

Part 9 - Dog deployment exercises with Defence and other agencies

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Summary	4
Request for assistance	4
Action request	4
Command and control	4
Safety briefing	4
Deployment instructions for dog handlers	6
Purpose	6
Key objectives	6
Bite-work	7
1080 poison	8
Department of Conservation (DOC) land	8

Summary

The Police Dog Section regularly provides operational dog teams to support defence force training. The main type of training exercises that assistance is provided for are search and evasion exercises, such as the annual NZSAS Combat Survival Course.

The principles of this policy also apply to other Government agencies that seek support for training exercises.

Request for assistance

All requests for assistance must be in writing from the commanding officer of the requesting organisation or group, and be addressed to the National Coordinator: Police Dogs, Box 47076, Trentham or by email.

Action request

The National Coordinator: Police Dogs will consider the request and if approved, liaise with District Dog Section supervisors to identify the appropriate dog teams to deploy on the exercise. The request will then be forwarded to the appropriate district for action.

Following district approval, dog section supervisors can then liaise directly with the exercise commanders for implementation.

Command and control

Prior to the deployment of any dog team, the dog section supervisor will ensure that every handler attending the training / exercise is briefed on the contents of this policy.

During the exercise Police staff should be under the control of a dog section supervisor who will liaise directly with the defence force commanding officer for the exercise.

The deployment of a dog team during an exercise will follow liaison between the commanding officer or his or her representative, and the police dog section supervisor.

Safety briefing

The dog section supervisor will deliver an initial safety briefing to all staff before the exercise commences covering key objectives, safety and bite work limitations as detailed below.

All dogs will wear muzzles during all exercises.

Police dog handlers will ensure that dog deployment will only occur if it complies with Police policy and practice. Where there are requests, instructions or there is pressure for a handler to deploy outside of these instructions then the handler must withdraw from the exercise and report the matter immediately to their dog section supervisor.

At the conclusion of the exercise handlers must ensure that a debriefing on their deployment is conducted with the commanding officer of the exercise, and report through their district dog section supervisor to the

National Coordinator: Police Dogs detailing their deployment.

Deployment instructions for dog handlers

Purpose

Deployment in army exercises not only provides assistance to the defence force concerned, but also provides a valuable and unique training opportunity for police dog teams.

It is important that key objectives and instructions for deployment are identified for police dog teams, so that training opportunities are maximised and risks minimised. A training exercise does not alter a handler's responsibilities from those required in the normal operational and daily management of a Police dog.

Key objectives

This table details the key objectives. Basket muzzle to be worn at all times.

Tracking	<p>The primary objective is to enhance the operational tracking capability of Police dog teams; including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - casting large areas to locate a track (free and on a harness) - tracking significant distances - following tracks one to twelve hours old - free tracking - line tracking.
Patrolling	<p>To enhance operational capability of Police dog teams in patrolling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - working for extended periods in the field - alerting to tracks and people while patrolling - alerting to people while in static observation positions - working with and around other patrol members.
Searching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To indicate the presence of groups or individuals. - To range over large areas and 'wind scent' targets. - To work ahead of patrols to clear areas. <p>Free searching poses risks for both Police and defence force personnel. There is a risk to Police of a dog being injured by an exercise participant, and then a risk of a dog reacting by biting the person. Therefore free searching should only be conducted where the dog is under the immediate control of the handler, and only for the purpose of indicating the general area where a group or individual may be hiding. Where there is potential for a dog to come in contact with a group or individual then free searching should not be used.</p>
Inter-service co-operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appreciation of command and control processes of the defence force. - Transport protocols and techniques - particularly helicopter work. Refer to guidelines on transporting Police dogs in helicopters in 'Part 4 - Dog management'. - Ground tracking techniques. - Co-operation and support.

Bite-work

Bite-work is not to be undertaken. A 'basket muzzle' is to be worn at all times. Dogs must not be deployed to bite any person or deployed in a manner that a bite is likely to occur.

There may be occasions where bite work is requested for a specific purpose, e.g. ambush or capture phase of the SAS qualifying course; to give soldiers experience of a dog's biting capability. This must only be done where:

- the request is from the officer in charge of the exercise
- a Dog Section sergeant/senior sergeant is present and gives approval

- the request for that training is recognised as a legitimate training need for the defence force, e.g. this would be appropriate for SAS training but not for a general search and evasion exercise.

Where approved, the person receiving the bite, i.e. the 'criminal', is trained in criminal work techniques including:

- presentation of the sleeve to the dog
- body position before during and after the attack
- precise instructions of how the exercise will be managed
- assessment by the handler that the person is capable of safely performing criminal work
- identification of potential risks and dangers to all participants
- the person is wearing appropriate protective equipment
- there is no risk of the dog biting anywhere but on the sleeve
- the dog is under the immediate control of the handler.

Where any person is bitten, this must be reported in accordance with '[Part 8 - Use of force with Police dogs](#)'.

1080 poison

Handlers must ensure that areas where the dog is to be deployed are not subject to 1080 poisoning programmes.

Department of Conservation (DOC) land

Where exercises extend onto DOC land, appropriate clearances for the deployment of dogs must be obtained prior to the exercise commencing.

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