



THEN & NOW

1970 & 2015



CENTURIES OF SUPPORT

This Soldier and his Doberman served during World War II. (Photo courtesy of U.S. Marine Corps Archives and Special Collections)

DOGS of WAR

Dogs are no strangers to war. Indeed, it's likely that canine militarization is as old as canine domestication. Historical accounts of dogs participating in warfare date at least as far back as the middle of the seventh century B.C. According to a 1915 article in *The New York Times*, the Egyptians used dogs in war in the fifth century B.C., and "it is certain that no metaphor was intended by Shakespeare when he made Antony exclaim, 'Cry "havoc" and let slip the dogs of war.'"

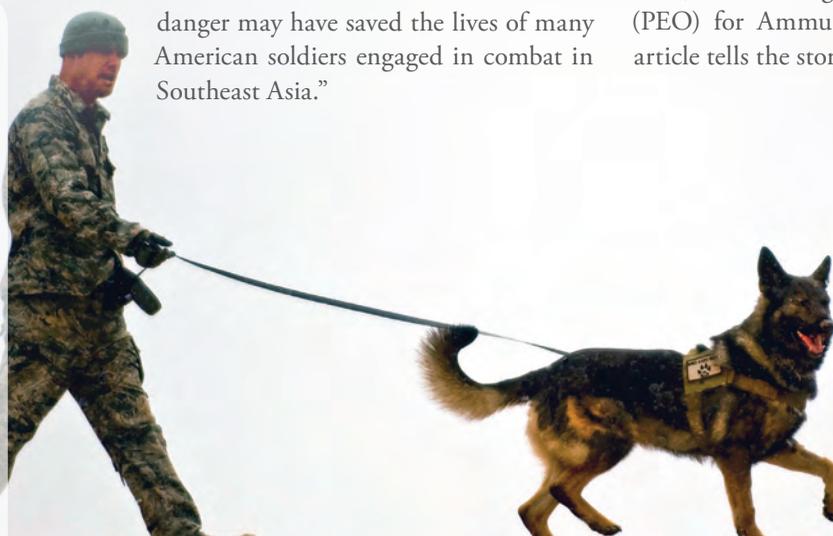
The article concludes with the news that the program to supply those dogs out of the U.S. Army Land Warfare Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, had earned John J. Romba, a research psychologist, and Dr. Max Krauss, chief of the lab's Biological Science Branch, DA commendations "for meritorious service in recognition of their work on the project."

Today, 45 (human) years on, dogs still play an important role in the Army, thanks to their intelligence, highly developed sense of smell and highly accurate hearing. But today's dogs have much better accommodations, and their handlers now have the proper equipment for training and health, thanks to the Project Manager for Close Combat Systems (PM CCS) of the Program Executive Office (PEO) for Ammunition. The following article tells the story.

In the November-December 1970 issue of this magazine's predecessor publication, *Army Research and Development* magazine, the article "Canine Caution Warns Troops of Concealed Dangers" describes how "canine consciousness of concealed danger may have saved the lives of many American soldiers engaged in combat in Southeast Asia."

TRAINING FOR MISSION SUCCESS

A military working dog (MWD) handler runs his military working/patrol explosive detection dog through explosive device detection training. MWDs must be trained and certified in detecting both military-grade and homemade explosives, and must be recertified annually. (U.S. Air Force photo by MSgt Adrian Cadiz)





SNIFFING OUT IEDS

A Soldier and a U.S. Air Force working dog conduct patrols with the Afghan Border Police in Afghanistan in January 2013, in search of locals suspected of creating improvised explosive devices. While the Air Force provides the services with standardized capabilities for MWDs, the services are responsible for equipping, maintaining and follow-on training, including explosive detection. (U.S. Army photo by SPC Alex Kirk Amen, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



NEW DIGS and MORE **for SOLDIER DOGS**

by Mr. Frank Altamura

Military working dogs (MWDs) have become specialized and unique in their own way and assigned mission. However, one aspect they have in common with other Soldiers is their need for equipment, training, proper care and good health. This is the niche that PEO Ammunition fills. Through the process of capabilities development for rapid transition, PM CCS assumed responsibility for the Family of Military Working Dog Equipment (FoMWDE) in May 2008.

The Army designated the working dogs and the equipment as an official program of record, establishing a funding line in the budget to procure and sustain equipment sets to support this vital asset. The Army's Office of the Provost Marshal General manages the requirement for the dogs, while PM CCS manages all the equipment. FoMWDE includes an array of different equipment sets for handlers, first aid, facility and obedience courses in addition to the Worldwide Deployable Kennel System (WDKS) and the Canine Explosive Scent Kit.

Just as important as funding to the program's success are the standardization and cataloging of equipment, creating a one-stop shop at the Defense Logistics Agency to replace equipment, and have it all approved by the entire MWD community. PM CCS' Product Manager for Counter Explosive Hazard (PdM CEH) worked across

the community of stakeholders, including the U.S. Army Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center (ARDEC), Rock Island Arsenal, IL, the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center of Excellence and users from the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence's Capabilities, Development and Integration Directorate and the military police (MP) and engineer schoolhouses. Additionally, the Office of the Provost Marshal General, the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps, the Joint Services MWD integrated product team and the TACOM Life Cycle Management Command further helped define requirements, logistics and fielding needs in order to standardize equipment and provide a central point from which to replace equipment through the DLA, which provides the latest equipment for the handlers and the kennels.

FULLY EQUIPPED

For the first time, Army handlers have fully equipped sets that help them keep the dogs healthier, safer and more able to accomplish their mission. In the past, units and handlers purchased a lot of their own equipment ad hoc through catalogs, online and at pet shops. Now, ARDEC engineers working with their counterparts at TACOM for logistics and fielding support have delivered four different types of equipment sets to 41 active Army MP and engineer units with MWDs across the world.

Because each piece of equipment is standard and has a NATO stock number, units needing to replenish their equipment as the result of attrition or damage can do so easily through DLA. In addition, the Army can save money through larger buys of standardized equipment.

The obedience course set contains equipment that helps the dogs meet the requirement to be certified for agility and remain well-trained. Items include crouch tunnels for the dogs to run through, stairs and A-frames to run up and down, as well as walkways to run across and windows to jump through.

The facility set includes equipment to maintain the dogs' health and training, such as food and medication scales, feeding pails, bite suits and other attack

training aids in addition to reward toys. MWDs are organized in different units that accommodate nine, 18 or 30 dogs, depending on the number authorized for that location. Each location receives a small, medium or large facility set, depending on the size of the unit.

VETERAN VETERINARIANS

The canine first-aid set provides canine medical supplies to the handlers, who are trained as first responders for their MWDs. Handlers take the sets with them when they deploy to render first aid if the dog gets injured or needs attention. The set includes bandages, tracheotomy kits, intravenous equipment and a flexible stretcher, along with numerous medications. The Veterinary Corps provides controlled medications when the dog teams are deployed on missions.

Labels for the items and their locations in each bag are standard.

The handler set contains what is needed for the full support and care of the dog: leashes, grooming equipment, collapsible feeding bowls, harnesses and transportation kennels. The portable kennels currently in use are open-air and are kept in the barracks with troops so that the temperature can be controlled.

COOL DOGS

Military handlers have praised the WDKS. Just like Soldiers, MWDs need proper rest in an environmentally controlled shelter when deployed to locations where the temperature could get very hot or very cold, in order to perform at peak levels and provide maximum capability while on missions. The rest is not optimal, however, if the MWD is housed in quarters with people. This knowledge drove the requirement for a deployable kennel.

In Afghanistan, where MWDs have often been deployed, summer temperatures soar to 120 degrees Fahrenheit, and winter temperatures dip into the teens. Mix in blinding sandstorms and other environmental challenges, and one can appreciate the importance of adequate military shelter not only for Soldiers but also for MWDs. To keep MWDs healthier and more comfortable during deployments, the PdM CEH integrated product team is fielding the WDKS for all environments.

The new WDKS will have a shelter with a forced-air system that circulates fresh air in the absence of natural breezes—heated air during extreme cold and cooled air during extreme heat. In accordance with Veterinary Corps requirements, the operating temperature inside the kennel is a minimum of 45 degrees Fahrenheit when the temperature outside the kennel is



HOME BASE

The PdM CEH is fielding this WDKS for all environments. It includes a forced-air system that circulates fresh air and moderates temperatures in extreme climate conditions. Designed for easy transport, the WDKS can be assembled by two people in less than 15 minutes with no tools. (Photo courtesy of PM CCS)



MISSION READY

PM CCS ensures that Army handlers have fully outfitted training kits, including an obstacle course like this one, to help them keep MWDs ready for any mission. (U.S. Army photo by SGT Samuel Northrup, 7th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

5 degrees. When the temperature is 120 degrees outside, the inside temperature cannot exceed 85 degrees.

In addition to the shelter, the WDKS includes a run, or exercise area, that allows dogs to stretch their legs. The dogs access the run area through a hinged door that lets them enter and exit the shelter as they please. Thus the dog can be exposed to daylight while remaining in a secured area.

The kennels are an expeditionary capability; the length of a mission determines what type of kennel is used. On missions of up to 30 days, the dogs stay in transportation kennels that do not include the dog runs. The new deployable kennel houses dogs on missions that last 30 to 180 days. Beyond 180 days, the dogs stay in brick-and-mortar structures.

The WDKS can be used independent of the “run” area and is designed to be transported on quick notice on the back of a truck. If a Soldier needs to take the dog to a forward operating

base, he or she can remove the run and take only the shelter if the mission will be under 30 days. The WDKS is modular; two people can assemble it in less than 15 minutes with no tools. The kennels are 48 inches long by 24 inches wide by 40 inches high. The attachable run is 6 feet long by 4 feet wide by 4 feet high.

SNIFFING OUT EXPLOSIVES

The Air Force is DOD’s executive agent for MWDs, responsible for procurement and training. It provides all services with standardized capabilities through the MWD program. However, the services are responsible for the equipping, maintaining and follow-on training of their MWDs. Depending on the mission, training may include explosive detection. Thus MWDs must be trained and certified in detecting both military-grade and homemade explosives, and must be recertified annually.

Training uses live samples of the actual explosives, even though procuring these is logistically challenging for a number of reasons, including uneconomical quantities of scale, varying shelf life and



LEARNING TO OBEY

A veterinary technician in a protective bite suit helps train an MWD as the handler issues a command. The Army designated the working dogs and the equipment as an official program of record, establishing a budget to procure and sustain equipment sets needed for mission readiness. (USAF photo by TSgt Erik Gudmundson)

hazard classifications. For this reason, the Product Directorate for Support Munitions within PM CCS is responsible for ensuring that the MP detachments and engineering units that need these scents have them. If the scents are not available for training, the dogs cannot meet their annual certification standards.

CONCLUSION

The MWD has been and continues to be a valuable partner to the Soldier while in garrison and in harm’s way while deployed. The value of MWDs is greater than ever, especially in this era of asymmetric warfare, in which the enemy makes regular use of improvised explosives. The MWD remains the most reliable explosive detection capability available to the military.

As the result of the judicious efforts of PEO Ammunition and PM CCS, MWDs and their handlers have standardized equipment to meet their requirements and a system that helps the handlers acquire and replace equipment easily. This consistently allows handlers to focus on the care of their partners and the mission they do so well, ensuring that these vital assets are always ready to serve as a “Soldier’s best friend.”

For more information, go to <http://www.pica.army.mil/pmccs/MainSite.html>.

For a historical tour of AL&T over the past 53 years, go to the Army AL&T magazine archives at <http://asc.army.mil/web/magazine/alt-magazine-archivel>.

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