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HISTORY OF SCOUT DOG DETACHMENT

UNITED STATES ARMY INFANTRY CENTER
HEADQUARTERS DETACHMENT SCOUT DOG
US ARMY

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PREFACE

The purpose of this publication is to provide a basic source of information about the US Army Scout Dog Detachment, 26th IPSD and 51st IPSD.

The Detachment Commander wishes to express his appreciation to those officers and men who assisted in the preparation of the material for this history.

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This history is actually the combined history of the 26th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog), 51st Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) and USAIC Headquarters Detachment Scout Dog. At the beginning of 1967 all scout dog teams in the US Army were trained by the 26th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog), which was attached to 1st Battalion, 29th Infantry. In addition to the training of all deploying TOE scout dog platoons the 26th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) was also given the mission of training all individual scout dog handler replacements. In late 1966 a locally approved FDA Augmentation of one (1) officer and thirty (30) ~~en~~ provided assistance in performing this mission.

Another addition to this training base made early in 1967. The recently activated 51st Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) had begun their unit training in preparation for support of the training mission. Openings for 11F2D personnel were filled by men who had just completed Basic Combat Training as part of a "Train and Retain" program. However, the problems involved in training these men as Infantry Operations and Intelligence Specialists (11F20) and as dog handlers (11F2D) exceeded the capabilities of this unit and they were transferred to other units within the 197th Infantry Brigade. Excess personnel either scheduled to undergo training, or personnel who were qualified but had not deployed were then assigned to the 51st Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog). The unit finally completed its twelve (12) weeks of training on 24 March 1967. The 51st Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) was made a STRAF unit with duty station at Fort Benning. The 51st Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog)

was given the additional mission of supplying personnel and equipment for use as a training base.

On 25 May 1967 the TD Augmentation of one (1) officer and thirty (30) AM was formally approved by Third US Army and USAIC. (See Annex I). This approval made the detachment a separate unit. The scout dog units were then released from the 1st Battalion, 29th Infantry and attached to the 197th Infantry Brigade as the USAIC Headquarters Detachment Scout Dog. The 26th LBS, 51st IBS and deploying TCE units and USAIC personnel were then attached to the Headquarters Detachment. Local approval was given to have the unit commanded by a field grade officer. Major John W. McKinney was the first commanding officer of the detachment. The detachment provided the command and control for the students, instructors and administrative personnel involved in the scout dog training program. However, most US Army personnel arriving here to undergo twelve (12) weeks of training as individuals continued to be assigned or attached to the 26th IBS throughout the year.

The mission responsibility given this new organization has to rank among the all time novelties - not only because of the unique character of the many missions but also by the variety and scope of the requirement. (See Annex II.) To simply train and deploy one (1) TCE platoon actually required four (4) separate MOS producing courses of instruction.

The combined strength (3 officers & 4 AM) of the Headquarters Detachment, 26th IBS and 51st IBS was marginally adequate to meet the above mission requirements. During the summer months of 1967 the 51st IBS received alert notification to deploy to Viet Nam. If this had taken place it would have severely hampered the operation of the training program. This catastrophe

was averted to some degree by activating the 58th IPSD and transferring the equipment from the 51st IPSD to the 58th IPSD. Some of the instructors who had been with the dog training units here at Fort Benning for several years were then transferred to the 58th IPSD and the platoon then filled with rejects from other schools at Fort Benning. The 58th IPSD then began a twelve (12) week course which started in October. The 51st IPSD remained with the detachment, but its ranks were stripped of trained personnel.

At the end of 1967 the functional organization of the combined forces was as follows:

CO	-	Major	-	Detachment Commander
XO	-	LT	-	26th IPSD Commanding Officer
S-3	-	LT	-	51st IPSD Commanding Officer
S-4	-	LT	-	Student Officer assigned to Headquarters Detachment

The enlisted men were organized without regard to platoon assignment but as to function in the detachment as a whole.

Late in 1967 a change to the TDA was requested raising its authorized strength to four (4) officers and eighty-five (85) EM. Along with this requested change was a recommendation to deactivate or deploy the 26th and 51st Infantry Platoons (Scout Dog). The purpose of this recommendation was to provide an organization specifically tailored to the mission of training scout dog teams. Original organizations and augmentations were planned as short term mission expedients. As the value of scout dogs in combat has become apparent and the requirements for scout dog teams has increased this can no

longer be considered a short term program and it should not be organized as such. The unit has a school mission and should achieve an appropriate standing.

1. General: During the development of any school or training base many and varied problems arise. These next few chapters will be devoted to the discussion of what occurred in this unit.

2. Students: There were two main problems involving the students; arrival on time and completion of the POR requirements. This was true for both the replacements and for the students assigned to the deploying platoons.

In many cases students reported as late as the 5th and 6th week of training. They were admitted in the class because of the dire need, given special attention and graduated. This certainly was not the optimum and they were not as well trained as possible but they did reach a satisfactory level of training.

A major portion of the twelve (12) weeks was spent in preparing the students to be POR qualified. Not only were there eighty (80) scheduled hours for POR qualification on the training schedules, most every student also missed training for other reasons. Dental appointments could only be gotten during duty hours. Other medical and administrative appointments cut into the training time. A recommendation will go in to accept only POR qualified students. This prerequisite will be doomed to failure unless the school receives full official recognition.

3. Instructors: The instructor situation became critical in 1967.

The original instructors were OOC school trained. They had worked with dogs, sentry or scout, for many years. Most of this extremely small pool of instructors (only 41 took the proficiency pay test in that MOS in 1967) had been pulled to Fort Benning in 1965 and 1966. They were rotating or retiring by 1967. In early 1967 very few veterans from Infantry Scout Dog Platoons in Viet Nam were returning to Fort Benning. The situation did not improve measurably toward the end of the year because the MOS indicator 11F2D or 11F4D did not automatically identify the individual to the Army's Computers and there was no requirement put into those computers for their return to the scout dog detachment as instructors. For whatever the reason about the only returnees from Viet Nam were those who happened to be re-assigned to Fort Benning and then contacted by the scout dog detachment upon arrival.

4. Class Organization: It was discovered in 1967 that less conflicts arose when the students were not working in a closely organized platoon. The instructors preferred to have the students as a class rather than platoons. The platoon leader and sergeant along with the platoon squad leaders were reluctant to take the same training as the other students. As a class all students received the same training.

Reports were received from Viet Nam that the dogs were sometimes ineffective in villiages because they were distracted by the animal smells. The detachment procurred two bulls, 2 goats, 2 pigs, and 12 chickens to accustom the dogs to these barnyard animals. The animals were generally kept around the kennel area but were twice moved to the field locations. Transportation of the bulls presented a problem near the end of the year.

Experimental work on the off leash mode of scouting was completed at Fort Benning by the Limited war Laboratory. Five teams were sent to Viet Nam for evaluation.

A television tape was made to present to the Infantry Office Career Courses and another tape was made to show all scout dog handler students. This was tne extent of literature published.

The training of the Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) did not change materially from the way the platoons were trained in 1966. The requirement to train replacements for the platoons already in Viet Nam arose. It was decided to give these individual replacements the same basic course as given to the deploying platoons. These were trained and shipped and were evidently well received from the reports sent back. The replacements reported to Oakland Army Terminal without dogs. They used the dog of the man they replaced once they arrived in country. The dogs that were used by the replacements were left behind and given to a deploying platoon. The dogs, in effect went through two or more cycles. An interesting point is that the dog which went through more than one training cycle did not perform significantly better than those which had gone through only one cycle. Another interesting point was that the replacements were as proficient at the end of twelve weeks as were the TOE Platoons although they were second in priority in the selection of dogs and in many cases switched dogs during training.

Additional emphasis was given to booby trap detection by the dogs. This caused an ammunition problem on occasions because of the difficulty in procuring trip wire and booby trap simulators.

All training continued to be done on the forgotten corners of Fort Benning Military Reservation. This was satisfactory and did not interfere with other training being conducted and visa versa.

Chapter 4

LOGISTICAL DEVELOPMENTS

I. Procurement Of Dogs Suitable For Scout Dog Training

All scout dogs continued to be procured from the U.S. Air Force, located at Lackland A.F.B., Texas. The Air Force procures all dogs for the use of the Armed Forces. The Air Force had to send procurement teams all over the United States to meet the need of the Military Dog Program. Over 2000 dogs were needed to fill the Military requirements for dogs in 1967, (including both sentry and scout).

During calendar year 1967, Fort Benning purchased 398 German Shepard scout dogs from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. This compared with only 247 dogs purchased in the calendar year ending 1966. An estimated 600 dogs will be needed to fill the requirements set forth for the calendar year 1968.

As the detachment received the requirements to ship platoons, train additional replacements, and to ship trained dogs the detachment supply officer had to be one move ahead with his orders to the Air Force for more dogs.

The requisitions for dogs were made similar to requisitions for other equipment, on a DA Form 2765-1. The forms were delivered directly to post G-4. G-4 then contacted Lackland A.F.B.. The dogs arrived approximately 60 days later via C-119's. After their arrival at Lawson Field the dogs were put on a 21 day quarantine before they were mixed with other dogs.

II. Care Of Dogs

The post veterinarian provide one veterinary officer to work full time with the scout dogs in 1967. This officer not only supervised the care and treatment of the approximately 250 dogs, but he also administered classes to the Vet Tech's of each training platoon.

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The dogs were troubled to some extent with Upper Respiratory Disease in 1967. When the 58th IPSD began training "URI" as it was commonly called was prevalent in most of the dogs. The 58th then took part in an experiment to determine if this disease could be transferred from animal to man. Blood tests were made of both man and dog before they were brought together, after they had worked for several weeks, and again upon the completion of the 12 week course. No results of this test are yet known. The 58th was kept in quarantine for the entire 12 week course. Other tests were made to determine the cause of URI and attempts made to produce a vaccine to prevent it.

Parasites remained high on the list of medical problems. Fecal flotations at two week intervals revealed an incidence of intestinal parasitism as high as 70% in the field during the summer months. During the mosquito season about 10% of the dogs were positive for heart worms and successfully treated.

Problems were encountered with the dog food being fed, in that there were occasional problems with bloating and inability of keeping some of the dogs in good working condition. Action was taken to improve the dogs diet.

III. Equipment

There were two new items of equipment developed for use by scout dogs in 1967. Limited War Lab developed and tested a radio that emitted a signal when the dog was in motion. This was used by the off lease experimentation and evaluation in Viet Nam. The radio allowed the handler to determine if the dog was moving or stopped. The dog had been trained to sit when alerting. This allowed the handler to call an alert without having visual contact with the dog. The theory was good except that the handler did not necessarily know where the dog was located and in which direction he was giving the alert. The radio itself was found to be in need of many improvements to make it more durable for combat operations.

One item of equipment was developed here at Benning by the Detachment Supply Officer. He worked in coordination with the USAIS Airborne School and manufactured a nylon leash at a cost of \$.42 each. This compared with a \$5.50 leather leash which is the normal issue. The nylon leash is presently being procured locally. It is much better suited for use in Viet Nam because it will not rot.

The Supply Section continued to requisition all supplies and equipment including repair parts and other authorized stockage items for all deploying platoons. The Supply Section maintained as many as seven property books during some months. In addition to this S-4 type job the Supply Room also operated a unit supply room. This involved issuing and receiving TA-50 equipment and exchange of linen, beds, mattresses, etc..

IV. Transportation

Another unique problem encountered by this unit is the motor maintenance and transportation. At times this unit had assigned 47 different vehicles. (Including several water trailers on hand receipt from other units in the 197th Brigade). The detachment was not authorized any drivers or any maintenance personnel. The vehicles were sent to brigade headquarters motor pool for maintenance. This taxed the capabilities of that unit because the scout dog detachment had more vehicles than did the remainder of brigade headquarters. The detachment assigned an NCO as Motor Sergeant and gave student officers the duty of Motor Officer until they began training. Other personnel from the 51st Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) and 26th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) were used as drivers. Some of the students drove trucks also. This was marginally adequate. Many vehicles were on deadline status for excessive days. Other vehicular support was obtained through S-3, 197th Brigade. This was much more convenient because drivers came with the vehicles.

V. Inspections

The scout dog platoons deploying to Viet Nam must go through a series of formal inspections that start in the eighth week of training cycle and continue through the remainder of the twelve week cycle. The first inspection is to check the preparations for overseas movement. It's conducted by Post G-4. The purpose is to check the status of all equipment, records, and PLL. The purpose of this inspection is to determine if any problems are developing in the receiving of the equipment that may affect the deployment date. If Post G-4 finds any such problems they then take necessary action to correct the situation.

The second inspection takes place within 60 days of the initial P.O.M. inspection. This one is performed by the Post I.G. The purpose is to inspect the property books, document register, clothing forms and the motor pool records. By this time a TO&E unit should have all of its PEL on hand, and all non-expendable equipment on hand. The final inspection is held by the Third Army I.G. At this time they check the report from Post I.G. for any corrections that needed to be made. If none they will again check the units complete records; this is the final required inspection before deployment to Viet Nam. The detachment conducts other inspections and requests assistance inspections from Post Tech Inspection Team.

During 1967 units of the scout dog detachment received 37 inspections from higher headquarters.

Along with each TO&E unit inspections, the 26th and 51st Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) have their own inspections. All the logistical records are kept by the S-4 of the headquarters detachment scout dog. Only one inspection found a unit not combat ready. That was the result of the 58th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) having 3 of its 4 trucks on deadline status in the 67th Maintenance

En. when it was inspected by Post I.G. The trucks were quickly repaired as a result of this inspection. All of the logistical records were maintained by the Detachment S-4. The personnel records were maintained by the Detachment 1SG, PSNCO, and Brigade Personnel Records Section.

VI. Reports

The 26th and 51st Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog) are separate line units that require a complete unit readiness report for each. These reports are quite extensive and are rendered quarterly. Each TO&E platoon that is activated also is required to submit 4 unit readiness reports during their attachment to the scout dog headquarters. The material readiness portion of all these reports was prepared by the S-4 and submitted to the detachment XO, who had overall responsibility for submitting the complete report. New units have a report rendered upon activation, start training, 55 days prior to deployment, and upon graduation.

VII. Direct To G-4

While attached to the 1/29th Infantry, all requisitions were submitted to B Company's Supply Sergeant for approval by En S-4. After his approval, a 2765 was sent through the normal supply channels.

On 25 May 1967 the scout dog unit became a separate detachment, no longer a part of the 1/29th Infantry. After that all 2765's went direct to Post G-4. Since the establishment of the scout dog detachment, there has been a much more efficient system of ordering and recording the supplies used by the training platoons.

General: By the end of 1967 the men involved in scout dog training, (26th IPSD, 51st IPSD and the Headquarters Detachment) realized they had accomplished the following:

1. TOE Units Activated, Trained and Deployed to Viet Nam

(Full strength platoons with all equipment)

50th IPSD
49th IPSD
46th IPSD
45th IPSD
43rd IPSD

Total Strength 5 Officers 132 EM

2. Replacement Personnel: 6 packets of 2 Officers, 52 EM each packet

Total 12 Officers 312 EM

3. Dogs Shipped as Individual Replacements: Only 64 dogs were shipped to Viet Nam as replacements for those that were lost due to combat action or otherwise. Dogs shipped with TOE Platoons 137 and individual replacements 64

Total Dogs Shipped 201

4. Results in Viet Nam: The only feed back of results from Viet Nam has been through personal correspondence. The Scout Dog Platoons evidently are producing good results because of the command decisions to request and send more platoons, than were originally planned. Summary sheets are submitted by the platoons in Viet Nam each month but are of little value at Fort Benning. They cover what an entire operation, of which the Scout Dog Detachment is a part, accomplished.

5. USAIS Support: The Scout Dog Detachment provided approximately 502 scout dog teams to support ranger patrols and ranger escape and evasion exercises. The detachment also sent 60 teams to Fort McClellan, Alabama to support the chemical school's escape and evasion exercises.

6. Public Relations: The detachment was probably the favorite demonstration at Fort Benning in 1967. Any group or organization coming to Fort Benning was likely to be given a Scout Dog Demonstration or if any unit was being given a post tour and had extra time they would be given a tour through the scout dog kennels. In addition to the numerous demonstrations put on within the kennel area the detachment sent teams out for off post demonstrations to;

1. Armed Forces Day Demonstrations to:

Marietta, Georgia
Red Stone Arsenal
Fort Bragg, N.C.

2. US Dog Kennel Club Show in Cleveland, Ohio

3. Redstone Arsenal for South-Eastern Boy Scout Jamboree

4. Numerous local Civic Clubs in the Columbus, Phenix City Area

CHAPTER 6

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS OF 1967

1. Kennel Area: During 1967 the kennel area was completely remodeled and renovated. The hospital area itself was renovated; the clinic area and kitchen enlarged; a laboratory and operating room constructed and an additional block of thirty (30) dog kennels constructed.

2. Change Locations: The detachment with its two subordinate units, the 26th and 51st IPSP, moved from Kelly Hill under 1/29th Infantry Bn into old WWII temporary housing in the 2200 block area in April 1967. In December the unit moved into building 2834 right across the road from the dog kennels.

3. Awards: The Unit Mess Hall was awarded the best mess of the 197th Infantry Brigade for each of the last two quarters of calendar year 1967. The unit employed civilian KPs from the activation of the unit throughout the year.