

1st Marine Corps Scout Dog Platoon  
MILITARY POLICE COMPANY  
HEADQUARTERS BATTALION  
3d Marine Division, FMF

RVW:jfp  
10 May 1966

From: 1st Lt. Robert V. Wilder, 089527, Platoon Commander, 1st Marine  
Corps Scout Dog Platoon  
To: Commanding General, III MAF  
Subj: Monthly Report of activities (March and April)

1. The 1st element of the 1st Marine Corps Scout Dog Platoon arrived in the Republic of Viet Nam on 1 March 1966. The remainder of the Platoon arrived on 4 March 1966. We set up temporary kennels just inside the perimeter of the 3d Shore Party Battalion.

The entire month of March was spent in getting the dogs acclimatized to the climate. After one month most of the dogs were acclimatized to some degree, however, to this date some dogs have not gotten used to the heat.

2. While the dogs were getting acclimatized, liaison was established between the 1st Scout Dog Platoon and most of the units in the area. Arrangements were made for our new and permanent area (across from Ninth Motors). The new area was Reconnoitered and plans were established for the billets and kennels. Thick and unnecessary brush was cut down and a drainage system was made. The wire was put in and mortar shelters and bunkers were built.

3. On 22 March we moved to our new area. There was much work to be done and no time was wasted as we worked night and day.

Some dogs were ready to go to work at this time. The word was passed that Scout Dogs were ready for deployment.

4. During the month of April the 1st Scout Dog Platoon received 15 commitments. These dogs were deployed to the following units: Bulk Fuel, 3-7, 1-9, 2-9, 3-9, 1-3, 2-3, 3-3, Hq. Bn. Scout Dogs were used for daylight and nighttime patrols, both reconnaissance and combat. They were also employed on Listening Posts, and most of the time in searching villages and tunnels. Some of the dogs have been used to intimidate VCS with great success. The people are really afraid of the dogs. Thus far Scout Dogs have brought home excellent results. They have found nearly one-hundred VCS in tunnels and a great deal of rice and clothing. They have also found nearly 50 booby traps of all varieties and several weapons. They have found batteries with electrical wire which are used for detonating claymore mines and other booby traps.

5. Scout Dogs were deployed for no more than 5 days at a time so that the Veterinarian could keep a close check on them initially. Two dogs died of heat stroke so far but these dogs were easily excitable and would not remain calm during the heat of the day as most of the other dogs.

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5. Other than heat problems, no great health threat was encountered. The sooner the dogs are put in cement type kennels and off the ground, the greater chance they'll have in their everlasting battle with parasites that habitat in the dirt in the Republic of Viet Nam. When permanent kennels are built they will increase the dogs efficiency 60% and their chances of contracting common diseases from insects and parisites will be reduced by about 80%.

6. The dogs are best employed at night when it is cool and all their senses are sharper. However, there seems to be a reluctance on the part of infantry units to conduct night security patrols due to the number of booby traps found accidently and tragically at night. Scout Dogs are now being trained on trip wire and other types of booby traps, however, this is a slow process since 50% are deployed most of the time and are not available for training (They receive a degree of O.J.T. on booby traps in the field). When all dogs are familiar with booby traps I would like to see the dogs used almost exclusively on night security patrols since this is when the VC are out and this is when the dogs work best.

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