

USARV SCOUT DOG PLATOON

F. When working, the dog handler must devote constant attention to his dog. At least one member of the supported unit must act as a coverman and provide covering fire until the dog handler can react.

G. If speed is essential, and there is no time to consider or check out the dog's alerts, the team should fall back to the rear of the group.

H. If the handler becomes a casualty the dog should accompany him. If the dog becomes overly protective or aggressive to the point where his handler's life is endangered, the dog must be destroyed.

I. If a dog is wounded it should be evacuated. The handler must accompany the dog.

J. Rations and water for both handler and dog are often a problem. The dog must drink potable water. The supported unit can be of great assistance by having several men carry an extra canteen.

K. A scout dog is not a sentry dog, an attack dog, a show dog, or a pet. His handler is an expert on his care and use. If the dog becomes ineffective because of fatigue, injury, sickness, lack of food, or poor operating conditions, the handler's advice should be followed.

PPC-Japan

I. MISSION:

The mission of a scout dog platoon is to support tactical units by detecting and giving silent early warning of any foreign presence outside the main body. The mission is accomplished by attaching scout dog teams to units to provide:

- A. Warning against ambushes.
- B. Warning against snipers.
- C. Detection of enemy "hide-outs", or "stay behind groups".
- D. Assistance during village search operations.
- E. Warning of enemy approach to ambush patrols and listening posts.

II. ORGANIZATION:

A. The platoon headquarters consists of a platoon commander, a platoon sergeant, a veterinary animal technician and a clerk.

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B. Two scout dog sections each have a section leader, two dog handlers/asst section leaders and nine dog handlers.

III. FUNCTIONS:

A. The platoon commander's duties include:

1. Advising the supported commander on employment of the platoon.
2. Insuring maximum support to using units.
3. Conducting constant refresher training.
4. Controlling rotation of scout dog teams.
5. Conducting visits and briefings for all commanders, especially at company level.

B. The platoon sergeant and section leaders assist the platoon commander. They act as liaison to unit commanders, NCOICs of forward bases and training NCOs.

C. The scout dog handler maintains, trains, and works his dog when deployed.

IV. EMPLOYMENT OF THE SCOUT DOG TEAM:

A. Before a mission begins the scout dog team must be introduced

to the members of the unit which they will accompany. The handler briefs the unit on the team's capabilities and limitations and the dog becomes familiar with each member of the group.

B. The team is not infallible; members of the supported unit must not feel an exaggerated sense of security because of the team's presence.

C. Generally the best position for the scout dog team is at the point. This does not preclude a trail breaker preceding the team in very thick underbrush; but the dog detects airborne scent principally, and should be in front of all friendly elements.

D. The primary variables affecting the dog's abilities are wind, terrain, and the strength of the scent source. An alert may be given from a few meters up to 300 meters away from the source.

E. When an alert is given, the supported force leader moves forward, receives the handler's opinion and then investigates the area indicated. When contact is probable, the team remains in place while the unit moves out, and then falls in at the rear.

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