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ABSTRACT

(f) The Army Concept Team in Vietnam evaluated sentry dog operations to determine the adequacy of current doctrinal and organizational concepts concerning the employment of sentry dogs in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN).

The sentry dog team mission was to detect, report, and deny entry of intruders in order to prevent theft, sabotage, attack, and/or destruction of government property or personnel. The dog teams supplemented the physical security systems of such installations as airfields, ammunition supply points, POL dumps, dock areas, and supply storage yards. Installations in the II, III and IV Corps Tactical Zones received this specialized support.

The evaluation period started on 1 September 1969 and ended on 31 October 1969. Units participating in the evaluation were the 212th Military Police Company (Sentry Dog), located at Long Binh, and the 981st Military Police Company (Sentry Dog), located at Cam Ranh Bay. The companies, each authorized five officers, 188 enlisted men, and 140 dogs, were divided into 3-platoons.

The evaluation revealed that assigned missions of sentry dog companies followed sentry dog employment doctrine. In many instances, sentry dog teams were employed on posts under conditions that were undesirable or unacceptable as defined in existing policies and regulations. While these conditions tended to diminish the effectiveness of sentry dogs on specific posts, the extent of degradation resulting from these conditions could not be determined. However, the psychological effect of the team's presence, though not measurable, contributed to the overall physical security program.

It was concluded that Military Police headquarters should include personnel qualified to perform staff functions related to sentry dog employment, that direct and reliable communications for sentry dog employment were mandatory, and that the 6-hour maximum continuous duty span for a sentry dog team imposed in RVN was too long. Logistic support to sentry dog detachments was found to be adequate, and veterinary support was excellent. Essential improvements in training programs associated with sentry dog employment were identified.

As a result of this evaluation, it is recommended that improvements be made in the scope and conduct of sentry dog surveys, that all sentry dog posts in RVN should be resurveyed to confirm proper sentry dog employment and to identify areas that require corrective action, and that the sentry dogs when employed should be incorporated into the installation physical security plan. Standardization of and improvements to communications systems are also recommended. A 4-hour limitation is recommended for any continuous duty shift of sentry dog teams. Training recommendations include suggested improvements in dog-handler and supervisor instruction, and the initiation of a policy of formally designating

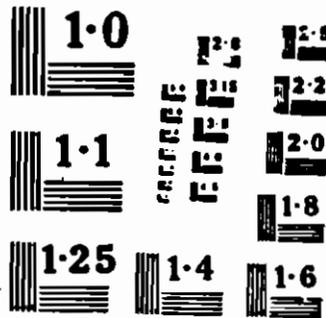
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sentry dog supervisory personnel; these personnel would attend a course in sentry dog supervision prior to deployment to RVN. It is also recommended that formal operational proficiency evaluations of dog teams be initiated and conducted on a quarterly basis. A final recommendation proposes a study into the effects of environmental and psychological conditions on overall sentry dog team effectiveness.

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