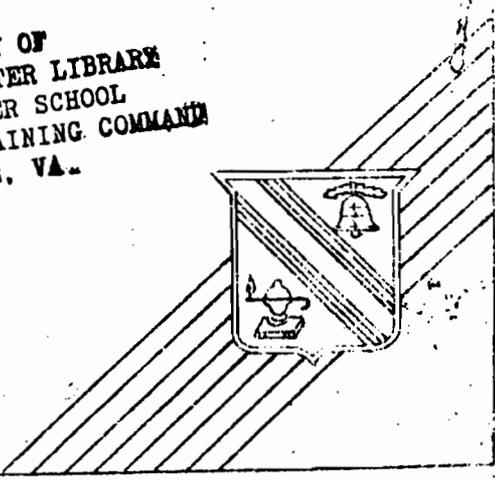


The Infantry Scout Dog Platoon Guide

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The Infantry Scout Dog Platoon Guide

The information in this manual is published for the guidance of all concerned.

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SECTION I

GENERAL

1. General. Infantry Scout Dog Platoons are a capable and valuable adjunct when properly trained and used. They are tactical units only, and have no means of providing administration. Essential information on the tactical use and administration of these platoons is covered in this guide. For information on detailed care of dogs and their basic training, see TM 10-396.

2. Scout Dog. Characteristics of a scout dog must be understood in order to get the maximum advantage from his use. The silent scout dog is trained to detect and give silent warning of the presence of any individual or group, other than the one with which it is working. The dog will prove especially useful in warning of ambushes or attempts at infiltration. Each scout dog is handled continuously by one man, who has been especially trained in this type of work; he works on leash, in darkness, preferable in open country, in almost any kind of weather. The scout dog uses all his sense of smell. Use of a scout dog is justified when circumstances and conditions are such that the dog can smell further than a man can see. The scout dog is aware of and gives silent warning of a nearby person long before such presence can be detected by a human. The distance at which warning is given depends upon a number of factors, some of which are: Ability of the handler to understand his dog, ability and condition of dog, wind direction and velocity, volume of concentration of human scent, humidity, density of vegetation, and volume of noise or other confusing factors in the vicinity of activity.

SECTION II

CAPABILITIES AND LIMITATIONS

3. General. There are many factors that influence the effective use of scout dogs. These factors must be considered in relation to a contemplated mission. Knowledge of these factors will prevent the assignment of dogs to missions which are beyond their ability and will insure their use where they will be of considerable assistance. This is comparable to the use of supporting weapons in a tactical operation.

4. Detailed Factors Effecting Efficiency of Scout Dogs.

a. Direction of wind. A dog is most sensitive to scents upwind and least sensitive to scents downwind. The dog is worked cutting the wind whenever possible so as to get the most wind from area being scouted. Distances at which dogs can pick up the scent of humans varies with conditions, circumstances, and dogs. Quartering winds have varying effects on this distance, depending upon velocity and direction. (See Figure 1)

b. Terrain. Flat open terrain gives the dog a longer scent range,

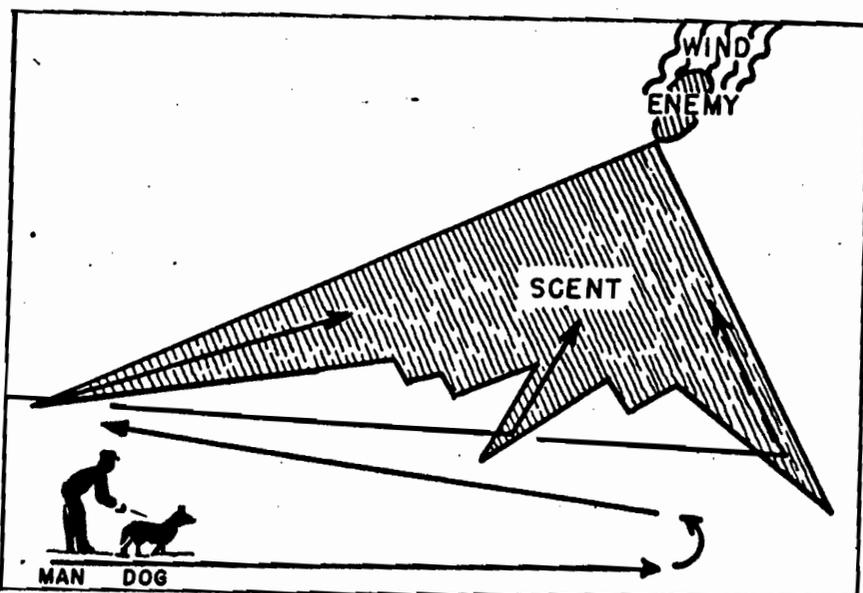


FIG. 1- ROUTE OF THE MASTER AND SILENT SCOUT DOG IN QUARTERING A GIVEN AREA. FINAL ARROWS INDICATE POINTS AT WHICH THE DOG PICKS UP 'ENEMY'S' SCENT.

whereas hilly terrain, with its changing winds and thermal currents, gives varying results which tend to shorten the alerting range. Jungle or heavy woods on flat terrain restrict the alerting range.

c. Strength of scent. The dog will detect large groups of persons sooner than small groups or individuals and, in general, his reaction will be greater. Recently used bivouac areas containing human scent will cause the dog to become alert. The scout dog will react to friend as well as foe, and therefore he will give the same attention to friendly outposts or patrols as to those of the enemy. Most dogs do not become alerted by dead bodies.

d. Climatic conditions. Scout dogs work best during cool weather. Cool, moist air provides better conditions than hot, dry air. Their efficiency decreases as the severity of the weather increases. They are practically useless in extreme cold, extremely wet weather, or deep snow. Mud collects on the dog's bellies and footpads, causing them to tire and stop frequently. Gusty or intermittent winds may cause the dog to give confusing alerts.

e. Condition of dogs. Fresh dogs, like fresh men, work best. Continuous service for extended periods of time will tire dogs and the dogs will be less efficient towards the end of the period. They require rest the same as other animals and cannot keep going continuously. Cross country ability varies with the dog, and, in general, compares with that of a man. However, when a dog tires, his effectiveness decreases sharply.

f. Noise. All dogs are sensitive to intense noises. A moderate amount of noise, such as small arms fire and grenades, will not distract the dog from his work. However, a noisy, laugh-



FIG. 2 PATROL LED BY SCOUT DOG

or talking patrol will divert his attention. Shell fire of mortars and artillery, when close in, makes dogs extremely nervous. The effect differs with dogs and the length of time they are subjected to shelling. Continuous, day after day exposure to battle noises should be avoided by rotating dogs to rear areas.

g. Individual ability. Each scout dog has certain individual ability tolerances, depending on conditions. As experience in scouting increases, the better trained the dog becomes. Combat duty provides the best training with just enough rest to keep him in good condition. He requires continuous training when not engaged in combat duty. Ability and discipline decrease rapidly during long periods of idleness or continued patrolling without alerting contacts (a month or more), necessitating a period of retraining before further use in combat.

SECTION III

EMPLOYMENT

5. General. The scout dog and his handler are the basic tactical element of the platoon. Normally one handler with a dog is assigned to a small unit for a short mission. The handler and dog can, in general, be considered as a highly sensitive and alert scouting and detecting element.

6. Reconnaissance patrols. The patrol leader indicates to the dog handler the mission, general direction of advance, and any special instructions. He then directs the patrol to move out. The scout dog and handler, with a covering rifleman preferably armed with a automatic weapon, precede the patrol at a distance which will permit immediate communication with the patrol leader. The scout dog and



FIG. 3-A SCOUT DOG ON OUTPOST.

his handler move out, keeping generally in the assigned direction, utilizing cover, and proceed so as best to take advantage of wind and other conditions favoring the dog's power of scenting. The patrol leader may, from time to time, change the direction of the patrol's advance. In general, however, it is advisable to allow the scout dog and his handler to move on the front assigned at will. Upon the scout dog's warning of an unusual presence, the handler from concealed position immediately signals "enemy in sight" whereupon the patrol leader at once causes his patrol to halt and take cover. He then proceeds to the handler to obtain available information. Depending upon the type of contact, the dog may be withdrawn to the rear of the patrol. Also depending upon the nature of

the information received, the patrol leader takes steps to observe the enemy, to avoid discovery, or to retire. He may proceed in a new direction or bypass the enemy, preceded as before by the scout dog and his handler.

7. Combat patrol. The procedure is the same as above, except that after the patrol leader has been informed of the definite location of the suspected enemy, the scout dog and his handler immediately withdraw to the rear of the patrol. Upon elimination of any opposition, the patrol may continue its mission, preceded as before by the scout dog and handler.

8. Outpost. In any outpost position the main value of the scout dog is to give timely warning of the approach or attempts of infiltration through the outpost line of observation. The scout dog and handler are placed on the front line of the outpost in a foxhole large enough for both dog and man. Except during an attack by ground troops or shelling by artillery or mortar, the dog should be placed on top and directly in front of the foxhole with leash tied to the handler's arm or leg. The dog handler's foxhole should be in a position within arm's reach of foxholes on his flank containing regular armed guards with automatic weapons. On any occasion when the dog alerts he should be taken into the foxhole and should remain there until the situation has been taken care of by the security group commander. (See Figures 3 & 4)

9. Static security groups; combat groups; isolated positions. The use of the scout dog on all of these missions is substantially that as outlined for outpost duty. In all cases, local commanders should realize that the dog's handler must be relied upon to advise on the use of his dog on an assigned mission. His familiarity with the characteristics of his dog come from a long period of close association.

SECTION IV

Administration

10. a. The infantry scout dog platoon has no organic means of supply or administration and therefore must be attached.

b. Kennel crates are TO&E equipment and should be utilized wherever practical if dogs are to be kept at maximum efficiency.

c. No persons, other than platoon personnel or veterinarians, should handle dogs. They are dangerous to those who do not know them. They must not be made into pets.

d. Dogs in the theater or operations should be fed meat and vegetable stew or meat and vegetable hash contained in the Army "C" ration in the amount of two (2) cans plus one (1) can of biscuits per dog per day. This ration may be supplemented with scraps from kitchens. It is recommended that the dog not be fed before training or going on a mission.

e. When the dogs are used on patrols of more than one (1) day's durations the dog and handler should bivouac with the headquarters of the using units. Dog handlers should be consulted on their daily use by unit commanders. A dog should not be used on both outposts and patrols in one night. If both an outpost and a patrol are needed, two dogs should be requested. Experience has proven that scout dog's most valuable function is that of patrolling.

f. Dogs which have not made contacts during two successive patrols should be encouraged by patrolling against a staged ambush. This may be done on a very small scale, but sufficient to maintain the dog's interest in his mission.



FIG. 4 - THE SCOUT DOG ON OUTPOST HAS GIVEN WARNING OF THE APPROACH OF THE "ENEMY."

g. Dogs in rear areas for refresher training must be kept in training and daily work of short duration is recommended. Areas suitable for refresher training must be safe and isolated.

h. The platoon leader knows his men and dogs. Missions should be coordinated with him sufficiently in advance, so that: he may make recommendations as to the use and number of dogs required for each mission and be in a position to estimate and inform the commander as to the probable results of their use; suitable teams may be picked out and transported to the area; scout handler may receive instructions from patrol leader and give his recommendations for use of dogs; and scout handler may check dog and equipment.

i. Whenever possible the same scout handler and dog team should be assigned to the same patrol for different missions. Performance increases as the dog becomes acquainted with the personnel with whom it works.

j. Scout dogs who lose their handler through rotation, transfer, or death need not become inoperative as most scout dogs will willingly work for a trained scout dog handler after a short period of refresher training together.