 and 116, that might
- 21 be another way of establishing reliability.
- But the -- the central way would be showing
- 23 that the dog successfully completed training or that the
- 24 dog was certified.
- 25 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And I think you'll agree

- 1 that the handler, too, the handler would have to --
- MR. GARRE: Well, Your Honor, we don't think
- 3 there is a Fourth Amendment requirement of certification
- 4 for handlers. Again, this is something that varies
- 5 among states.
- 6 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Not -- not certification,
- 7 but that the handler has been -- has been trained --
- 8 MR. GARRE: Yes.
- 9 JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- to work with drug
- 10 detection dogs.
- 11 MR. GARRE: That's correct. And Officer
- 12 Wheetley here, of course, had been trained. He had
- 13 gotten a 160-hour course in narcotics detection, and had
- 14 done training with Aldo in the Dothan, Alabama police
- 15 department, 40 hours there.
- 16 And these dog -- the dog, Aldo, and Officer
- 17 Wheetley had worked together for about a year before the
- 18 time of the search.
- 19 The handlers themselves are going to be in
- 20 the best position to know the dogs and evaluate their
- 21 reliability. And they have a strong incentive to ensure
- the dogs are reliable. That's both because they don't
- 23 want to miss contraband when it's available -- when it
- 24 exists in the field; and, also, they don't want to be
- 25 put into harm's way.

- 1 The traffic stop, in particular, is one of
- 2 the most dangerous encounters police officers face.
- 3 They're not going to want to be working with a dog that
- 4 is consistently putting the officer in a position of
- 5 searching cars based on an alert when that dog is not
- 6 reliable in predicting the presence --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, I'm somewhat
- 8 troubled by all of the studies that have been presented
- 9 to the Court, particularly the Australian one where,
- 10 under a controlled setting, one dog alerted correctly
- 11 only 12 percent of the time.
- How and when and who determines when a dog's
- 13 reliability in alerting has reached a critical failure
- 14 number? And what is -- what do you suggest that number
- 15 is, and how does a judge determine that that's being
- 16 monitored?
- 17 MR. GARRE: We don't think the
- 18 Fourth Amendment puts a number on it. This Court has
- 19 rejected a numerical conception of probable cause.
- 20 But with respect to --
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, I'm deeply
- 22 troubled by a dog that alerts only 12 percent of the
- 23 time. That whatever -- whether we have a fixed number
- 24 or an unfixed number, that seems like less than
- 25 probability for me.

1	MR. GARRE: But, but let me let me
2	address the, the South Wales study, Your Honor, which I
3	think is the one that you were referring to and it's the
4	primary one relied on by the other side. In that case
5	they reported that over the course of several years the
6	dogs' alerts resulted in discovery of drugs only 26
7	percent of the time.
8	But there is another part of that study
9	which doesn't come up in the amicus briefs, and that's
_0	that in 60 percent of the other cases the individuals
.1	admitted to using drugs or being in the proximity of
_2	drugs. And if you include that in the universe of
_3	accurate alerts, as you should, then the number becomes
4	70 percent of dogs accurately alerting. That 70 percent
-5	based on the primary study that they rely upon
-6	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That doesn't answer what
_7	happens to the dogs who have dogs grow old. They are
-8	taken out of service for a reason. So how how is a
_9	court supposed to monitor whether or not a dog has
20	fallen out of
21	MR. GARRE: Well, primarily by looking at
22	whether the dog has successfully completed training.
23	And you're right, dogs do go out of service when they
24	reach a certain age. Dogs, like humans, become old and
25	impaired over time. But but looking at weekly

- 1 training records, like are available in this case, dogs
- 2 that successfully perform week in and week out in
- 3 training are going to successfully perform in the -- in
- 4 the real world.
- 5 And, after all, I think the most problematic
- 6 aspect of the challenges to the reliability of these
- 7 dogs is that law enforcement agencies across the country
- 8 at the state and Federal level, law enforcement agencies
- 9 around the world, and law enforcement agencies that
- 10 protect this Court rely on detection dogs as reliable
- 11 predictors of the evidence of contraband, evidence
- 12 of the presence of explosives or likewise.
- 13 And this is an area where we think that a
- 14 page of logic and experience is worth a volume -- a page
- of experience and history is worth a volume of logic.
- 16 These dogs have been used and are being used in many
- 17 settings across the country and across the world today.
- 18 And the reason they are being used is because the people
- 19 who work with them know that they are reliable and --
- 20 and know by experience that they are reliable.
- 21 And that's one of the central problems we
- 22 have with the argument on the other side, is that
- 23 ultimately this Court should distrust the reliability of
- 24 the dogs. And again --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Well, Mr. Garre, could I

- 1 understand your argument? Because -- suppose in a case
- 2 the government comes in, says this dog has been through
- 3 training and the handler has been through training. And
- 4 this is a case in which -- this is never going to come
- 5 up when the dog actually alerts to narcotics; it's not
- 6 worth anybody's time at that point.
- 7 It's only going to come up in a case like
- 8 this, where a dog alerts to narcotics, there is no --
- 9 there are no narcotics, but something else is found, and
- 10 so the person ends up being criminally prosecuted. So
- 11 it's, you know, a small universe of cases.
- So the government comes in and says that the
- 13 dog has been trained. Can -- can the criminal defendant
- 14 at that point call the handler, say, how has the dog
- 15 been trained, what are the methods that -- that the dog
- 16 has -- was used, and how did the dog do in training?
- 17 Can the -- can the defendant do that.
- 18 MR. GARRE: Your Honor, I think that the
- 19 defendant can call the handler and can ask those sorts
- 20 of questions. I think the court would cut it off if you
- 21 got into questions like, well, did they use the
- 22 play-reward or the scent-imprinting method in training.
- 23 Well, what specifics -- because I think that delves too
- 24 far into the details.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: But you can ask questions

- 1 like how did the dog do in training.
- MR. GARRE: Yes, and that was done here.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: And how about if you really,
- 4 if there were some articles that said, you know, that
- 5 there was a certain kind of method that, for example,
- 6 led to a lot of subconscious cueing by the handler.
- 7 Could the -- could the criminal defendant say, did you
- 8 use that method that leads to these problematic results?
- 9 MR. GARRE: I -- I don't think so, Your
- 10 Honor. First of all, cueing is not part of this case
- 11 because they haven't argued that the dog was cued. The
- 12 argument is the dog was just sort of inherently
- 13 reliable.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: I'm using "cueing" not in
- 15 terms of any intentionality, but one thing that I
- 16 learned in reading all of this was that one difficulty
- 17 here is that dogs respond to subconscious cues and that
- 18 there are different ways of training that make that less
- 19 or more of a problem.
- MR. GARRE: And our position is, is that you
- 21 can inquire into cueing during this hearing, that the
- 22 defendants can -- can argue that the dog was cued, and
- 23 in -- in the course of that argument you might be able
- 24 to get into those sorts of things. That's different
- 25 than the challenge that was made here. There wasn't a

1	cueing challenge made in this case.
2	I would like to just go back to one of the
3	premises of your question, which is that the dog in this
4	case didn't accurately alert. The dog in this case
5	accurately alerted to the odor of illegal narcotics.
6	JUSTICE KAGAN: Yes, I didn't mean to say
7	that. I just meant to say that there were there were
8	no drugs found.
9	MR. GARRE: Right. And, and I think that's
_0	another central problem with the Florida supreme court's
.1	decision, is this notion that alerts to so-called
_2	residual odors aren't indicative of the dog's
_3	reliability. A dog's alert to the lingering odor of
_4	methamphetamine which was in the car, must have been in
.5	the car in this case, is just as accurate as a dog's
_6	alert to the presence of methamphetamine itself in the
_7	car.
_8	If I could reserve the remainder of my time
_9	for rebuttal?
20	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
21	MR. GARRE: Thank you.
22	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Mr. Palmore.
23	ORAL ARGUMENT OF JOSEPH R. PALMORE,
24	FOR UNITED STATES, AS AMICUS CURIAE,
25	SUPPORTING THE PETITIONER 18

1 MR. PALMORE: Mr. Chief Justice and may it 2 please the Court: 3 This Court has long recognized the ability 4 of trained dogs to reliably detect target odors and such 5 dogs every day perform critical life and death homeland 6 security and law --7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, I have two separate questions for you. Tying the earlier case a 8 little bit to this one, I am assuming that your position 9 is -- and you'll tell me what the legal standard is --10 11 that a well-trained dog, if he alerts, or walks by a row 12 of apartments, a row of houses, and alerts to drugs, 13 that that simple alert is probable cause for the police 14 to get a search warrant. MR. PALMORE: Yes, we believe that an alert 15 16 by a trained dog is sufficient to establish probable 17 cause. JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So that, without any 18 other information about -- unlike the earlier case or 19 20 this one, where the police officer saw the individual being nervous, et cetera, et cetera -- that all -- all 21 22 it takes is a dog alert, despite the fact that there is 23 no study that says the dogs reliably alert 100 percent 24 of the time? 25 MR. PALMORE: 100 percent of the time is of

- 1 course not required for probable cause.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No, I -- I understand.
- 3 MR. PALMORE: It's a fair probability
- 4 standard and certainty is not required, and I think that
- 5 was the principal and fundamental flaw of the Florida
- 6 supreme court. It demanded infallibility where
- 7 infallibility is not required.
- 8 In terms of studies, it is actually well
- 9 studied --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So -- so shouldn't we be
- 11 addressing the question whether a -- an alert,
- 12 especially outside a home in particular, should be,
- 13 standing by itself, enough?
- 14 MR. PALMORE: I think what the Court -- of
- 15 course reliability is important. The question is how
- 16 you determine reliability. This is a somewhat unique
- 17 setting where the law enforcement tool is actually
- 18 tested initially and on an ongoing basis in a controlled
- 19 setting to establish its reliability. Your Honor asked
- 20 what the standard for bona fide training is.
- 21 We think the -- the important point is the
- 22 outcome of the training: Is the dog proficient? Can
- 23 the dog reliably detect narcotics odor and only
- 24 narcotics odor in a controlled setting where false
- 25 positives and false negatives can accurately be

1 measured? That record is established here. JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, only because the 2 3 officer said that he satisfactorily performed --4 MR. PALMORE: Well --JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- and what the Florida 5 6 court said: But we don't know what that means. 7 MR. PALMORE: Well, we -- I think we do know what it means, Your Honor. There are two different 8 showings that are made here. There is a formal training 9 and formal certification, both for the dog and the 10 11 handler separately, and then a separate training, formal 12 training together. 13 But then, just as important, you have ongoing, but less formal, proficiency exercises 14 15 conducted by the handler in which the dog, in a 16 controlled setting where errors could reliably be 17 identified, performed quite strongly, including 2 days before the arrest here. So that's JA 113 on June 22nd, 18 19 the dog performed perfectly in a controlled setting. 20 And we have -- there are records in this case going back several months before the arrest and 21 22 several months after the arrest showing that -- that 23 this dog passed the test, this dog was reliable. 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And you agree that 25 that's an appropriate area of inquiry?

Τ	MR. PALMORE: We think it is.
2	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The judge,
3	presented with, here's Aldo, he was went to this
4	school, he was certified, the judge can say, when was he
5	last tested, right? When did he last go through some
6	MR. PALMORE: Yes, I think the judge can ask
7	those kinds of questions.
8	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The the only
9	thing really you say they can't ask about is what's
10	what's his record.
11	MR. PALMORE: Well, there is a question
12	there are a couple sub-issues here. The principal vice
13	of the Florida supreme court was in imposing an
14	unprecedented and inflexible set of evidentiary
15	obligations that are part of the government's
16	affirmative case that the government has to always
17	introduce any time it seeks to establish probable cause
18	based on a dog alert. We think that's fundamentally
19	misplaced for a for a variety of reasons.
20	The question of what the government what
21	are fair game questions for a defendant to ask once the
22	handler is on the stand is a is a different question.
23	And
24	JUSTICE KENNEDY: And judges do this
25	thousands of times in thousands of cases. They ask: 22

- 1 Was the tip reliable? There are any number of
- 2 permutations. It's a question of whether or not the
- 3 trial judge was -- made a correct determination in
- 4 determining that there was or was not sufficient cause
- 5 for the police to proceed. It just happens every day.
- 6 MR. PALMORE: I think that's right, Your
- 7 Honor, but I think the -- the critical aspect of
- 8 reliability in this context is the dog's performance in
- 9 a controlled setting.
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Mr. Palmore, you
- 11 criticize the Florida supreme court for requiring
- 12 evidence of field performance; and, assuming that that
- 13 evidence is not required, if the defendant, in preparing
- 14 for the suppression motion, wants what information there
- is, would it be proper to seek -- for the defendant --
- 16 would it be permissible for the defendant to speak -- to
- 17 seek through discovery whatever field performance
- 18 records there are?
- 19 MR. PALMORE: We don't think so, certainly
- 20 not as a routine basis. The kind of burden that that
- 21 might impose on law enforcement we don't think is
- 22 justified.
- 23 That's a separate question from whether the
- 24 defendant can ask the handler, if the handler is on the
- 25 stand, about field performance, and then the court can

-							
1	give	that	answer	whatever	weight	lS	appropriate.

- We think, typically, an answer on field
- 3 performance is not going to be material. It's not going
- 4 to be helpful. Because the problem is in the field,
- 5 when a dog alerts, the dog is trained to alert to the
- 6 odor of drugs.
- 7 It's like a -- what the -- Florida supreme
- 8 court wanted a batting average, a batting average that
- 9 would be calculated when we know the number of at bats,
- 10 but we don't know in many cases whether there was a hit
- 11 or an out. So we had a fraction where we know the
- 12 denominator but not the numerator.
- 13 The answer to the Florida supreme court's
- 14 question and concern about reliability, again, is to go
- 15 back to the controlled setting, where we know what's a
- 16 hit and what's an out, and we can calculate a reliable
- 17 batting average. That needs to be where the focus
- 18 should be in determining the reliability of a dog.
- 19 And there should -- there's no reason to
- 20 constitutionalize the process or the training
- 21 methodologies that get you to that point. What matters
- 22 is, is this dog successful in a setting in which we can
- 23 measure success.
- And I think that it's also important to
- 25 point out that the Florida court was basically alone in

1	establishing	these	unprecedented	and	inflexible	sets	of

- 2 evidentiary requirements.
- 3 There is a large body of case law in the
- 4 lower courts on the reliability of drug detection dogs
- 5 going back 30 or 40 years, and there are no other
- 6 courts, no other appellate courts to be sure, that have
- 7 imposed these kinds of requirements on law enforcement
- 8 when it seeks to establish probable cause for a
- 9 detection -- for after a detection dog alerts.
- 10 JUSTICE KAGAN: If you take out the Florida
- 11 supreme court and this one trial court in Massachusetts,
- 12 basically you think what courts have been doing is the
- 13 right thing?
- 14 MR. PALMORE: In general. There is some
- 15 diversity across the courts, but I think that if you
- 16 look at Judge Gorsuch's opinion in the Ludwig case from
- 17 the Tenth Circuit, or the Jones case from the Virginia
- 18 supreme court, you see approaches that are basically
- 19 sound, where courts have confidence that if law
- 20 enforcement comes in and says, this dog is trained and
- 21 has demonstrated proficiency in a training setting, that
- 22 that dog is generally reliable.
- 23 And I think, as Mr. Garre --
- JUSTICE KAGAN: But where at the same time
- 25 they'll allow a defendant to question the handler about

- 1 that training, about how the dog has performed in that
- 2 training; is that right?
- 3 MR. PALMORE: Yes. Those questions can be
- 4 asked.
- 5 But I think it's critical, as Mr. Garre
- 6 pointed out, that the courts not constitutionalize dog
- 7 training methodologies or hold mini trials with expert
- 8 witnesses on what makes for a successful dog training
- 9 program. Because, as Mr. Garre said, the government has
- 10 critical interests, life and death interests, that it
- 11 stakes on the reliability of these dogs.
- So the U.S. Marshals use dogs to protect
- 13 Federal judges. The Federal Protective Services use
- 14 dogs to keep bombs out of Federal buildings. The TSA
- 15 uses dogs to keep bombs off of airplanes. FEMA uses
- 16 dogs to find survivors after hurricanes.
- 17 There are 32 K-9 teams in the field right
- 18 now in New York and New Jersey looking for survivors of
- 19 Hurricane Sandy.
- So, in situation after situation, the
- 21 government has in a sense put its money where its mouth
- 22 is, and it believes at an institutional level that these
- 23 dogs are quite reliable. And I think the courts --
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Do you -- I'm not
- 25 sure it's relevant, but do dogs -- does their ability --

- 1 is it even across the board? In other words, if you
- 2 have a dog that's trained and good at sniffing out
- 3 heroin, the same dog is going to be good at detecting a
- 4 bomb, or is there some difference?
- 5 MR. PALMORE: No, there -- well, I think any
- 6 dog could be trained in either discipline. And if you
- 7 look at the Scientific Working Group on Detection Dogs
- 8 report that we cite in our brief, the report explains
- 9 that the same general methodologies and the same
- 10 different -- same general approach is used to train each
- 11 kinds of dogs. But, typically, a drug detection dog
- 12 will not be cross-trained on explosives.
- 13 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: So you don't know
- 14 whether -- in other words, are dogs good at sniffing
- 15 things, or are they -- can they be good at bombs, but
- 16 not good at meth?
- MR. PALMORE: Well, I don't know the
- 18 specific answer to that. I think once a dog kind of
- 19 chooses a major, that's what they stick with. But I
- 20 think the important point is that --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: You don't want coon dogs
- 22 chasing squirrels.
- 23 MR. PALMORE: Right. But I think the
- 24 important point is that these dogs have to meet -- have
- 25 to pass proficiency in an initial training program, and

1	then they, as is shown in the record here in great
2	detail, they show proficiency on an ongoing basis,
3	including in this case two days before the arrest.
4	Thank you, Your Honor.
5	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
6	Mr. Gifford.
7	ORAL ARGUMENT OF GLEN P. GIFFORD
8	ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENT
9	MR. GIFFORD: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
10	please the Court:
11	There is no canine exception to the totality
12	of the circumstances test for probable cause to conduct
13	a warrantless search. If that is true, as it must be,
L4	any fact that bears on a dog's reliability as a detector
15	of the presence of drugs comes within the purview of the
16	courts. This can encompass evidence of initial
17	training, certification, maintenance training and
18	performance in the field.
19	JUSTICE KENNEDY: Do you understand the
20	government to disagree with that general position? In
21	other words, the trial court, if you have an attorney
22	that's really concerned about the training of this dog,
23	they can ask about it.
24	MR. GIFFORD: I do understand the government

25

- 1 And where I specifically think the government disagrees
- 2 is on the level of detail that can be inquired into by
- 3 the trial court on any of these elements.
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: I didn't think they
- 5 disagreed about what he may do; I thought they disagreed
- 6 about what he must do. That is, the Florida supreme
- 7 court said you must, da, da, da, da, and gave a
- 8 whole list. I thought that's what the case was about.
- 9 MR. GIFFORD: Well, the Florida supreme
- 10 court did have several passages in its opinion where it
- 11 talked about what the state must produce. And at first
- 12 glance, that looks rather didactic.
- 13 However, what I think the Florida supreme
- 14 court was saying there was that if this -- these records
- 15 exist, the state must produce them. And that is
- 16 consistent with the state's burden of proof to justify a
- 17 warrantless search.
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: Well, that's a totally
- 19 different matter. Of course, I agree with you that a
- 20 trial judge has control of the trial. He's likely to
- 21 know what's relevant. In different circumstances,
- 22 different matters will be, and he has first say on what
- 23 you're going to go into. It's the must.
- And now you're on the point. Why is that
- 25 the right list? I mean, what in the Constitution

- 1 requires that list?
- 2 MR. GIFFORD: I don't believe the
- 3 Constitution requires it, and I don't believe --
- 4 JUSTICE BREYER: Doesn't the Supreme Court
- 5 believes the Constitution requires it?
- 6 MR. GIFFORD: No, I don't think so, even
- 7 though they used the word "must." I think that the
- 8 "must" concerns performance records and training records
- 9 that exist.
- 10 Farther down in the opinion, the court says
- 11 reasons why the -- why the state should keep and present
- 12 performance records --
- JUSTICE BREYER: But what --
- 14 JUSTICE GINSBURG: So if the state doesn't
- 15 keep -- if the state doesn't keep any performance
- 16 records, then there would be no field performance to
- 17 show, but that doesn't mean the state loses; is that
- 18 what you're saying?
- 19 The state doesn't keep performance records.
- 20 The Florida supreme court seems to say field performance
- 21 records are required.
- MR. GIFFORD: If the state does not keep
- 23 field performance records, that is a fact, that is a
- 24 lack of evidence that could be held against the state in
- 25 the suppression hearing. And it shifts the focus onto 30

- 1 providing evidence of the initial training, the
- 2 certification, and the maintenance training that can
- 3 show to the trial court that this is a reliable dog.
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: Now I thought the
- 5 court said -- held against the state. I thought what
- 6 the Florida court was saying is if you didn't produce
- 7 it, the dog's evidence would -- would not be allowed --
- 8 MR. GIFFORD: They did use --
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: -- the search is invalid.
- 10 MR. GIFFORD: The court did use the word
- 11 must --
- 12 JUSTICE SCALIA: Yes.
- 13 MR. GIFFORD: -- but it's not -- it's not a
- 14 specific recipe that can't be deviated from. Because,
- in addition to listing the records that must be
- 16 produced, the Florida supreme court also said, and all
- other evidence that bears on the reliability of the dog.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: Even worse.
- 19 MR. GIFFORD: So it's not a specific recipe,
- 20 and it's talking about what -- if these records exist,
- 21 they must be produced.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: Are you conceding that
- 23 the Florida supreme court, at least with respect to the
- 24 field performance records, was wrong, that they -- it is
- 25 not a Fourth Amendment requirement?

1	MR. GIFFORD: I don't think they I don't
2	think they require field performance records to
3	establish
4	JUSTICE GINSBURG: But they outline what the
5	government must prove, and that was one of them.
6	MR. GIFFORD: They said what the government
7	must produce if those records exist. But when you go
8	down to the part of the opinion where the court applies
9	the law to the facts, the court didn't just say, because
10	there were no field performance records, no probable
11	cause, we close up shop, conviction reversed.
12	What the court did was take into
13	consideration the lack of field performance records, the
14	lack of any records about initial training and
15	certification aside from the fact that this dog had a
16	certificate.
17	And we have to remember that this
18	certificate, not only was it 16 months out of date, it
19	wasn't a certificate for Aldo. It was a certificate for
20	Aldo and a Seminole County deputy together as a team.
21	This dog was never certified as part of a
22	team with Officer Wheetley in this case. And the
23	certifications in this area are team certifications, not
24	individual certifications.
25	JUSTICE SCALIA: Is that a requirement too?

32

- 1 That's a constitutional requirement, that the dog
- 2 training doesn't count unless it's training with the
- 3 officer who is using the dog?
- 4 MR. GIFFORD: No, but that's an indicator of
- 5 reliability, which is the ultimate test here, has this
- 6 team been trained and certified together --
- 7 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, fine. counsel can
- 8 bring that up. Counsel can bring that up at the hearing
- 9 before the judge. But -- but I understood this to be
- 10 a -- a requirement. You never even get to that hearing,
- 11 because there's no evidence that this dog was ever
- 12 trained with this policeman.
- 13 MR. GIFFORD: That's correct, there is no
- 14 such evidence.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Yes, and therefore end of
- 16 case, right?
- 17 MR. GIFFORD: No, not end of case. The fact
- 18 that the dog wasn't trained with this policeman means
- 19 that you need to look for evidence -- other evidence of
- 20 reliability, which also doesn't exist in this case.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Well --
- 22 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Doesn't this -- this
- 23 officer has been working with this dog for many months.
- 24 They have training periods every week. So why isn't
- 25 that enough to show that this handler and this dog

- worked effectively as a team?
- 2 MR. GIFFORD: Well, first, this weekly
- 3 training is maintenance training. It's to maintain the
- 4 dog at a level of proficiency that has previously been
- 5 established. That level of proficiency hadn't been
- 6 established with this team of Wheetley and Aldo. The
- 7 level of proficiency that had been established was with
- 8 Wheetley and with another Seminole County deputy.
- 9 JUSTICE SCALIA: What -- what are
- 10 the -- what are the incentives here? Why would a police
- 11 department want to use an incompetent dog? Is that any
- 12 more likely than that a medical school would want to
- 13 certify an incompetent doctor? What -- what incentive
- 14 is there for a police department?
- 15 MR. GIFFORD: The incentive is to acquire
- 16 probable cause to search when it wouldn't otherwise --
- 17 otherwise be available.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: And that's a good thing?
- 19 MR. GIFFORD: Is that a good thing?
- 20 JUSTICE SCALIA: I mean, you acquire
- 21 probable cause, you go in and there's nothing there.
- 22 You've wasted the time of your police officers, you've
- 23 wasted a lot of time.
- MR. GIFFORD: And -- and you've invaded the
- 25 privacy of an individual motorist who was innocent.

1	JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, maybe the police
2	department doesn't care about that, but it certainly
3	cares about wasting the time of its police officers in
4	fruitless searches.
5	MR. GIFFORD: The incentive of the officer
6	to be able to conduct a search when he doesn't otherwise
7	have probable cause is a powerful incentive. As the
8	Court has said, ferreting out crime is a competitive
9	enterprise. And also, these
10	JUSTICE SCALIA: Willy-nilly. Officers just
11	like to search. They don't particularly want to search
12	where they're likely to find something. They just like
13	to search. So let's get dogs that, you know, smell
14	drugs when there are no drugs. You really think that
15	that's what's going on here?
16	MR. GIFFORD: Officers like to search so
17	that they can get probable cause so that they can
18	advance their career. Forfeiture is also an issue.
19	JUSTICE SCALIA: They like to search where
20	they're likely to find something, and that only exists
21	when the dog is well trained. It seems to me they have
22	every incentive to train the dog well.
23	MR. GIFFORD: But the question goes back to
24	the dog's reliability, what the officer knows
25	objectively, and what that officer can demonstrate on 35

- 1 the stand to the trial court to determine by the
- 2 totality of the circumstances that that dog is well
- 3 trained.
- 4 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Getting back to --
- 5 I'm confused about the difference between must and is
- 6 required. What if the judge has before him or her a
- 7 record, this is where the dog went to school and it's a
- 8 bona fide school, this is where the dog was certified,
- 9 he's trained every -- every, you know, couple of weeks
- 10 or whatever it is, and the judge says, do you have any
- 11 field records, and the officer says, no, and the
- 12 drug says -- the judge says, well, then no probable
- 13 cause. That's reversible error, right?
- 14 MR. GIFFORD: It is reversible error if we
- 15 know what went into the training and certification. Was
- 16 that training and certification sufficient to prove the
- 17 dog was reliable? Did it include the use of blanks and
- 18 did the --
- 19 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You have, I quess,
- 20 experts testify about whether -- what constitutes a good
- 21 training program.
- MR. GIFFORD: No, not necessarily experts,
- 23 but simply the -- the officer who participated with the
- 24 dog can testify as to what he and the dog went through
- 25 to obtain the training certificate and the -- and the

- 1 certification.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: Oh, I assure you that if we
- 3 agree with you there will be a whole body of experts
- 4 that will spring into being about dog training. I
- 5 assure you that that will be the case.
- 6 MR. GIFFORD: Those experts already exist.
- 7 They -- they are prevalent in the case law already.
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I understood the Florida
- 9 supreme court, counselor, to say that the deficit in the
- 10 training records here was because there was no evidence
- of false positives, that the reports didn't say, the
- 12 training reports didn't say, if the dog was alerting
- 13 falsely.
- 14 Assume that the record, as your adversary
- 15 claimed, shows the opposite, that a satisfactory
- 16 completion means that the dog detected drugs where they
- 17 were. What -- why wouldn't the training records here be
- 18 adequate in that circumstance?
- 19 MR. GIFFORD: That would be one of several
- 20 showings that would make the training records adequate.
- 21 Also, you would want to know whether there were
- 22 distractors used in the field. However, I don't believe
- 23 that the record supports, except -- and this is
- 24 arguable; the parties dispute this -- for the
- 25 maintenance training.

All the state had for the initial training

1

2	with Deputy Morris, not with Deputy Wheetley, was a
3	certificate: One certificate that said this dog was
4	trained by the Apopka Police Department for 120 hours
5	with Deputy Morris; another certificate saying that this
6	dog was certified by Drug Beat narcotics certifications,
7	again with Deputy Morris, for 1 year.
8	JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I I guess what I'm
9	asking you is, as a matter of law you want us to hold
0	that training records are inadequate unless what?
1	Unless you're going to specify now a list of things
2	they have to include?
.3	MR. GIFFORD: No. This Court in in a
_4	number of circumstances has provided examples that can
_5	guide a court in probable cause determinations. In
. 6	Illinois v. Gates, under the old Aguilar-Spinelli test,
_7	the Court specified where evidence on one prong can be
-8	so strong that it substitutes for evidence on another
_9	prong. In Ornelas, the Court pointed to local knowledge
20	that can be relied upon, such as the winter climate in
21	Milwaukee.
22	JUSTICE SCALIA: But, counsel, you're
23	defending a Florida supreme court opinion which says
24	"must." You can't just say, you know, I'm not asserting
25	any particular thing is necessary, just, you know, 38

- 1 totality of the circumstances. You have an opinion here
- 2 in which the Florida supreme court says "must." It must
- 3 include the, you know, the field training. Now, do --
- 4 do you disavow that or -- or do you want us the ignore
- 5 it? What?
- 6 MR. GIFFORD: That is -- that is not the
- 7 holding on which I'm relying here. The holding on which
- 8 I'm relying is that training and certification alone,
- 9 the mere fact of training and certification alone, is
- 10 not sufficient to establish the dog's reliability.
- And as to the language about "must,"
- 12 remember, the Florida supreme court didn't just say that
- 13 the failure to produce one of these elements
- 14 necessitated reversal.
- 15 It then went and engaged in a totality of
- 16 the circumstances test. And several lower courts
- 17 applying that case, applying Harris, have reached the
- 18 same conclusion. In two of those cases --
- 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: But this is absent in the
- 20 totality of the circumstances and you nonetheless hold
- 21 that there was probable cause, then "must" does not mean
- 22 "must," right?
- 23 MR. GIFFORD: "Must" means "must" if the
- 24 state has the records. If the records exist, then the
- 25 state must produce them because it bears --

1	JUSTICE GINSBURG: That's not what the
2	Florida supreme court said? It listed, along with
3	training, that the the provision of records of field
4	performance.
5	MR. GIFFORD: I read that as: If those
6	records exist, the state must produce them, because not
7	only does it bear the burden of proof; it's the only
8	party that can produce these records because it keeps
9	the dog.
LO	JUSTICE GINSBURG: Suppose it's it's a
11	dog that's just completed the training, training course
12	top-performing dog in the training program, but there's
13	no field record.
L4	MR. GIFFORD: If that if the training is
15	sufficient, if it has those elements that demonstrate
16	that the dog is reliable, those are the circumstances.
17	You have the totality of the circumstances there and
18	those circumstances don't include any field performance
19	And, yes, under that circumstance, a trial court can
20	find the dog to be reliable.
21	JUSTICE ALITO: What is wrong with the
22	state's argument that field performance records are not
23	very probative because dogs detect odors, they don't
24	detect the physical presence of the substance that
25	created the odor, and therefore so-called false alerts,

- 1 cases in which a search was performed and no contraband
- 2 was found are not really cases of false alerts. What's
- 3 wrong with that?
- 4 MR. GIFFORD: Well, you don't know whether
- 5 they're cases of false alerts or not, because the state
- 6 will always point to the possibility of residual odor as
- 7 a reason. And we know from the studies that have been
- 8 cited in the briefs that there are other reasons that
- 9 dogs alert when that alert cannot be verified. Handler
- 10 cueing is identified as the chief one. And simply dogs
- 11 make mistakes. Dogs err. Dogs get excited and will
- 12 alert to things like tennis balls in trunks or animals,
- 13 that sort of thing.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, that may all be true,
- 15 but then what -- what can one infer from the fact that a
- 16 dog alerted a number of times when no contraband was
- 17 found?
- 18 I think what you just said was the
- 19 explanation could be the dog detected an odor, but the
- 20 substance wasn't there, or it could be that the dog was
- 21 cued or the dog was confused or the dog is not very
- 22 competent. So what can one infer from these field
- 23 performance records?
- MR. GIFFORD: Well, what you can infer is
- 25 this dog is not a very accurate indicator of probable

- 1 cause, because probable cause tests whether drugs are
- 2 likely to be found in a search that follows an alert.
- 3 If the dog's --
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: But they are likely to be
- 5 found if there is a residual odor of drugs, even though
- 6 the drugs are no longer there. So it's not an
- 7 incompetent dog when he alerts because of the residual
- 8 odor.
- 9 MR. GIFFORD: But if a dog has -- but if a
- 10 dog has previously alerted and no drugs have been found
- 11 because the dog's hyperacuity causes him to smell drugs
- 12 that were there two days or two weeks ago, then the next
- 13 time that dog alerts, it's less likely, the probability
- 14 declines that drugs will be found.
- 15 It goes to what probable cause measures,
- 16 rather than what the dog training and certification
- 17 community measure, and that is, the likelihood, the
- 18 reasonable probability, that drugs will be found
- 19 following the search.
- JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Counsel, how is that any
- 21 different than a police officer who comes to a car and
- 22 smells marijuana? He's never going to know whether
- 23 there is any more in the car or not. It could have been
- 24 smoked up an hour before. I don't know how long
- 25 marijuana lingers for, but -- I'm not sure why residual

- 1 odor affects the reliability of the dog, which was
- 2 Justice Scalia's point. It's no different than an
- 3 officer who smells something.
- 4 He doesn't actually know whether it's
- 5 physically still present or not, but we're talking about
- 6 probabilities.
- 7 MR. GIFFORD: That's correct. And -- and
- 8 the difference is that -- that the police officer can
- 9 describe what he has smelled and can say, I smell
- 10 marijuana. All the dog tells the police officer is, I
- 11 smell something I was trained to detect, perhaps, if I'm
- 12 operating correctly.
- But getting to this -- this issue of
- 14 residual odor, our position is that an alert where no
- 15 drugs are found means that the dog -- that -- it
- 16 detracts from probable cause in that instance.
- But that's not the only rule available to
- 18 the court. Residual odor, whether an alert was to
- 19 residual odor and is therefore correct and accurate, is
- 20 something that can be litigated.
- 21 In one of the lower courts that decided the
- 22 case after the Florida supreme court, the court looked
- 23 to the field performance records, and it found several
- 24 of them well supported on the issue of whether the alert
- was probably to the odor of drugs; several it didn't

- 1 find. So that is an issue that can be litigated.
- 2 Another possibility is --
- JUSTICE ALITO: Well, excuse me.
- 4 Where -- when nothing is found, how can you tell whether
- 5 the dog alerted to a residual odor or simply made a
- 6 mistake?
- Now, there may be cases where there is other
- 8 evidence that suggests that drugs were present in that
- 9 location, and, therefore, that is something from which
- 10 you can infer that the dog was alerting to residual
- 11 odor; but, the fact that you don't have evidence of that
- 12 doesn't mean that there wasn't residual odor.
- 13 MR. GIFFORD: No, it doesn't mean that there
- 14 wasn't residual odor. But, again, you go back to what
- 15 probable cause measures, I believe.
- 16 And the Florida supreme court didn't demand
- 17 evidence of residual odor. What it did is it said that
- 18 if field performance records exist, then the state can
- 19 explain unverified alerts in the field as residual odor,
- 20 and then a court can then evaluate that.
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What's the magic
- 22 number? What percentage of accurate alerts or
- 23 inaccurate is enough for probable cause?
- MR. GIFFORD: Well, this Court has always
- 25 hesitated to assign percentages to probable cause; but,

- 1 in the lower courts, once you get below 50 percent,
- 2 probable cause is much less likely to be found, assuming
- 3 that there is no other corroborative evidence, no other
- 4 reasonable suspicion factors.
- 5 I'd like to talk briefly about the Oregon
- 6 supreme court and what that court did in several cases.
- 7 Helzer and Foster decided in 2011,
- 8 independently of the Florida supreme court decision,
- 9 doesn't cite -- in Foster, the Oregon supreme court had
- 10 a dog that trained initially with the same handler,
- 11 unlike here, where the evidence was very strong as to
- 12 the features of the training and certification program,
- 13 and where that dog had, I believe, a 66 percent field
- 14 performance record.
- Now, the court in Foster said that the dog's
- 16 reliability can be established by training,
- 17 certification, and performance in the field. The court
- 18 added that it didn't think that performance in the field
- 19 was the most reliable measure, but it's relevant, and
- 20 the court considered that 66 percent percentage.
- But then, on the same day, in Helzer, there
- 22 was a dog that trained initially with a different
- 23 handler, that the handler ultimately testified to very
- 24 few details of the ongoing training and the
- 25 certification.

1	In Foster, the certification was with an
2	organization that required a 90 percent success rate.
3	In Helzer, there was no such testimony.
4	And this officer, like the officer here,
5	didn't keep field performance records when the dog
6	alerted and no drugs were found.
7	In Helzer, the court found that there was
8	insufficient evidence of reliability. And I believe
9	that those two cases demonstrate what is a what is a
10	correct line to draw in navigating what is reliable.
11	On several arguments made by the state, the
12	argument was that the maintenance training included
13	blanks, and that the dog did not alert to blanks. The
14	record, we believe, supports the Florida supreme court's
15	conclusion that blanks were tested the dog was tested
16	on blanks, but there was no testimony as to whether the
17	dog didn't alert on those blanks.
18	The state has said that the dog was
19	subsequently recertified. I don't find support in the
20	record for that. At a suppression hearing, the state
21	argued the officer testified that the dog was
22	scheduled for another certification, but we don't know
23	whether the dog was ever recertified.
24	The Court can affirm the Florida supreme
25	court simply on the failure to produce adequate

1	documentation	of	certification	and	initial	training,	and
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- 2 on the fact that this dog was never certified with this
- 3 trainer -- with this handler and didn't initially work
- 4 with this handler.
- 5 You don't have a dog here who was reliable
- 6 enough to demonstrate probable cause. The Florida
- 7 supreme court so concluded. I believe its conclusion
- 8 was correct. And unless there are additional
- 9 questions...
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: The alert -- the alert
- 11 here could have been to residual odor, or it could have
- 12 been to drugs inside the pickup truck. If it's --
- 13 because the alert was in front of the -- a front door
- 14 handle, is that -- so it -- it's equally likely that
- 15 it -- that it was just residual odor or that there were
- 16 drugs inside the pickup truck.
- 17 Can the police establish probable cause
- 18 when what the dog alerted to may well have been residual
- 19 odor and nothing inside? The dog didn't alert anyplace
- 20 other than the door handle, is that...
- 21 MR. GIFFORD: It can constitute probable
- 22 cause. What Officer Wheetley testified to in this case
- 23 was he believed that this alert was to residual odor
- 24 on the door handle --
- JUSTICE KENNEDY: Excuse me. Did you say it

- 1 can or it can't?
- 2 MR. GIFFORD: It may. It can
- 3 constitute probable cause in this case.
- 4 Officer Wheetley testified that this dog
- 5 alerted to the door handle. And in his prior
- 6 experience, when the dog alerts to the door handle, it
- 7 means that someone who had smoked or consumed drugs or
- 8 handled drugs had touched the door handle.
- Now, if Officer Wheetley had testified that
- 10 in his experience when he'd seen such alerts and
- 11 conducted a search, drugs were found inside the vehicle,
- 12 then that residual odor alert would support probable
- 13 cause.
- 14 Officer Wheetley did not so testify. There
- 15 was insufficient evidence that this residual odor
- 16 alert -- that a residual odor alert of this nature,
- 17 without finding drugs afterward, supports probable
- 18 cause.
- 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: But at least we don't have
- 20 to worry about mothballs in this case; is that right?
- 21 There are no mothballs?
- 22 (Laughter.)
- 23 MR. GIFFORD: No. No mothballs to my
- 24 knowledge. No, Your Honor.
- JUSTICE ALITO: Was that the holding in the 48

1	Florida	supreme	court,	that	there	was	no	probable	cause

- 2 because the dog alerted to the wrong part of the truck?
- 3 MR. GIFFORD: No, Your Honor.
- 4 JUSTICE ALITO: Was it any part of their
- 5 reasoning?
- 6 MR. GIFFORD: They were concerned about
- 7 residual odor alerting without any explanation by the
- 8 state as to how residual odor alerting supports probable
- 9 cause.
- 10 But the primary basis for its decision was
- 11 the lack of performance records and the lack of records
- 12 supporting initial training and certification to show
- 13 that this dog was reliable.
- 14 JUSTICE GINSBURG: And if we think they were
- 15 wrong in that respect, I suppose that you would say the
- 16 Court shouldn't reverse, but should vacate and remand
- 17 because the question did alert him to the door handle,
- 18 was that enough? Was that enough to establish probable
- 19 cause that there were drugs in the vehicle?
- 20 MR. GIFFORD: Well, I don't think the door
- 21 handle itself is -- is dispositive. I think it's the
- 22 door handle plus the lack of evidence that we have a
- 23 reliable dog.
- And, again, the reason you need a reliable
- 25 dog, evidence on what training and certification means,

1	is that there are no standards, no standards whatsoever
2	for initial training.
3	Some states do have standards for training
4	and certification. Florida does not. And no standards
5	for for maintenance training as well.
6	In order to have probable cause, you have to
7	know what that certification, what that training means,
8	if you don't have standards that will tell that for you.
9	If there are no additional questions, I'll
10	conclude.
11	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
12	Mr. Garre, you have 3 minutes.
13	REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF GREGORY G. GARRE
14	ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONER
15	MR. GARRE: Thank you, Your Honor.
16	First, probable cause in this Court's
17	precedents looks not only to the likelihood that
18	contraband would be present, but the likelihood that
19	there would be evidence of a crime. And that would
20	include the so-called residual odor, evidence that drug
21	paraphernalia, someone had recently smoked illegal
22	narcotics in the vehicle, or the like.
23	So the alert to the so-called residual odor

probable cause as an alert to drugs themselves. 50

of drugs is just as probative to the question of

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1	The fact that Aldo alerted to the door
2	handle area of the car doesn't negate in any way the
3	probable cause that Officer Wheetley had to search.
4	What it means is that the door handle area was where the
5	scent of the illegal narcotics was the strongest. It
6	could have been narcotics coming out of that area, or
7	coming out of the door seam, or could have been the fact
8	that someone who had used narcotics was using the door
9	handle to get in and out of the car.
10	Second, courts can determine reliability in
11	this context. They would look to the performance in the
12	controlled training environment. There is a real danger
13	with suggesting that field performance records are
14	are a permissible foray for defendants in suppression
15	hearings to challenge the reliability of dogs because,
16	one, as Justice Alito pointed out, it's not a controlled
17	setting.
18	We don't know whether the dog did alert to
19	residual odors of narcotics that had been in the car,
20	drugs that were hidden and simply not found during
21	the relatively
22	JUSTICE SCALIA: Would you would you
23	allow counsel to ask about that?
24	MR. GARRE: I think they could ask about it,
25	Your Honor. I don't think they could demand the

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1	performance	records	themselves.	And	that	would	be	а
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- 2 huge deterrent to law enforcement, even maintaining
- 3 those records.
- 4 Third, Officer Wheetley and Aldo did train
- 5 together for nearly a year before the search in
- 6 question. They did complete the 40-hour drug detection
- 7 seminar at the Dothan, Alabama, police department. And
- 8 that certificate's at page 105 of the record.
- 9 And second, as Justice Scalia pointed out,
- 10 all the incentives in this area are aligned with
- 11 ensuring the reliability of drug detection dogs. It's
- 12 not in the police interest to have a dog that is
- inaccurate in finding contraband or that is inaccurate
- 14 and putting an officer in harm's way.
- 15 Humans have relied upon dogs for law
- 16 enforcement-related purposes, due to their extraordinary
- 17 sense of smell, for centuries. Dogs, trained drug
- 18 detection dogs and explosive detection dogs, are
- 19 invaluable members of the law enforcement community
- 20 today.
- 21 We would ask the Court to reverse the
- 22 decision below, which would act as a serious detriment
- 23 to the use of that valuable tool.
- 24 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- MR. GARRE: Thank you, Your Honor.

1	CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: The case is
2	submitted.
3	(Whereupon, at 12:01 p.m., the case in the
4	above-entitled matter was submitted.)
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